

Pentecost XXII  
LWML Sunday  
October 12, 2008

*“A Clear Vision of Your Savior”*

Text: Luke 24:25-32

Among his fellow sailors, John Newton was known as “The Great Blasphemer.” He later called himself an “infidel and libertine.” He was captain of a slave ship, transporting fellow human beings from their homes in Africa across the sea in chains to lives of servitude—if they survived the crossing.

Newton was known as a mocker of God and of those who expressed their faith in God. Yet whenever he got into a close scrape and narrowly avoided death—this happened on several occasions—he would try for some time to live a better life. This wasn’t out of any love for God; he was just trying by his own efforts to avoid damnation.

One close call was different, though. Moments after he had left the deck of his ship during a violent storm, the man who had replaced him was washed overboard and drowned. Newton said that it was then that he realized his own hopelessness. He began to read his Bible. In time, he became a different man. He became a believer in Christ. He got married. He became a minister and an active opponent of the slave trade. He wrote these words:

*Amazing grace—how sweet the sound  
That saved a wretch like me!  
I once was lost but now am found,  
Was blind but now I see!*

As a changed man, John Newton’s eyes now clearly saw who Jesus Christ was and all that He had done for him. You can too as you have-

**A CLEAR VISION OF YOUR SAVIOR**

## **I. You see it in the pages of Scripture**

## **II. He is visible in your life**

### **I.**

**A.1.** When I was a student in the seminary, there was a visiting pastor who was teaching a class on Bible class teaching. Our text is a Bible class he would have loved to have been at, I would too. St. Luke paints quite a scene for us. How sad these men were and who could blame them? They really had a clouded vision even though they were believers.

How about our world of today? There are some who are stumbling around in spiritual darkness. Consider the so-called “New Atheists”, including those with best selling books, who have become very vocal and critical of Christianity. Watch “Entertainment Tonight” or “Access Hollywood” and see the messes that people have stars and would be stars have made of their lives.

The necessary direction and vision of their Savior is found in Scripture alone. St. John writes: “But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.” (John 20:31) Scripture gives us a clear picture of our Savior and what it means to be followers of him.

**2.** According to Jesus these men should have paid more attention to the Scriptures. In these writings it is very clear regarding the work of the Messiah and what he was about to accomplish. The suffering and death of Jesus was confusing to these men, yet this is what the Scriptures had promised and what Jesus had said him. People of all time have often run on emotion or traditions and custom instead of the truth revealed in Scripture.

**B.1.** It is generally accepted that there are 300 prophecies regarding Christ in the Old Testament that have been fulfilled by Jesus. Recently in our Parish Hall class we went through about one third of them. On this evening, Jesus told

these two disciples everything in the Old Testament that spoke about him. He covered all the Biblical bases for these discouraged disciples, who I'm sure were never the same again. He had to suffer and die for our salvation and us. That doesn't make sense from a human perspective, but it is God's perfect plan for our salvation.

**2.** What insures your belief in Christ as your Savior? The German theologian, Helmut Thielecke said, "The disciples could never have been persuaded to believe that the dead Jesus had risen from the grave if they had not believed his word. Even the empty grave did not bring the disciples to faith. Only after Jesus opened the Scriptures to them did the scales fall from their eyes and did they realize how many dotted lines in the life of the Savior pointed to and intersected at this point where the Easter event burst upon them..."

## **II.**

**A.1.** Jesus acted as if he were going further, so the disciples invited him in, some suspect that St. Luke was one of the two disciples. He accepted their invitation. As he broke bread with them they realized who it was and he disappeared from their sight.

These disciples truly enjoyed fellowship with their Savior. Christ's visibility is also seen in our lives. We hear his word in worship. We pray to him. We partake of his body and blood in the Lord's Supper. St. Paul reminds us: "God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord." (I Corinthians 1:9)

**2.** After these disciples realized what had really happened they were amazed and thankful. They said to one another: "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?" What Jesus says is important to us. We see him as the central part of our lives.

**B.1.** Because of what he has done for us, we respond to him by following him and seeking him. This is the motivation of the Gospel. It was very important for these disciples that Jesus stay with them. The moment was electric and the joy they felt must have been overwhelming. These disciples could witness that Jesus had risen from the dead. Scripture tells us that they went back and told the rest of the disciples what they had seen and heard and we can too, that is our mission.

**2.** Today we are celebrating LWML Sunday. It is one Sunday when we especially remember the work of this organization that was founded in 1941 in order to “Serve the Lord with Gladness” Ladies from this organization support Gospel outreach in local congregations like Trinity and also to the farthest corners of the world. Our Ladies Aid, Willing Workers and Women With Mission are our part of the LWML. Each year our own Central Illinois District gives thousands in mission projects. These go to such things church worker scholarships and supporting missions and mission stations. I have seen this first hand as your pastor and also as circuit and district counselor. St. Peter said: “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who out of darkness into his marvelous light.” (I Peter 2:9)

On one occasion a pastor was conducting a pre-baptismal interview with a Mexican lady who spoke very little English. She was a refined lady who was well traveled. The pastor spoke through an interpreter and asked her how she came to believe in Jesus. As a stranger to Houston she was given a nicely wrapped present from a lady in the congregation. It was a book, but the best gift was an invitation to dinner in the lady’s. Through the visit she saw a vision of her Savior as it was revealed in the book. You see him too in his word and like those disciples can rejoice! Amen.