

Familiar Snapshots

[Luke 24:13-35](#)

A few years ago—just shortly before I came here to Campbell—I met a woman named Lisa Wood. Lisa is the inventor—she actually holds the patents on—some of the technology that allows us to share photos and video digitally—that is, on your phone or your computer. She’s one of those rare female entrepreneurs in technology.

When Lisa was first trying to get her company funded, some years ago, she met with a lot of venture capitalists. She told me about one meeting in particular where the guy with the money looked at her and said, “Are you kidding? Are you telling me you think people will send pictures of their babies around on their cell phones? That’s never going to happen.”

Sometimes even venture capitalists make bad decisions.

Because of course we do send *and keep* photos of babies, and children, pets, our dinner, and just about everything else, on our phones. Phones have become our photo albums. They’re always available: in our pockets, right at our fingertips. We take them out to show other people who we love. A moment we didn’t want to forget. The scenes that have made an impression on us.

But whether we carry those memories on our phone or in our wallets or just in our heads, we all have, in some form, a set of *snapshots* we carry around with us to remind us of who our people are, what we used to look like, moments we want to remember.

Sometimes the snapshot is not a picture but a voice. You know that moment when you hear a familiar voice and you know immediately the face and the relationship that go with it?

Some years ago Hallmark, which is a really smart company, figured out that if it stayed exclusively in the business of making greeting cards, it was going to go the way of Kodak—fail—because fewer and fewer people mail greeting cards these days. So they expanded the way they think about the mission of their company. Hallmark now talks about its business as helping people make and keep *emotional connections*. Now they make and sell not only cards, but things like audio storybooks. You can record a story in your own voice, so that your children or grandchildren can keep forever the voice of someone they love and want to remember. An *audio* snapshot.

The story we read this morning from the Gospel of Luke is about two people who knew Jesus. Like others we talk about around Easter—the women who went to the tomb, Thomas, the other disciples—Jesus appeared to these two after they thought he was gone, on the very weekend of his death. He just showed up while they were walking from Jerusalem to a town called Emmaus, toward home, away from the city where Jesus had been executed. They were talking about their memories of moments they’d spent with Jesus. That time he healed a blind person, what he’d said to the woman they’d wanted to stone. The moments that had given them hope.

Whatever their mental snapshots of Jesus looked like, this stranger who came alongside of them didn't match for some reason. They saw him, but they didn't recognize his face. Maybe their heads were down—so lost in their sorrow about the death of their friend that they didn't even look up enough to see the face of this man who had joined them on the road. He talked, but they didn't recognize his voice. They listened to him explain the parts of their religion that had predicted what would happen to the Messiah—maybe a little like a sermon. But his religion wasn't exactly what they'd heard before, so they didn't connect the dots.

It wasn't until they sat down to have dinner together, Luke says, that it happened. The stranger took the bread, blessed it, broke it and gave it to them. At that moment, suddenly they realized who this was. They recognized him. And then, suddenly, he was gone. Elusive, as Jesus always was—always is.

The snapshot they carried—the one that finally made them see who this stranger was—wasn't a voice or a face; it was a set of motions. That combination of movements they'd seen him do so many times before: take the bread, give thanks, break it, give it away. Suddenly they knew exactly who this was, this man who'd been walking alongside of them for hours already.

They'd seen him do those same motions on a hill, when there were five thousand hungry people waiting to see if there was enough food for them. They'd watched him do it in the homes of tax collectors and at meals with poor people and sick people nobody wanted to see. He'd done it just a few nights before, when they gathered around a holiday meal, just before the soldiers came to arrest him.

They knew those movements. They were unmistakable. Unconsciously, they'd stored those movements of his hands in their memories. Those motions were the photo Jesus had told them to carry. "Every time you do this, remember me," he had said to them.

They recognized him in the breaking of the bread.

On these *Worship At Work* Sundays when we worship with our hands, we're re-creating the snapshot that Jesus left behind. We're assuming the posture that Christians have taken over and over again in the two thousand years since Jesus was here. We are making the same motions. Moving our hands and our hearts to pick up what we have—food, love, even hygiene products—blessing them, giving them away. So that they can be shared. So that everyone will have what they need. *This is how I want you to remember me*, Jesus said. *This is how the world will know you are my disciples.*

Yes. That's who we are.