

## **TIME TO SAY GOOD-BYE**

Text: I Corinthians 15:1-8; Acts 1:1-8

In a world that seems to have lost the beauty of music, a most beautiful song was written by Francesco Sartori and Lucio Quarantotto and made famous by Andrea Bocelli entitled "Time to Say Good-bye." The words of the chorus say something that kept resonating in my mind--that thoughts like these may have been in the mind of the disciples:

Time to say goodbye  
Horizons are never far  
Would I have to find them alone  
Without true light of my own with You?

It seems in times past I have pictured the disciples experiencing a very quick adherence to faith once the disciples saw Jesus after the resurrection. After more careful study, there seems to be a battle for belief that is waging in the hearts of those who loved Jesus the most.

Let us enter once again into these first few days our risen Lord walked this earth as now the time to say good-bye is quickly approaching. Acts 1:3 tells us, "To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." Forty days and He must say good-bye. Our Lord has given ample promise of the coming of the Holy Spirit Who would be the disciples' comforter and the One who will bear witness within them. Although God, the Son must go to the right hand of the Father, God, the Holy Spirit would now be with them and even though Christ will physically be gone, He will still be with them through the Holy Spirit. Hebrews 13:5b: "...for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

### **I. THE DIFFICULTY BELIEVING**

Let's identify the two disciples on the Road to Emmaus. Luke 24:18: "And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?" John 19:25: "Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene." I love the fact that the risen Christ's first extensive teaching of His purpose in coming to Earth is explained to a married couple. There is power in the witness of a couple. We see that was true of Simon Peter, the half-brothers of Jesus and some of the other disciples. I Corinthians 9:5: "Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?"

A. The Emmaus disciples placed faith in the past.

Luke 24:21-24

B. A rebuke is given for slowness to believe.

Luke 24:25, 26

C. Cleopas and Mary experience holy heartburn.

Luke 24:27-32

D. The Eleven experience doubt.

Luke 24:33-38; Mark 16:9-14

At first, the disciples did not believe Mary. Mark 16:11: "And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not." When Cleopas and Mary told the disciples, they responded the same way. Mark 16:13: "And they went and told it unto the residue: neither believed they them."

## **II. REASONS TO BELIEVE**

A. We need to believe because of where unbelief takes us.

Mark 16:14; Luke 24:36-38

Even while our Lord was ministering in his home territory in Nazareth, the Bible records in Matthew 13:58, "And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief." Psalm 78:40, 41: "How oft did they provoke him in the wilderness, and grieve him in the desert! Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel."

B. The risen Lord was seen by those who knew Him best, then a multitude and finally, Paul.

Luke 24:39-43; I Corinthians 15:5-8

C. Believe because the Word of God says so.

Luke 24:27, 44, 45

## **III. WORKS OF FAITH REQUIRE OUR BELIEF**

A. We take God at His Word

Luke 24:46a: "Thus it is written..." Romans 10:17: "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

B. We understand the necessity of the Gospel.

Luke 24:46b: "...and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day."

C. We preach repentance and remission of sins.

Luke 24:47b: "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name...."

D. We are to make a universal offer of salvation.

Luke 24:47c, 48: "...among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things."

Romans 1:16: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

Revelation 5:9: "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."

## **IV. THE GREAT COMMISSION**

A. The Command

Mark 16:15: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

Matthew 28:19, 20a: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you...."

#### B. The Convert

Mark 16:16: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

#### C. The Capability

Luke 24:49: "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."

Acts 1:8: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

Matthew 28:18: "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Matthew 28:20b: "...and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

#### D. The Conflict

Mark 16:17, 18: "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

G. Campbell Morgan said, "If you have no opposition in the place you serve, you're serving in the wrong place."

J. Sidlow Baxter said, "Men may spurn our appeals, reject our message, oppose our arguments, despise our persons, but they are helpless against our prayers." I Corinthians 9:26, 27: "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."

-Pastor Pope-