

The Adventure of Coming Home

Introduction: Everyone of us is born into a grand adventure. We set out to discover what is true about God and life and life after death. We instinctively know that there has to be more to life than eating and drinking and working and playing. As others have said, we are born with eternity in our hearts. When we come "home" to the simple truth that Jesus died for our sins and rose again on the third day, we are truly home. And there is nothing like being home.

Opening Discussion: What is a memorable "coming home" experience you've had in your life?

Read Mark 9:9-10, 30-32 (see also Luke 9:43-45; 18:31-34)

1. How clear is Jesus about what his future holds?
2. Why couldn't the disciples "get it" when Jesus explained to them that he would be crucified?
3. Was there ever a time in your life when you didn't "get it" even though you heard the words of the Gospel? How so?

Read Luke 24

4. How do Christ's followers become convinced that Jesus had indeed risen bodily from the dead? How does Jesus help them understand?

Steve said:

Jesus made clear to them that they had come home to the faith they had known from childhood. **He** was the fulfillment of everything that their Hebrew Scriptures had promised and anticipated. He was the descendent of Abraham who would bless all the families of the earth. He was the fulfillment of the entire sacrificial system. He was the descendent of David who would reign in the kingdom of God forever. His blood would establish the new covenant that would remove their sins as far as the east is from the west, writing the law of God on their hearts instead of tablets of stone. He was the One who would be marred more than any man (Isaiah 53) and who would die for the sins of the people. When Jesus opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, they realized that Jesus was the fulfillment of everything they already knew and loved.

5. When the disciples came to understand all this about Jesus, in what way were they "back home"?

6. How did the disciples' lives change when they become convinced of Jesus' resurrection?

Steve said:

Every single one of us here today is on a grand adventure. Like Chesterton we have each set out on a voyage to discover what is true about God and life and life after death. We can't help but wonder about these things. We start from several different places. A lot of us started out going to church and hearing Bible stories. Perhaps others of us started out in a faith different from Christianity. Perhaps others of us started our adventure with no faith at all.

7. What was the starting point of your "grand adventure"?

Steve said:

Here's the thing that the disciples' adventure makes clear: if Jesus really did rise from the dead, He is in a category all by Himself. And like the disciples we have to re-think what we have always thought. If Jesus actually rose from the dead, then what He taught and what He did has to be taken seriously. A person who conquers death has the authority to explain God and life and life after death. A person who accurately says ahead of time, "I am going to be crucified, be buried, and then be resurrected three days later" can be trusted as a reliable guide to God. If He says that through Him your sins can be forgiven and you can come home to God, then we should pay attention.

8. When did you begin to take Jesus seriously? (If you are not quite there yet, what is keeping you from it?)
9. For the disciples the reality of Jesus' resurrection was a revolutionary truth. It changed their lives. For us the truth of Jesus' resurrection sometimes becomes sort of a ho-hum, "yeah, I've known that all my life," kind of truth. How does such an incredible truth become ho-hum in our lives at times?
10. Are there any ways in which you sense you need to come home to God (or come home to God again)?