

Challenging Our Preconceived Ideas

By R.T. Nusbaum

In spite of the fact that the disciples were told more than once by Jesus Christ Himself about His death and resurrection, they were so much engrossed in their preconceived ideas of what they thought was supposed to happen that His words did not affect them.

After Christ arose from the dead, you will notice that the first disciples to see Him besides Mary were the two men walking to the village of Emmaus recorded in Luke 24. Beginning with verse 13, we are told that these two men traveling to Emmaus, which was approximately seven miles from Jerusalem, were very discouraged men. They were so discouraged that when Jesus joined them, they did not realize who He was. Their preconceived ideas of what they thought had happened clouded actual reality. When He asked them the question, "What is this communication all about? What is this discouraging talk I hear from you?" they responded by saying, "You mean to say you don't know what has happened? In others words, they spoke to the Son of God as if He didn't understand what was going on and believed that they had a true conception of things. Of course, their conception was based on the earth and circumstances. They said, "This man, Jesus of Nazareth, we thought He was the one, the Messiah, the One that the prophets spoke about. But our rulers crucified Him and our hopes have been dashed to pieces. And indeed, what has happened has taken place about three days ago."

But Jesus put forth His view of things. Listen to what He says to them in Luke 24, verse 25-27: "Then He [that is, Jesus] said to them, 'O foolish ones and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken. Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?' And then, beginning with Moses, going through all the prophets, Jesus expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself."

In other words Jesus was telling these two disciples: "Look, it's all there in Scripture. Why haven't you seen it?" And the reason they had not seen it was because they were blinded by their preconceived ideas, a problem that we also face today in terms of learning about truth. Later on at the table, when they were having their supper, when Jesus raised His hands to bless the food, when they realized who was talking to them, they became extremely excited.

We are told in Luke 24:23-33 that they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem. They returned back seven more miles and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, saying: "The Lord has risen indeed and has appeared to Simon." Then they told about the things that had happened on the road and how He was known to them in the breaking of the bread. Imagine these discouraged, disappointed disciples, their hopes dashed by the Cross, and suddenly, with new light, they have the greatest joy ever. It is important that Jesus challenge our view of things. ***