

Open Our Eyes, Minds, and Hearts

Scripture Lessons: **Luke 24:13-49 (New American Standard Bible 1995)**

<sup>13</sup> And behold, two of them were going that very day to a village named Emmaus, which was about seven miles from Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup> And they were talking with each other about all these things which had taken place. <sup>15</sup> While they were talking and discussing, Jesus Himself approached and began traveling with them.

<sup>16</sup> But their eyes were prevented from recognizing Him. <sup>17</sup> And He said to them, “What are these words that you are exchanging with one another as you are walking?” And they stood still, looking sad. <sup>18</sup> One of them, named Cleopas, answered and said to Him, “Are You the only one visiting Jerusalem and unaware of the things which have happened here in these days?” <sup>19</sup> And He said to them, “What things?” And they said to Him, “The things about Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word in the sight of God and all the people, <sup>20</sup> and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to the sentence of death, and crucified Him.

<sup>21</sup> But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, it is the third day since these things happened. <sup>22</sup> But also some women among us amazed us. When they were at the tomb early in the morning, <sup>23</sup> and did not find His body, they came, saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said that He was alive. <sup>24</sup> Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just exactly as the women also had said; but Him they did not see.”

<sup>25</sup> And He said to them, “O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! <sup>26</sup> Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?” <sup>27</sup> Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.

<sup>28</sup> And they approached the village where they were going, and He acted as though He were going farther. <sup>29</sup> But they urged Him, saying, “Stay with us, for it is getting toward evening, and the day is now nearly over.” So He went in to stay with them. <sup>30</sup> When He had reclined at the table with them, He took the bread and blessed it, and breaking it, He began giving it to them. <sup>31</sup> Then **their eyes were opened** and they recognized Him; and He vanished from their sight.

<sup>32</sup> They said to one another, “Were not our hearts burning within us while He was speaking to us on the road, while He was explaining the Scriptures to us?” <sup>33</sup> And they got up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found gathered together the eleven and those who were with them, <sup>34</sup> saying, “The Lord has really risen and has appeared to Simon.” <sup>35</sup> They began to relate their experiences on the road and how He was recognized by them in the breaking of the bread.

## Other Appearances

<sup>36</sup> While they were telling these things, He Himself stood in their midst and *said* to them, “Peace be to you.” <sup>37</sup> But they were startled and frightened and thought that they were seeing a spirit. <sup>38</sup> And He said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? <sup>39</sup> See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.” <sup>40</sup> And when He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. <sup>41</sup> While they still could not believe it because of their joy and amazement, He said to them, “Have you anything here to eat?” <sup>42</sup> They gave Him a piece of a broiled fish; <sup>43</sup> and He took it and ate it before them.

<sup>44</sup> Now He said to them, “These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” <sup>45</sup> Then **He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,** <sup>46</sup> and He said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, <sup>47</sup> and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. <sup>48</sup> You are witnesses of these things. <sup>49</sup> And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”

Acts 16:14 (New American Standard Bible 1995)

## First Convert in Europe

<sup>14</sup> A woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple fabrics, a worshiper of God, was listening; and **the Lord opened her heart** to respond to the things spoken by Paul.

## Introduction

Christ is risen!  
Christ is risen indeed!

In today’s Scripture, I want you to notice three powerful phrases (Please **Circle** those sentences)

- “Their eyes were opened” (Luke 24:31)
- “He opened their minds” (Luke 24:45)
- “The Lord opened her heart” (Acts 16:14)

These are not minor details. They reveal something essential about our faith:

**We cannot come to faith on our own—God must open us.**

When our eyes are closed, we cannot see Jesus.  
When our minds are closed, we cannot understand Scripture.  
When our hearts are closed, we cannot respond to God and His salvation message.

So today, we pray one simple prayer:

**“Lord, open our eyes, open our minds, and open our hearts.”**

Let us begin.

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### **1. Open Our Eyes to See Jesus (Luke 24:31)**

Have you ever seen Jesus?

Most of us would say no—not physically.  
And yet, I wonder if many of us have seen Him... without realizing it.

That happened to me many years ago.

In my early days of ministry, I was a young and ambitious pastor serving a small rural congregation in Michigan—about seventy members. I had big dreams. I wanted to do something great for God.

One afternoon, I drove about 45 minutes to visit a shut-in member named Bertha. She was a sweet woman. I spent two hours with her—talking, listening, laughing, and praying.

It wasn't easy. She had trouble hearing and didn't wear hearing aids. Several times she said, “Pastor, I'm sorry... what did you say?”

After the visit, I got into my car and began driving home. And as I drove, my thoughts turned inward.

I thought to myself,  
“What am I doing here in the middle of nowhere?  
I should be at a bigger church.  
I could be doing more.  
Am I wasting my life?”

Then suddenly, deep in my heart, I heard a voice:

**“You have seen Me today.”**

I knew it was the Lord.

And immediately, He brought to my mind the words of Jesus in Matthew 25:

*“I was sick, and you visited Me.”*

In that moment, God opened my eyes.

I realized that when I visited Bertha...

I was visiting Jesus.

I was shocked.

I was ashamed.

I repented of my pride and my blindness.

From that day on, my perspective changed.

Now, when I see God’s people, I see Jesus.

When I visit someone in the hospital, I visit Jesus.

When I serve the least, I serve Christ Himself.

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That is exactly what happened on the road to Emmaus.

Two disciples were walking, discouraged and confused after Jesus’ death. A stranger joined them—it was Jesus—but they did not recognize Him.

They walked together.

They talked together.

They listened to Him explain the Scriptures.

And still... they did not see Him.

But then, at the table, when Jesus took the bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to them—

**their eyes were opened.**

And they recognized Him.

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Folks, Jesus is present among us.

He is present in His people.  
He is present in our daily lives.  
He is present even when we do not recognize Him.

But unless the Lord opens our eyes, we will miss Him.

So, we pray:

**“Lord, open our eyes—to see You in our homes, in our church, and in the people around us.”**

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## **2. Open Our Minds to Understand the Scriptures (Luke 24:45)**

Let me ask you a question:

Do you understand the resurrection?

Most Christians would say yes—we believe that Jesus rose from the dead. We believe that one day we will be with Him.

But the question is not just *do we believe it*—  
the question is *do we truly understand it*?

Because understanding Scripture is not automatic.

It does not come simply from years in church.  
It does not come from knowledge alone.

**It comes when the Lord opens our minds.**

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Think about the disciples.

They walked with Jesus for three years.  
They heard His teaching. They also heard Jesus’ teaching on resurrection.  
They saw His miracles.

And yet, when Jesus died, they were confused.  
They were discouraged.  
They did not understand.

Why?

Because their minds had not yet been opened.

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Luke 24:45 says:

**“Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.”**

Only then did everything begin to make sense.

They understood that the Messiah had to suffer.

They understood that He had to rise again.

They understood that this was God’s plan all along.

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The problem is not a lack of information.

The problem is a lack of illumination.

It’s like sitting in a dark room filled with furniture. Everything is there—but you cannot see it until the light is turned on.

In the same way, the truth of God’s Word is there.

But unless God turns on the light, we cannot see it clearly.

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In Jesus’ time, there were religious leaders called the Sadducees.

They knew the Scriptures.

They studied them.

They taught them.

And yet, they denied the resurrection.

Why?

Because their minds were closed.

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Today, many people struggle with the same issue.

They question the resurrection.  
They doubt eternal life.  
They reduce faith to human reasoning.

But at the center of the Christian faith is this truth:

**Jesus Christ is risen.**

And because He lives, we too shall live.

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Faith begins with hearing the Word of God.

But understanding comes only when God opens our minds.

And when that happens—something else follows.

The disciples said:

**“Were not our hearts burning within us while He was speaking to us...?”**

When the mind is opened,  
the heart begins to burn.

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So, we pray:

**“Lord, open our minds—to understand Your Word, to see Your truth, and to grasp the power of the resurrection.”**

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### **3. Open Our Hearts to Respond in Faith (Acts 16:14)**

Let me ask you one more question:

What matters most in any relationship?

It's not money.  
It's not status.  
It's not outward performance.

**It is the heart.**

Love comes from the heart.  
Trust comes from the heart.  
Obedience comes from the heart.

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I remember a friend from my high school days.

We attended the same youth group. One day, he told me he was planning to quit church.

I was surprised. I asked him why.

He said,  
“Church feels too restrictive.  
Too many rules.  
Do this. Don’t do that.  
I just want to be free.”

At the time, I didn’t know how to respond.

But looking back now, I understand.

His relationship with God was not built on love—it was built on obligation.

And when faith becomes only duty, the heart eventually walks away.

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Here is the truth:

**God is not after outward compliance—He is after your heart.**

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We see this clearly in Acts 16.

There is a woman named Lydia. She had never met Paul before. She was simply listening as he preached the gospel.

And the Bible says:

**“The Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul.”**

That’s it.

God opened her heart—  
and she believed.

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Why do some people hear the gospel and respond, while others hear the same message and walk away?

The difference is not intelligence.  
The difference is not background.

**The difference is the heart.**

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Our hearts are like a radio.

They tune into what they love.

If our hearts are tuned to the world, we resonate with the world.  
If our hearts are tuned to God, we respond to His voice.

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Even during a sermon, this happens.

Sometimes our minds wander.  
Sometimes we lose focus.

Why?

Because our hearts are drawn to other things.

But when God opens our hearts—everything changes.

We begin to listen differently.  
We begin to respond in faith.  
We begin to obey out of love.

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So, we pray:

**“Lord, open our hearts—to love You, to receive Your Word, and to obey You with joy.”**

## **Conclusion**

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is not just something we believe—it is something we experience.

The risen Christ is alive.  
He is present.  
He is at work among us.

But unless God opens us, we will miss Him.

Unless He opens our eyes, we will not see Him.  
Unless He opens our minds, we will not understand Him.  
Unless He opens our hearts, we will not receive Him.

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So today, let this be our prayer:

**“Lord, open my eyes—so I may see You.  
Open my mind—so I may understand Your truth.  
Open my heart—so I may respond in faith.”**

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If you already believe in the resurrection,  
praise God.

If you struggle to believe,  
ask Him to open you.

Because when God opens your eyes,  
you will see Christ.

When He opens your mind,  
you will understand His Word.

And when He opens your heart,  
you will experience new life.

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Christ is risen!  
Christ is risen indeed!

Amen.