

THE KEY THAT UNLOCKS THE WORD  
Luke 24:13-35

Intro: I am always a little hesitant about talking about a key to the Word because it always suggests some mechanical means, a method, of arriving at an understanding of the Word of God. Perhaps it would be more accurate to talk about keys (for there are several), but we must never get the idea that any method will automatically open to us the great truths of the Word of God. Our texts tonight will show that.

The Bible actually has little to say about methods. To be sure there are methods which can be used, but any method is meaningless unless first of all we get into our hearts the truths which we have before us in this chapter.

The one thing we are to do is to read. Cf. in Matthew-- 12:3, 5; 19:4; 21:16, 42; 22:31. Also Eph. 3:4; Col. 4:16. See Rev. 1:3; 1 Tim. 4:13.

But we must also see 2 Cor. 3:14, 15!

Reading includes re-reading, and remembering, and thinking, and comparing, and questioning, and collecting, and many other things. BUT IT IS POSSIBLE TO BE READING THEWORD, AND YET NOT PROFITING FROM OUR READING BECAUSE WE DO NOT HAVE THE TRUTH THE LORD STRESSED WITH HIS DISCIPLES HERE IN LUKE 24.

How are we to arrive at an understanding of the Word of God?

Read v. 27, then vv. 44, 45.

- I. BOTH PASSAGES INDICATE THAT THESE DISCIPLES WERE CONFUSED BECAUSE THEY DID NOT TAKE "ALL" OF THE SCRIPTURES --JUST PARTS.

Heresy is always the result of just taking part of the Word of God--the part which may appeal to us. People can be led into error because they take just one verse. Liberal theologians give us abundant illustrations of this. They emphasize the humanity of Jesus, but ignore what the Bible says about His deity. They talk about the love of God, but ignore what the Bible says about the righteousness of God. They talk about the way a person should live, but they ignore what the Bible says about how to get life--how to be born again.

Never follow any teacher because he uses the Bible. Find out how he uses it, and find out if he uses it ALL.

The mistake which the disciples made was they had taken the Scriptures which spoke of our Lord's glory, but had ignored what the Scriptures said about His suffering. They wanted a Kingdom, but did not want the Cross.

We must take ALL of the Word. Paul said a tremendous thing when he was leaving the Ephesian elders. It is recorded in Acts 20:27,

"For I have not shunned to declare unto you ALL the counsel of God."

- II. IN THE STUDY OF THE SCRIPTURES WE MUST NEVER FORGET THAT, WHILE WE MAY READ AND STUDY, ONLY THE LORD CAN MAKE US UNDERSTAND.

"He expounded," explained, interpreted, unfolded the meaning of what was written!

Or, in v. 45, "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures."

With the disciples, He did it directly. With us, He may still do it directly. Or, He may use some teacher. BUT NO ONE EVER COMES TO UNDERSTAND ANY PART OF THE SCRIPTURE UNLESS THE LORD GIVES HIM THE UNDERSTANDING.

Cf. John 16:12-15.

Notice how Paul prays for the Ephesians in 1:17-19-- "the eyes of your understanding (lit., your heart) being enlightened; that ye may know . . ."

Do you look to the Lord for understanding when you pick up your Bible to read it, or when you come to hear someone teach it?

We can be exposed to a lot of truth, but we only understand that which the Lord teaches us. Therefore, we need to look to Him for wisdom and understanding, and nothing will help to emphasize this in our minds like praying for understanding whenever we come to the Word.

Cf. 1 Cor. 2:9, and then 10. Also, Rom. 11:33-36.

- III. Now we come to the very heart of the matter. We must have ALL of the Bible, and we must recognize that only the Lord can make us understand what we read, BUT WE MUST ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT THE MAIN THEME OF THE BIBLE, FROM GENESIS TO REVELATION, IS CHRIST.

"He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures, the things concerning himself."

See also Luke 24:44.

Cf. John 5:39, 40; 12:37-41; Rom. 1:1-4; 1 Pet. 1:10, 11; Rev. 1:10; John 1:45; Acts 3:24-26; 8:35; 10:43; 13:26-37; 28:23.

How wonderful it would be to go to the OT passages which speak of Christ! To miss this, is to lose the very heart of all that the Word has to say.

Concl: There is nothing that is more important for any of us than that we know the Word of God. Study it from every approach possible. Read it over and over. Get all of the helps that you possibly can. BUT NO CHILD OF GOD WILL EVER GET BEYOND THESE THREE TRUTHS WHICH FORM THE KEY:

- 1) We must take it all.
- 2) We must always look first for what it has to say about our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 3) We must never forget that only the Lord can give us the help we need so that we will be able to understand what has been written.

Remembering these truths, there will be many times when we, too, will be able to say,

"Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us along the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?" (Luke 24:32).