

# Jonestown Bible Church

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## **And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” 2 Corinthians 12:9**

March 24, 2023

My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As we approach Passion Week, we will be remembering our Lord's sacrifice on the cross for our sins and celebrate His rising from the dead the third day. Sorrow followed by joy.

Perhaps you are feeling discouraged and bewildered by the events in your life, wondering what the Lord is doing. You suddenly find yourself struggling to process things like the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, who were disheartened and sad by the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus, who they believed was the Messiah who would usher in His kingdom. It was then that Jesus met them and walked with them, understanding everything that was in their hearts. We read in Luke, 24:13-27, *Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; but they were kept from recognizing him. He asked them, "What are you discussing together as you walk along?" They stood still, their faces downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, "Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?" "What things?" he asked. "About Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see Jesus." He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.*

These two men had their hopes shattered because Jesus had just been crucified, and then His body was missing from the tomb. Perhaps things that you had hoped for and dreamed would happen, came crashing down. Perhaps you were planning retirement and suddenly the doctor tells you that you have a terminal illness. Perhaps you had hopes for a child of yours, and suddenly they are taken from you.

Perhaps you never imagined you would have to live alone with really no one to care for you, and it seems all have deserted you. These two men on the road needed to be reminded of the promises in God's Word. What God's plan was for the Messiah involved suffering first, before the kingdom. Jesus appeared to them and began to remind them of these things, which are prophesied in the Scriptures about Himself. In verse 27 we read, *"And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself."* When they then had invited Jesus home with them, Jesus revealed himself to them as the risen Christ.

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The Lord Jesus had to encourage the rest of the disciples in the same way as He met with them on the beach before his ascension in Luke 24:44-45, *Then He said to them, "these are the words which I spoke to you, while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses and the prophets and the Psalms concerning Me. And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures."*

On one occasion Michelangelo, the great artist, turned on his fellow artists in a spirit of indignation. He said: "Why do you keep filling gallery after gallery with endless pictures on the one theme of Christ in weakness, Christ on the Cross, and most of all, Christ hanging dead? Why do you concentrate on the passing episode as if it were the last work, as if the curtain dropped on Him with disaster and defeat? That dreadful scene lasted...a few hours. But to the unending eternity, Christ is alive; the stone has been rolled away and He rules and reigns and triumphs!"

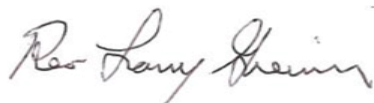
The Lord desires to encourage our hearts in our pain and despair by leading us to His Word and finding comfort and hope in the Scriptures concerning God's ultimate eternal plan for our lives. In this life, we will experience suffering, but this is to be expected. As we approach Good Friday and Easter, and remember the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, let us hold fast to the promise that He will never leave us, nor forsake us, and promises to give us His grace to bear up under the burdens until He comes back again to take us home.

We must trust the Word of God, in spite of what our eyes tell us and when our expectations fail.

May the Lord open our spiritual eyes to see Him as our risen Savior who has all things under control in our lives. We can then experience joy as these two men from Emmaus did when they realized that they were eating with the Lord Jesus Christ who had risen from the dead. They returned to Jerusalem, and found the other disciples who were gathered together with great joy rejoicing, that the Lord is risen, indeed!

Remember that, as you put your faith and hope, in the truth of God's Word, you will experience His supernatural grace that will sustain you through the trials. "He is risen, He is risen, indeed!" As our Savior said to the apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:9, *And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness."*

In Our Savior's Love,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Pastor Larry".

Pastor Larry