

Open Eyes

Long Beach Alliance Church • January 5, 2014 • Pastor Chris Lankford

**And their eyes were opened,
and they recognized him...**

~Luke 24:31a

1) Why Do YOU Read The Bible?

- A) What is the purpose for reading the Bible? If the reason you are reading is NOT the reason the Bible was written, boredom and/or discouragement easily occurs.
- B) Reading the Bible often begins because, "you should read your Bible in order to grow." Many begin reading the Bible simply for knowledge and/or transformation.
- C) Reading the Bible for knowledge, while sincere, will produce "Christian lawyers," experts in the text who lose sight of the ultimate purpose of the Bible.
- D) Reading the Bible for transformation, while sincere, will produce "Christian legalists," experts in behaviors but who have lost sight of the ultimate purpose of the Bible.
- E) Let's not be (sincerely) sidetracked! Reading the Bible is about God! Being introduced to Him in Jesus Christ, knowing Him in Jesus Christ, finding out God's plan in Jesus Christ, and being consistently reminded of how to engage Jesus Christ in the Spirit for God's great glory!
- F) This is the Gospel! The Gospel is Jesus Christ! The Bible is God's great Gospel story! We read to know Jesus! We are to know Jesus and make Him known to others! We exist by Him, through Him, to Him, and for Him.

2) The Whole Bible Is About Jesus

- A) The Bible is a tremendously creative Gospel story, God's plan to heal His broken creation focused on the best news of all, our Savior and Redeemer, Jesus Christ.
- B) Whether it is Philip leading the Ethiopian to Jesus from Isaiah (Acts 8:26-40), or the recognition that every saving act of God is Jesus Christ (Jude 5), the whole Bible speaks of the Good News of the Gospel story.

3) The Gospel Story Is Eye Opening

- A) Jesus Christ illustrates this while strolling with Cleopas and his companion (wife?) on the way to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-31) after Passover in Jerusalem, a few days after Jesus Christ was crucified.
- B) The process we see with Cleopas is the same kind of Gospel process in which we are engaged in the world. As we read, we are getting to know Christ's heart for the lost, for the world, and how He shared God's story.
- C) As normal life proceeds, Jesus draws near (24:13-15), but is hidden (24:16), shows interest in what others speak about (24:17), listens carefully (24:17-24), responds with Spiritual insight (24:25-26), presents God's story in a way which addressed Cleopas' hopes (24:27), creates open space (24:28), accepts Cleopas' invitation (24:28-29), reveals Himself through the context of relationship (communion), and Cleopas responds (24:30-31).

4) The Gospel Story Invites Relationship

- A) Rather than focus on "Gospel Techniques of Jesus," or "Jesus sharing Jesus," let's focus on God's story. What does the story teach us about Jesus?
- B) While there's a lot (Growth Groups will explore some this week!), the focus of the story lands on relationship. He has given it to you, will you offer it to others?