

How Do We Recognize Jesus Today?

Question - How would you react if Jesus were to walk in here this morning?

- Would I even recognize Him?
- And if I did, would I:
 - respond in terror?
 - run away?
 - respond in joy and delight at the thrill of seeing Him?
 - be looking to see the physical evidences of His crucifixion?
 - bow in worship?
 - greet Him as my dearest Friend?

An Unexpected Encounter with Jesus

That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, “What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?” And they stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?” Lk 24:13-18 (ESV)

And he said to them, “What things?” And they said to him, “Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened. Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning, and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see.” Lk 24:19-24 (ESV)

And he said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?” And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, but they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent.” So he went in to stay with them.

Lk 24:25-29 (ESV)

When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, “Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?”

Lk 24:30-32 (ESV)

Cleopas and his Friend...

- Jesus caught up with and walked with them.
- *their eyes were kept from recognizing him*
 - They likely shared meals and talks
 - They know a great deal about Jesus
 - They mentioned their feelings about Him
 - They knew the cold, hard facts about Jesus

...beginning with Moses and all the Prophets,
he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the
things concerning himself Lk 24:27 (ESV)

How Can We Recognize Jesus Today?

- a shared meal... thanksgiving prayer, Jesus broke the bread and gave it to them...
- *their eyes were opened, they recognized him*

Their eyes were
kept from
recognizing Him



Their eyes were
opened

Someone else
responsible...



Sovereign action
of God



Development of
faith

A Clue from Jesus

When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

Mat 25:31-34 (ESV)

For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’

Mat 25:35-40 (ESV)

For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’

As we minister to those in need, we serve the Lord Jesus Himself

Mat 24:35-40 (ESV)

“Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me.... And whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.”

Mt 10:40-42 (ESV)

While he was still speaking to the people, behold, his mother and his brothers stood outside, asking to speak to him. But he replied to the man who told him, “Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?” And stretching out his hand toward his disciples, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.”

Mt 12:48-50 (ESV)

The Final Judgment

Sheep

- earthly works demonstrate proper response to the Gospel
- Demonstrated the fruit of the Spirit
- Acted kindly towards others

Acts of Kindness (primarily to other believers)

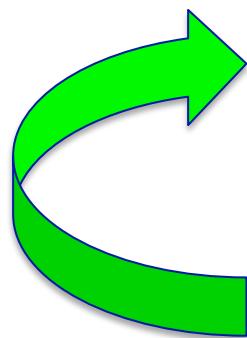
- = acts of kindness to Jesus Himself
- People's suffering is His suffering
- Compassion shown to people is compassion shown to Jesus

Let Us Do Good

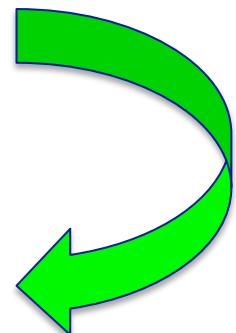
...let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. ¹⁰So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and **especially to those who are of the household of faith.**

Gal 6:9-10 (ESV)

We may recognize Jesus in the faces of
those to whom we offer our help



The recipients of our kindness may
recognize Jesus in us



Ambassadors for Christ

if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

2 Cor 5:17-20 (ESV)

A New Creation

New: life, perspective, purpose, home country

Roles:

- Represent God's kingdom
- Bring the message of Christ Jesus
- Represent His grace, love, and forgiveness

Responsibility – embody the life and love of Jesus

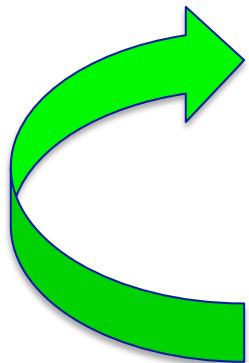
**Bridge the gap between a holy God and
a world in desperate need**

Job Description

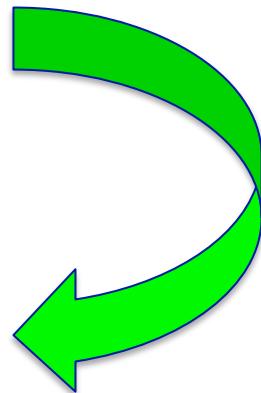
- Show kindness and generosity to people in need.
- Help people get to know Jesus through your words and your actions.
- Pray for the good of all, incl. people you don't like.
- Become a source of peace in a divided, anxious world.
- Boldly share the good news of Jesus with kindness and respect.
- Live with integrity in your words and actions.
- Resist the temptation to compromise your calling and hurt yourself and others.
- Rest in God's grace when you don't get it right.

How Do We Recognize Jesus Today?

Through the people that we are
privileged to serve



Through the actions and the
characters of His people, His
ambassadors, who do the serving



May The Lord Jesus
grant us the grace both to
receive and to offer kindness
in His Name and
to become more faithful
ambassadors
for His Kingdom!