



Come to the Table

Book Excerpt

We Had Hoped

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In Luke 24:13-35 we find a story about two disciples of Jesus who were walking on the road to Emmaus. They were discussing the events they had witnessed regarding the death of Christ. Verse 21 contains one of the saddest phrases found in Scripture when they said, “*We had hoped* that He was the one.”

Have you ever had your hopes crushed right in front of your eyes? Typically, when we begin to refer to hope in the past tense, we are in trouble. A soul without hope is like a body without food. Perhaps this is a passage you identify with today. We have all kinds of hopes and dreams—hope that we might meet the person of our dreams or hope that a marriage we already have will be rekindled. Some desperately hope that they might finally conceive a child, while others hope that their adult children might finally turn their lives around. We hope to get out of debt or escape our stress. We long to be healed of a disease, or we hope that we won’t have to take a medicine the rest of our lives.

What the two disciples did not know was that the stranger who had joined them in their walk was the resurrected Jesus Himself. He talked to them about the Scriptures and about all that the prophets had spoken about Him. (What would you give to have been part of that Bible study?) They urged the stranger to stay and have a meal, and Luke says that in the breaking of the bread they recognized Him as Jesus.

In this moment of awareness, they were transformed from hopeless, depressed men to two guys who were so overjoyed that they likely sprinted the seven miles back to Jerusalem. We are often privileged to observe this transforming power of hope. Life in Christ is designed that we might never experience a bankruptcy of hope. The church is a place that should specialize in “hope loans.”

In a moment we are going to break bread. It’s likely that the reason the two disciples recognized Jesus in the breaking of bread was because they saw His nail-pierced hands. If you see His nail-pierced hands today, your hope level will go up because, you see, if our Savior can conquer the grave, He can offer us a hope that is absolutely invincible. God has made sure that we need never run out of hope. Psalm 22:5 puts it best, “In You they trusted and were not disappointed.”

There are some things in this life for which we have no guarantee, but as you take communion today, remember that all the eternally important things are anchored where hope will always be alive.

Scripture: Psalm 22:5; Hebrews 6:19

Prayer:

You are the anchor of my soul, Father. In You and You alone is our hope for life eternal. As we partake of Your memorial supper today, may we treasure this hope and prepare to share this hope with others in the days ahead.
In Jesus’ name, Amen.

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