

On the Road to Emmaus

Easter Musical Script

“Did not our hearts burn within us,
while he talked with us by the way,
and while he opened to us the scriptures?”

Luke 24:32

Script by Dave Therit

For Catawba Springs Christian Church

Song List

He is Risen – Shevy (The WILDS)

The Greatest Truth – McCartha (Shawnee Press)

Lord, I was blind; I could not see – Matson/Lynch (The WILDS)

Write Your Truth Upon My Heart - Mock/Nolan (Shawnee Press)

We Walk by Faith – Larson (Lorenz)

A Tree Once Stood – Martin (Shawnee Press)

Come Christians Now This Glorious Morn

– Therit/Lynch (Mac & Beth)

In the Name of the Father – Sorenson (Shawnee Press)

Cast List

Narrator 1, Narrator 2, Cleopas, Friend

On the Road to Emmaus

CHOIR - He is Risen - Lynch

Narrator 1

Good morning, and a glorious and happy Easter to you! Thank you for joining with us this morning as we commemorate the resurrection of our Savior. I hope you have your walking shoes on today because we're going on a journey! We'll be trekking our way along a hilly seven-mile, Judean road from Jerusalem to a village called Emmaus. And the weather couldn't be more agreeable! The sky is as blue as a robin's egg! - a perfect day to get our feet dusty!

In just a few minutes we'll be joining two travelers on the Emmaus road who followed Jesus during his earthly ministry. Precisely when they began to follow him, we're not sure. But we do know that they followed him - to the cross and beyond. This morning we'll hear from them as they tell the story of their encounter with a stranger on this same road on the day of Christ's resurrection.

There are just a few things that I'd like to mention before we start. The first is to encourage you to make this journey personal, which might be part of the reason why Luke, in his gospel account, gave us the name of only one of the two travelers, namely Cleopas. How might that make the story more personal? I'm glad you asked! More than a century ago a German pastor said, "The learned cannot come to any agreement who the other was, and I will give you this good counsel—let each of you take his place." What good advice that pastor gave, for Luke wrote their story for us! And so, let us follow the good pastor's counsel and enter into their story as if we were the unnamed companion, with a heart that yearned for the crucified Christ.

Secondly, I need to give you the setting for our story within Luke's story. Our story picks up fifteen years after Luke's story. In our story, our two friends - for the first time since the resurrection - are once again traveling this same road together. As you might imagine, and as you will see, the memories

of their resurrection-day-journey that Luke recorded for us are flowing freely.

Here they come now! Let's fall in close behind them so we can hear what they're saying. They're completely unaware of our presence, so I don't think they'll mind. In fact, I'm sure they would want us to hear what they're saying.

But before we start, I'm burdened to mention this. If you find that your heart is sometimes dull and doubtful concerning the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ - please do listen carefully to what you hear. Our two friends had hearts that were once that way too, until their hearts were changed - from cold to burning, from slow to believing! - on the road to Emmaus.

Friend

It's so good to be here again, Cleopas. Thanks for inviting me to come and visit you. This brings back so many good memories.

Cleopas

You're welcome, my brother. My wife and I have thought of you often over the years.

Friend

It's hard to believe that 15 years have passed since the day we met the risen Lord on this very road!

Cleopas

A lot has happened since then. The Lord continues to add to his church! And as he promised, the Gates of Hell have not prevailed against it!

Friend

So true. It does seem that when persecution comes the Lord uses it for the good of the church, often opening new frontiers.

Cleopas

And sometimes he turns enemies into brothers as he did with Saul!
Even when he was our enemy God used him for good.

Friend

Indeed. He used him as our pursuer to force me and many others
out of Jerusalem and into the mission field.

Cleopas

And now the Lord Jesus is using Saul - our dear brother Paul - to
pursue souls for his kingdom!

Friend

God is so good, and Sovereign!

Cleopas

He is always good. And always matchless in his Sovereignty. He
pursued our pursuer and won.

Friend

I was glad to see on my visit to Jerusalem that our brethren seem
to have a measure of peace and freedom now.

Cleopas

Yes. Ever since Saul's conversion things have calmed down some.
How long the peace will last is the question. But God is in
control.

Friend

It's a walk of faith my brother! God knew what he was doing when
many like myself had to flee from Jerusalem. Some fled to
Antioch, still others went to Phoenicia and Cypress ...

Cleopas

... Taking the good news with them! It's been a walk of faith,
hasn't it? And it's not over yet. There's more road ahead.

Friend

If the Lord wills, Cleopas - yes, there's more road ahead for us. And speaking of the road ahead. Is it just me or are these hills a bit hillier than they were 15 years ago. I don't remember the road being quite so rugged and so long.

Cleopas

I don't think it's the hills, brother. (smiling, and slight pause) But need I remind you how difficult our walk started out on that first Lord's Day? We trudged along so slowly at first. We were so mournful - so doubtful - not knowing what to believe about the early morning accounts of the empty tomb.

Friend

Yes. That walk was nearly as difficult as witnessing the Crucifixion itself. How our dear Savior suffered. (Shaking head from side to side)

Cleopas

Hmm. Yes (nodding in agreement). But how quickly things changed after Jesus joined us!

Friend

And how we flew back to Jerusalem after we recognized him for who he was - all the way from Emmaus! I felt as if my feet had wings!

Cleopas

Yes! Even though Jerusalem is mostly uphill from Emmaus my feet were as light as feathers! We were so eager to tell the disciples that Jesus was alive - that we saw the risen Lord!

Friend

And they, as well, were eager to tell us that Peter had seen him too! But I'm afraid my feet have lost their wings today. (With a sigh) Two miles behind us, and if I remember right - 5 more miles to Emmaus?

Cleopas

That's right. It's seven miles from Jerusalem to Emmaus. Look! That's where Jesus joined up with us - where the two roads meet, just past that grove of olive trees over there!

Friend

So it is! What a special place! How slow and dull our hearts were then, and how blind our eyes, thinking that he was but a stranger. Let's rest over there in the shade of that big olive tree for a while.

Cleopas

That's a great idea. We have so many memories to share, and what better place to start than here!

Choir - The Greatest Truth - McCartha, Shawnee Press

Narrator 2

“Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him. And He said to them, ‘What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?’ Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, ‘Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?’ And He said to them, ‘What things?’ So they said to Him, ‘The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened. Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us. When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive. And certain of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had

said; but Him they did not see.’ Then He said to them, ‘O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?’ And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.” From Luke’s Gospel, chapter 24.

Friend

When I think back on the resurrection day ... my mind immediately goes back to meeting up with Jesus at this very place... But I suppose it would be more correct to say, his meeting up with us, because he’s the one who drew near to us.

Cleopas

So true. (nodding his head) Tell me, whenever you think of that moment, what's the first thing that comes to mind?

Friend

Well, there are many lasting impressions. But the thing I remember first and foremost was his compassion.

Cleopas

Yes. Without a doubt! The first thing he wanted to talk about - was us! He wanted to hear from us why we were so sad! And he waited and listened as we poured out our hearts to him.

Friend

Jesus was as good a listener as he was a teacher. He then got straight to the heart of the matter by dealing with our hearts first.

Cleopas

And all the while his compassion revealed to us his heart. When he took us back to the beginning of Moses’ writings, all the way back to Adam and Eve in the garden, the first thing I saw, which I had overlooked before, was the heart of God. From the very beginning, he began to seek after that which was lost and broken,

when he drew near and called out saying to Adam, “Where art thou?”

Friend

Before that day, whenever I read that passage, I had only heard the sternness in God’s voice – and there must have been some of that – but underlying it was his compassion. I can still hear the compassion in Jesus’ voice when he rehearsed those words that God spoke in the garden. It’s as if he was calling out ... to us.

Cleopas

I believe he was. God, of course, knew where Adam was. And Jesus knew where we were that day when he drew near to us. It was Adam that needed to understand where he himself was – he was separated from God and at enmity with him. And we needed to understand where we were!

Friend

Jesus certainly knew where we were that sad and mournful afternoon. He knew exactly what we needed for our faith to be restored. And we thought that he might still be in the grave somewhere – when all along he was walking right beside us!

Cleopas

In a sense we really didn’t know where we were. No one can know their lost condition, or as in our case – their hopelessly confused condition, until they understand where they are with respect to God.

Friend

That’s a fitting description of my spiritual condition that day. And Jesus told us as much when he said, “Oh foolish ones and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken ...”

Cleopas

I was dumbfounded when Jesus said that. I thought I knew what the prophets had said.

Friend

We did know in our heads, but we didn't understand. Jesus himself had taught us what was going to happen. He spoke of his suffering. He spoke of his death. He spoke of his resurrection. Yet we didn't understand because we only heard what we wanted to hear!

Cleopas

It wasn't until Jesus showed us how Moses in the book of Genesis spoke of the Messiah as the seed of the woman - who would bruise the head of the serpent and himself be bruised - that the pieces of what would become a beautiful mosaic began to come together for me.

Friend

And oh, how Jesus was bruised! ... I too began to realize that the fulfillment of that pronouncement - made way back in the garden - was about Jesus. Though I still had a long way to go, I was beginning to see that the scriptures were about him.

Choir/Solo - Lord, I was blind; I could not see - Matson/Lynch

Narrator1

"And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself."

When Jesus spoke to them from the Scriptures, he expounded the things written of himself in the Old Testament, for the New Testament was not yet written. The Old Testament writings contained signs and images and prophecies that spoke of the Messiah to come. The writings formed a prophetic mosaic that looked just like Jesus!

Now when Jesus rebuked them for their slowness of heart, he didn't rebuke them for not knowing what the prophets had spoken. Not at all! He rebuked them for not believing in all that the prophets had spoken! The problem was, they didn't believe what they had heard!

And so, what was it that they had heard but did not believe? What caused them to be blind to the truth of the resurrection? It was a blindness that affected not only them, but many of the eleven disciples as well.

Oh my, I see that our break is over. I'll let you think on these things as you continue to listen to our friends who have already begun to move on. We'll chat some more at the next break - if there is a next break! We may not stop again until we reach Emmaus. These fellows have much to talk about and might be in Emmaus before they realize it, in spite of their aging bodies!

Cleopas

I think I might pull my wrap up over my ears. This April sun is beginning to show its strength. I think my ears are beginning to burn.

Friend

You know what the superstitious Romans say about that? - when your ears burn someone is talking about you!

Cleopas

Ha! So they do. How glad I am that we're not superstitious!

Friend

Amen to that, brother! Though I doubt they'd be talking about me.

Cleopas

Oh, of course not! (both chuckle)

Friend

... You know, Cleopas. I can't tell you how many people used to ask me questions like this one: They would say, "Now why do you suppose Jesus didn't just plainly show you who he was from the start?"

Cleopas

People used to ask me that all the time too! And still do. I simply tell them what Jesus told Thomas: "... blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

Friend

Hmm. I'd say that gives them something to chew on. What a fine answer! For the heart is more in need of faith than the eye is of sight. That was certainly true of us.

Cleopas

God had a reason for restraining our eyes on that journey, though I must confess, it was our doubting that provided him the veil that restrained our eyes.... It's about faith. It's not about sight. And so, God's Spirit did a much-needed work in my heart as Jesus opened the scriptures, as I know he did in yours.

Friend

Yes. It was a hard yet wonderful experience. The message of faith came home to me so clearly when he spoke of Isaiah's prophecy of the virgin. God wanted king Ahaz to ask him for a sign - a sign to show that God would protect Judah and the house David from their enemies. But Ahaz had his own plans and didn't want to hear about God's plan, so he refused to ask for a sign. He had no faith in God.

Cleopas

Ahaz lost a great blessing when he refused God. He could have asked for any sign in heaven or on earth and God would have turned his faith into sight; yet his unbelief didn't stop God from saving the house of David through whom the Messiah would one day come.

Friend

God is always faithful to his word. He had promised David an everlasting covenant - the sure mercies of David! And he was going to stand by his promise.

Cleopas

I can just see Isaiah standing before the house of David after Ahaz's faith failed him saying, "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign, Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."

Friend

And what a sign it was! The house of David would stand and in God's timing a maiden who was a virgin would be used by God to bear that son!

Cleopas

If ever a promise was fulfilled to the letter it was God's sign through Isaiah. My wife, Mary, became close friends with Jesus' mother during his ministry. She even stood with her at the cross at his crucifixion. She knew Mary's godly character. It was unmistakably clear to us that she was highly favored by God among women.

Friend

The zeal of the Lord performed what man was incapable of doing. Only God could have brought his Messiah into the world by a virgin. And only he, in his sovereignty, could orchestrate the circumstances for his Son to be bruised by Satan on a cross.

Cleopas

Until Jesus opened our eyes to the truth it was all beyond human comprehension. Isaiah at one place spoke of Messiah as the mighty God. And yet he would later write that the Messiah would be God's suffering servant, who would suffer so horribly for our sin. That was so difficult to understand.

Friend

It truly was beyond our comprehension. Whenever Jesus spoke during his ministry of his coming suffering and death, we all seemed to turn a deaf ear. Even Peter! He was so bold, so sure

that Messiah wouldn't suffer, that he rebuked Jesus for speaking of it!

Cleopas

We all wanted a victorious Messiah-King to free us from Rome's bondage. We had no place for a suffering Messiah. Like king Ahaz, we had our plan, but it wasn't God's plan. We wanted him to save our nation. He wanted to save our souls.

Friend

My how that cuts to the quick to think that we were like Ahaz. Our hearts just weren't attuned to what he was saying. We only heard what we wanted to hear.

Cleopas

(Shaking his head slowly) We had slow hearts ... blind eyes ... deaf ears - it's no wonder our minds were confused as to the whereabouts of Jesus. But consider John! When he and Peter went to the tomb that morning he came away believing at the sight of the empty tomb. He believed it all, even before he had seen the risen Lord.

Friend

You're right. John saw with his heart by faith. And here we were on this very road with our resurrected Lord, and we were too blind to see him with our eyes!

Cleopas

God's wisdom is so much higher than ours. Man's wisdom teaches us that seeing is believing. God's wisdom teaches quite the opposite - that believing the word of the unseen God is seeing!

Friend

When the "stranger" opened the scriptures, it was as if I was listening with a new pair of ears. I was beginning to hear and see things as they really were. It was then that my heart began to burn within me!

Cleopas

Wasn't it odd that in such a short time the stranger became a very dear friend?!

Friend

And what a friend he was! The truth he spoke rekindled the embers of my heart, embers that were almost lifeless and cold.

Cleopas

Hmm. "A smoking flax he will not quench." (With a smile) Yes ... And the sadness began to melt away!

Choir - Write Your Truth Upon My Heart - Mock/Nolan, Shawnee Press

Friend

Tell me, Cleopas. What was the turning point for you? What truth, what passage of scripture did Jesus use that finally convinced you that he was the Messiah?

Cleopas

I've already hinted at it, but before I answer let me first say this. As you know, truth isn't always found when and where we expect it to be. It is sometimes found in the most terrifying of places.

Friend

Hmm. Yes. Truth can be terrifying. God himself is truth. And the scriptures teach that sinful man cannot look on his face and live.

Cleopas

Imagine how terrified Isaiah was when he saw the vision of the glory of God in the Temple. To think that he saw God's holiness and man's sinfulness all in one awful scene - it's quite indescribable. The only thing Isaiah could do when faced with such a scene was to cry out and say, "Woe is me, for I am undone."

Friend

Yes, yes. But please answer my question, brother. I sense that our hearts beat as one as we reminisce and I'm anxious to hear your answer.

Cleopas

The turning point for me was when I saw Jesus as God's suffering servant on the cross. I saw him there being punished by God the Father for man's sin. It was all there in that one awful scene foretold by Isaiah. That's when the truth pierced my soul. And it was terrifying. And yet, for us ... it spoke of peace.

Friend

Yes. "The chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." How it warms my heart to know that God loved us so much that he was willing to make peace with our rebel race, at his own expense.

Narrator 2

"Behold, my servant shall deal wisely, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men. Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from

judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

From the book of Isaiah, Chapters 52 and 53.

Choir - A Tree Once Stood - Martin, Shawnee Press

Cleopas

When Jesus quoted from Isaiah and spoke of him who was “marred more than any man,” my heart knew that Isaiah’s suffering servant was the same as our Jesus on the cross!

Friend

I was one of those straying sheep that Isaiah spoke of. He was bruised for me. I’ll never forget his appearance on the cross. I think I’ll carry that sight with me into eternity.

Cleopas

His suffering was truly beyond comprehension, beyond imagination. I’ll never forget the love that I felt when my heart at last understood why the Lord Jesus had suffered so.

Friend

All the things he had said to us during his ministry finally made sense. He said that he must lay down his life for the sheep... But in our pride and unbelief we had missed it.

Cleopas

How slow of heart we were, and yet how he loved us. And how precious those scriptures are to us now for they pointed us to Jesus - the Messiah of God - not the Messiah of our own making!

Friend

When I look back on our journey, it's as if our friend had set a great feast before us and we were ravenous with hunger. We couldn't get enough of the scriptures. It was manna from heaven. And before we knew it, we were at Emmaus!

Cleopas

Yes. And then, I remember how earnestly we compelled our friend to stay with us. He had been so gracious and patient with us as our doubting gave way to faith. We just couldn't let him go!

Friend

No, we couldn't, and he accepted our invitation! And then our eyes were opened! And we became eyewitnesses of the risen Christ! How blessed we were to have seen!

Cleopas

Yes, my brother, we were. And yet, we know the greater blessing is in the believing and not the seeing... (Motioning to audience) For "blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

Choir - We Walk by Faith - Larson, Lorenz Publications

Narrator 2

"Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and He indicated that He would have gone farther. But they constrained Him, saying, "Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." And He went in to stay with them. Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight. And they said to one another, 'Did not our hearts burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the

Scriptures to us?’ So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together ... And they told about the things that had happened on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread. And as they thus spoke, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and said unto them, Peace be unto you.... And he said unto them, These are the words which I spoke unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, and he said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things.” From the gospel of Luke, Chapter 24

Choir - Come Christians Now This Glorious Morn - Therit/Lynch

Narrator 1

“Peace be unto you” (spoken pensively). Imagine hearing those words coming from the lips of the Lord Jesus on the evening of his resurrection. How full of comfort, and how rich with meaning they must have been to his disciples when he spoke to them. The sacrifice of Christ on the cross had once and for all ended the enmity between God and man: the door through which the peace of God would pass was now swung open wide. Yet without the resurrection the door could not have been opened, not one bit. Had his tomb kept him a prisoner it would have exposed his death as meaningless and vain. There could have been no justification for us in God’s sight, for the resurrection was the ultimate proof that the Father was satisfied with Jesus’ sin offering for us. No resurrection means no justification, and no justification means no peace. But the resurrection was true! And the peace of God drew near!

Regardless of who we are, the Bible tells us that, “if you will confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead, you will be saved.” When presented with the truth of the resurrection, each of us are called on to make a choice. Have you ever considered

what it means for someone to reject the resurrection? It means that they make a mockery of Christ's work on the cross and are therefore still in their sin. It means that there is still a great gulf fixed between them and God and they are still at enmity with him. It's a terrifying scene to look upon. The truth is, God cannot be satisfied with a faith that doesn't accept the resurrection any more than he could have been satisfied with Jesus's work on the cross without the resurrection. My friends: "It's all about the resurrection!"

We have now drawn near to our Emmaus, just as our two friends drew near to their Emmaus many years ago. With burning hearts, they then constrained Jesus to abide with them. Is your heart burning this morning? Will you ask him to abide with you? The Lord Jesus is willing to abide if you are willing to ask. Do not resist him for God's Spirit will not always strive with men. No one is promised another opportunity to take this same journey a second time - this journey with the risen Christ who has drawn near to you today, on the road to your Emmaus.

Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Choir - In the Name of the Father - Sorenson, Shawnee Press