

Reset: Reaching Out to God

We had goals when we first began this work 4 years ago.

- Grow closer to God.
- Grow closer to one another.
- Share the good news with the lost.

It was meant to be simple but on point. We're easily distracted, and this was an answer to the problem. It helps you prioritize your life. "Is what I'm doing bringing me closer to God and His people? Am I remembering why I'm here? If you can't answer "yes," you reset and re-prioritize.

It's simple, yet not so simple. Our recent discussion of faith, hope, and love has prepared us for the following few sermons. Your faith in God is motivated by His love. It gives you a confident expectation of His return and your resurrection. My aim, as your brother, is to encourage and help strengthen, first and foremost, your relationship as a son to God. I'll continue to labor in this field as long as the Lord permits.

So, what helps me draw closer to God? I remember when I had a hernia in 2017. The surgeon reassured me, "this is the approach I would recommend for my own children." That made me feel good! So, I don't want to preach one thing to you but practice another. I don't want to complicate it. Before I come out with it, allow me to walk through a passage with you.

Luke 24:13-32. I appreciate this account because it focuses on two nobodies. They don't play any significant role in the story. They are a representation of hundreds of conversations that were happening in Israel around that time. It feels very normal. You could picture yourself having this kind of conversation with a friend then.

- **Slow of heart to believe:** His word provides answers while others are still searching.
 - If Jesus hasn't convinced you, where do you go from there?
 - What lies around the corner in life? I'm not sure, but I know that nothing will change the reality that Jesus is the Son of God and He is the King of my life. He is the physician and Lord. He has communicated what I need to know and has put me at ease. I don't have to carry that burden. He has answered our needs. In short - I actually

believe it. What has this produced? **Security and relief.** I already feel appreciation for God for what He's provided.

- Jesus took them through the word to instill this conviction. Really think about that. His approach was to take them to the word to establish confidence and hope in God. Brethren, it's easier to make headway with conviction. I don't know how anyone lives without it. Whether you're spending one-on-one time in the word or chewing on it with a friend. Do you have a podcast that helps you out or a book that dives into a topic a bit deeper? The word is the beginning of it all. So faith comes by what??? This is why I try to quickly get a newbie or someone struggling into the gospels. They need to walk with Him.
- **They urged Him strongly, saying, "Stay with us":** His word encourages me to reach out to Him.
 - They didn't want to leave Him after experiencing possibly the greatest bible lesson they'd ever heard. It's incredible when the word comes together. When Jesus delivers truth, it sets you free. This was a natural response, which happens in our lives.
 - Study naturally leads to prayer. Since God isn't literally walking by our side as Jesus did, this is how we communicate. The more you're in the word, the more it feels like God is teaching you as He walks by your side. You, in return, naturally talk back.
 - The more you study, the more you see how God is needed everywhere. This gives you something to talk about. It's one of the reasons we don't pray - we don't have much to say because we don't know what to say, and our minds aren't on spiritual things anyways.
- **"Did not our hearts burn within us while He talked to us on the road, while He opened to us the Scriptures?":** Jesus, the Word, opens our eyes and hearts.
 - In our study, we need to see the Scriptures for what they really are. They are from God.
 - Why are some of you excited to travel to Israel in a couple of months?
 - Why do people go crazy over "The Chosen?"
 - Why did Rod say after returning from his trip, "I'm reminded of how great God is, how small I am. His creation is abundant and beautiful."?
 - Because since they believe the Bible is the word of God, they get excited about walking where Jesus walked, or seeing shows that portray what He may have been like from day to day . . . or appreciate what He created!
 - **Hebrews 2:11-13** Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience. For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

And no creature is hidden from His sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account."

- My dad was good at making the Bible come to life. It may be why my favorite sermons surround events in Jesus' life. I love to paint a picture and walk through it. It brought a deeper layer of faith and appreciation to my life. It also brought me closer to God and allowed me to see Him as He is.
- We are always to fear God in that we have reverence towards Him. Reverence borders fear but doesn't cross over the line. However, as I mentioned in last week's lesson, we tend to cross it. We're driven by a dreadful fear of judgment rather than peace and appreciation. We may think of God telling Moses not to come near and to take off His sandals because He was on holy ground. However, we'd need to see the big picture. God drew Him to the mountain. He hand-picked him to serve as an honorable vessel. He would speak with Moses in the tabernacle. The text literally states, "Thus the Lord used to speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend."
[Exodus 33:11](#).
- Do you know what I see in Jesus that makes my heart burn?
 - A man who told four fishermen, "Come, follow Me."
 - A friend who didn't heal leprosy by word but by touch.
 - A Lord over nature who told Peter, "Come."
 - A physician who told a man with a withered hand, "Come here."
 - A savior who didn't throw off a woman who washed His feet with her tears but defended her by saying, "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven - for she loved much."
 - A lamb of God who cried out, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." And the curtain was torn. And access to God was open to all. For it is written in [Hebrews 10:19-25](#) . . .
- We reach out to God because He first reached out to us. We reach out to God because He's asked us to. We pray with boldness because He's approachable ([Hebrews 4:14-16](#).) He's not a God who has said, "Keep your distance," but who says, "Enter in."