

# Would You Recognize Jesus?

One fact about the resurrection of Jesus has always fascinated me. Even as a kid, when adults would tell about His resurrection, I would always be taken back by one detail:

## **His disciples didn't recognize Him.**

- Mary Magdalene was in the garden area where Jesus' tomb was, and she mistook Jesus for a gardener. Even when He spoke to her, she initially didn't recognize Him. —John 20:11-18.
- Two of Jesus' disciples walked all the way to Emmaus with Jesus without recognizing Him—even after an extensive conversation with Him. —Luke 24:13-31
- When some of the disciples took a fishing trip, they initially did not recognize Jesus standing on the shore. —John 21:1-4.

Even as a kid, I wanted to shout, "WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU PEOPLE? THIS IS JESUS—THE ONE YOU'VE BEEN WITH DAY AND NIGHT FOR THREE YEARS!"

I'm older now and I get it now. They didn't see Jesus because they weren't looking for Him. In spite of all Jesus had said to prepare them, they weren't expecting Jesus to be alive. So, they weren't expecting to see Him.

One Sunday, a couple visited our church. After the service, I had a brief conversation with the man while the woman stood silently beside him. It was later on my drive home that I thought, "Wait a minute. She looked familiar." Further down the road, it dawned on me. "Holy cow! She works where I work!"



I attend a church well over an hour from the Lifeway headquarters. She was not in the context I'm used to seeing her, and I simply drew a blank. I wasn't expecting to see her—so unfortunately, I didn't.

I've done this in other ways. I park, go into the grocery store for ten minutes, and when I come out, I can't find my vehicle. It takes me a moment to remember. I was looking for my red truck, and not my wife's blue SUV which was right in front of me.

We often don't see what's right in front of us because we're not looking for it. That's the case with me and my wife's car. And it was the case with a group of surprised disciples.

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I no longer shake my head at the disciples' failure to recognize Jesus. Even today God is often at work around me, and I miss it because I'm not looking for Him. I'm too focused on the task in front of me, and I miss the subtle way He is at work.

Take a moment, look up from your screen, and note the places you see the color blue. For me, blue is in the spine of several books on the shelf next to me. It's in the shirt I am wearing. Three lights on my computer are lit blue.



The color blue was there all along. We don't notice it until we're looking for it.

Do the same as you go through the day, but don't look for blue. Look for God. Look for His hand at work. It may be in an encouraging word someone offers. It may be in a piece of mail. It may be in the beauty of the sunset. But God is with you, and He is at work in your life—whether you see it or not.

"Jesus responded to them, 'My Father is still working, and I am working also'" (John 5:17).