

KEEP AN OPEN MIND

Luke 24:44-53

(Not entirely original with me)

Introduction: Keeping an open mind is like a big can with the lid off and anything can be tossed in. An open mind is receptive to everything but no decision has to be made, just seeing, hearing, touching, becoming aware of anything that happens by. The Bible encourages Christians to "be continually transformed by the renewing of one's mind..." What the Bible has to say requires an open mind and not one already made up and closed to anything contrary to what one has established as his/her beliefs.

I. SIMPLY HEARING THE WORD OF GOD IS NOT ENOUGH

1. *"...Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God..."* (Romans 10:17).
2. Not everyone who hears the word of God listens to what the Holy Spirit has to say about it.
 - The world of today has become in a sense "gospel-hardened."
 - Scripture verses printed on posters, on bumper stickers, on business cards.
 - Everyone has been exposed to Scripture in one way or other, therefore they have "heard" some of the word of God.
 - Things become ignored when one is exposed to them long enough and interest in those often seen, heard, etc, things become dull and uninteresting.
 - Countless people have "heard" the word of God but have not responded in a positive way.

II. THE DISCIPLES OF JESUS HAD PROBLEMS IN UNDERSTANDING JESUS

1. During the three years of being with Jesus, the disciples had heard Jesus teach and preach countless times. They had witnessed Him performing miracles.
2. Jesus had been crucified and resurrected and the disciples still didn't understand what Jesus had done.
 - Remember when the disciples were told that Jesus was resurrected and they doubted. Remember Thomas? "Unless I stick my hand in His side where He was pierced, I'm not going to believe..."
 - The disciples had a hard time grasping what had happened and still lacked faith.
3. People cannot be pushed, or talked into listening to the Holy Spirit.

III. ONLY THE LORD CAN ENABLE ONE TO LISTEN WITH AN OPEN MIND

1. Upon His resurrection, Jesus finally got across to His disciples what had happened.
 - Jesus quoted scripture that referred to Him in prophecies.
 - They had heard Jesus quote scriptures before, but this time was different, they understood.
2. Were the disciples now ready to actually listen to what Jesus said?
 - They had heard this time and understood.
 - Their minds were finally opened and what Jesus said was no longer a mystery.
 - The difference was in the attitude of the disciples, it had changed for they had changed.

IV. CHRISTIANS HAVE BEEN ENTRUSTED TO LIVE AND SHARE SOMETHING VERY SPECIAL

1. Many Christians have the wrong idea about witnessing for Jesus.
 - Witnessing is more than just saying things, even though those things are spiritual truths.
 - Jesus witnessed, taught and preached for three years and yet not everyone understood Him.
 - No two people are the same and therefore each person must be treated in different ways.
2. To witness for Jesus involves the whole life of the Christian.
 - The Christian must be empowered by the Holy Spirit to live like Jesus and then to share the Gospel with others.
 - The Christian must have an open mind to the Holy Spirit as he/she is led to do what the Lord wants in the manner the Lord wants it to be done.

CONCLUSION:

1. To understand the Scriptures, one must have an open mind.
2. To witness for the Lord Jesus, one must have an open mind.
3. To live as the Lord wants, one must have an open mind.
4. An open mind to the truth of the Gospel is a gift that comes ONLY through an encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ.
5. The Holy Spirit is the guide to becoming a Christian and then living the life Jesus wants one to live.
6. Are YOU open minded? Or is your mind already made up?