

Psalm 116.1-4, 12-19 [Worship]

1 I love the LORD, because he has heard my voice and my supplications. 2 Because he inclined his ear to me, therefore I will call on him as long as I live. 3 The snares of death encompassed me; the pangs of Sheol laid hold on me; I suffered distress and anguish. 4 Then I called on the name of the LORD: "O LORD, I pray, save my life!"

12 What shall I return to the LORD for all his bounty to me? 13 I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD, 14 I will pay my vows to the LORD in the presence of all his people. 15 Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his faithful ones. 16 O LORD, I am your servant; I am your servant, the child of your serving girl. You have loosed my bonds. 17 I will offer to you a thanksgiving sacrifice and call on the name of the LORD. 18 I will pay my vows to the LORD in the presence of all his people, 19 in the courts of the house of the LORD, in your midst, O Jerusalem. Praise the LORD!

Consider:**[Think & Pray...]**

Luke 24:13-35 contains my favorite gospel story. With his usual storytelling skill, Luke draws us into this narrative of two disillusioned, disappointed disciples who are traveling to Emmaus (we are never told why) and meet a stranger on the way. Eventually they realize this stranger is Jesus. As with so many of Luke's stories, it illustrates something of the Christian journey of faith.

So many of us go through life disillusioned and disappointed, unable to understand what has happened to

us. When we first meet Jesus, we rarely recognize who he is, but slowly, as he travels with us, he explains to us what is going on.

This story can also function as a model for evangelism and pastoral care. Jesus could have hastening his story—bailing them out of their stupor, revealing himself to them and telling what had happened to him; inviting them to believe, but he didn't do this.

It is tempting when we meet people to hurry them, to offer a solution to their problems. Jesus does not do this. He meets people with gentleness and patience, and journeys with them. Luke reminds us to do the same.

[The Scripture]**1 Peter 1.17-23**

17 If you invoke as Father the one who judges all people impartially according to their deeds, live in reverent fear during the time of your exile. 18 You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited

from your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without defect or blemish. 20 He was destined before the foundation of the world, but was revealed at the end of the ages for your sake. 21 Through him you have come to trust in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are set on God. 22 Now that you have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth so that you have genuine mutual love, love one another deeply from the heart. 23 You have been born anew, not of perishable but of imperishable seed, through the living and enduring word of God.