

Luke 24:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?

Analysis

And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad? Jesus initiates conversation with a gentle question. The phrase **What manner of communications** (tines hoi logoi houtoi, τίνες οἱ λόγοι οὗτοι, literally "What words are these") invites them to articulate their thoughts. The verb "have" (antiballete, ἀντιβάλλετε) suggests exchange, back-and-forth discussion—He asks about their animated conversation He'd observed.

The description **as ye walk, and are sad** (peripatountes kai este skythrōpoi, περιπατοῦντες καὶ ἐστὲ σκυθρωποί) captures their emotional state. The adjective skythrōpos (σκυθρωπός) means gloomy, downcast, with sad countenance—their grief was visible in their faces and demeanor. The present tense verbs create vivid immediacy: even as they walk, they are sad.

Jesus' question demonstrates pastoral wisdom. Before teaching, He draws out their pain, lets them voice confusion and disappointment. He doesn't immediately correct but first listens, creating space for them to express their crushed hopes (verses 19-24). This models how Christ meets people—entering their grief, hearing their stories, addressing their actual questions before providing answers. The Great Physician diagnoses before prescribing, ensuring His teaching addresses real wounds, not imagined ones.

Historical Context

This encounter occurred hours after the women's empty tomb report (verses 1-11) but before Jesus' appearance to the eleven that evening (verses 36-49). The disciples' sadness reflected genuine grief—they had witnessed their beloved teacher's brutal execution, their messianic hopes crushed. The brief resurrection reports (verses 22-24) only added confusion, not yet faith.

Jesus' question, "What manner of communications are these?" would seem odd if He were merely human—He'd lived through the events they discussed. But as the unrecognized risen Christ, He used the question pedagogically, to engage them and draw out their understanding before correcting their misunderstanding through Scripture exposition.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. What does Jesus' gentle questioning rather than immediate correction teach about pastoral care and evangelism?
2. How does giving space for others to voice confusion and pain before providing answers model Christ's approach to the hurting?
3. Why is it significant that Jesus observed and addressed their emotional state (sadness) before their theological confusion?

Interlinear Text

εἶπεν	δὲ	πρὸς	αὐτούς	Τίνες	οἱ	λόγοι
he said	And	one to	them	What	G3588	manner of communications
G2036	G1161	G4314	G846	G5101		G3056
οὗτοι	οὓς	ἀντιβάλλετε	πρὸς	ἀλλήλους	περιπατοῦντες	
are these	G3739	that ye have	one to	another	as ye walk	
G3778		G474	G4314	G240	G4043	
καὶ	ἐστὲ	σκυθρωποί				
and	are	sad				
G2532	G2075	G4659				

Additional Cross-References

John 16:6 (Parallel theme): But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart.