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Journeying Through the Unexpected

“Now that same day, two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem...” Luke 24:13-35

When the unexpected happens, we ask ourselves a series of questions (in no particular order):

- What? After the initial shock, we try to wrap our heads around what occurred.
- How? Our minds scramble to understand the exact process of how it all unfolded.
- Why? We struggle to find meaning in the circumstances.
- Me? We want to know how the situation will affect our individual lives.

Unfortunately, we don't always get nice, tidy answers. We must go on with life carrying the unresolved issues of the unexpected.

On that very first Easter afternoon, two disciples on the road to Emmaus could completely understand that feeling. They were trying to make sense of what they had witnessed – the horribly unexpected crucifixion of Jesus – and they didn't know what to do.

These men were incredibly disheartened. One commentator writes, “it's as if they were walking home from a funeral.” They had devoted their lives to following Jesus, but now He was gone. Apparently, He wasn't the one who “would redeem Israel” (v.21). They, along with other Jesus-followers, were picking up the pieces of dashed hopes and shattered expectations. What were they supposed to do now? They had wholeheartedly followed Jesus and where did it get them?

Right smack dab in the middle of circumstances they never saw coming.

But watch what happens!

In the midst of the men's grief and uncertainty, Jesus shows up.

“As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them” (v. 15).

Facing the unanticipated events of life, we are often quick to conclude that Jesus isn't there. Remember, although He was right there with them, even the disciples didn't recognize Him at first.

Is that happening to you? Following Jesus doesn't shield us from experiencing the unexpected. In fact, He sometimes leads us into it. Perhaps Jesus is journeying with you, but for one reason or another, has yet to reveal Himself.

As we navigate the twists and turns of the unexpected, we have an incredibly limited point of view. This passage reminds us that there is more going on than meets the eye.

Consider the differences in perspective between the disciples and the Divine:

- The disciples thought it was the end of the story. Jesus revealed that was only the beginning.
- The disciples didn't see a plan. Jesus revealed that it was ALL part of God's sovereign plan (v. 26,27).
- The disciples thought they lost their future. Jesus revealed a future beyond their wildest dreams.

Read the entire story in Luke 24:13-35.

Hold fast to your faith and continue to trust Him as you process the unexpected. Just like these men, you will one day comprehend that Jesus was up to something way BIGGER than you “could ever think or imagine” (Ephesians 3:20).

Written by Jonathan Munson, Executive Director, RFTH

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May the 4th Be With You!

We're wrapping up our spring semester of Wednesday night activities with another great community event. Come out to the Shades Pavilion and Rec Field for a fun night for the entire family filled with free food, inflatables, face painting, games and a Jedi Academy! Invite your friends and neighbors to come with you and use this opportunity to introduce them to Shades! The fun starts at 5:30pm on Wednesday, May 4. Come join us for a great night of family fun!

For more info on how to get involved with Men of Shades, visit www.shades.org/men

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