

## **Burning Hearts - The Resurrection of Hope**

### **Luke 24:13-35**

Perhaps you have gone through times in your life when all hope seemed lost, and your heart was growing cold. You try to regroup, to find hope again...if that is possible.

This is where Cleopas and his friend find themselves. With the death of Jesus, their hopes and dreams of Jesus delivering them from Roman tyranny was gone, and now rumors of His resurrection. It's too much to contemplate. Life has no hope.

True to who He is, however, Jesus will come and restore hope to these faltering disciples of His, whether on the road to Emmaus or on the road you are traveling.

V 14 – Cleopas and his friend are conversing about what just happened in Jerusalem. They are confused and perplexed; they are seeking answers. People believe that if they discuss their problems, the answer will come. It doesn't work that way.

Vs. 15-16 – Jesus joins them from out of nowhere, and the Holy Spirit prevented them from recognizing Him. Christ resurrected body was the same body as before, but there was enough change that people did not recognize Him. Add to this, many of these people were depressed, sad, confused, or so lost in themselves that they were not perceiving everything happening around them. Nor were they looking for a resurrected Jesus, despite all the times he told them that his death and resurrection would happen. They did not believe, for they heard what they wanted to hear, or refused to hear.

Vs. 17-19 - Jesus asked them what they were discussing as they walked along. They stood still and looked downcast. Hope, for them, was gone. This look is followed by Cleopas' mild rebuke - "Where have you been? Are you that ignorant of what has been happening around you?" "Try me," said Jesus.

Vs. 19-24 - Cleopas tells the stranger (Jesus) who Jesus was, what had happened to Him, and how they (disciples) saw him. Notice what Cleopas says.

—First, "Jesus was a prophet, mighty in word and deed before God and all people." Cleopas did not say that Jesus was the Son of God who had come to deliver His people from their sins.

—Second, "the chief priests and our rulers handed Jesus over to be put to death and they crucified him." True, but noticed what he said next; "but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel."

--Third, "it is now the third day since all this took place." On the surface he speaks truth, but what does he mean? Does he mean what the Jews all believed that after three days the spirit leaves the body, thereby being no chance of life to return; or were they remembering Jesus words about his resurrection and finding it hard to believe that the possibility even existed? This could be the case based on what he says next.

--(Paraphrased) Some of our women amazed us with talk of going to his tomb and seeing visions of angels who told them that Jesus was alive. "Amazed" - you women are crazy; "visions" - you were seeing and hearing things that you wanted to see and hear. Disbelief, confusion, perplexity, self-pity, et. are present in his words.

--Lastly, He says, "Then some of our companions went to the tomb, and found it just as the women said, but him they did not see." In other words, "the women were only half crazy. We are not sure what to think."

Vs. 25-26 – Cleopas and his friend must have been embarrassed when the stranger, Jesus, chastises them, "How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?"

--"Foolish" this stranger is literally blaming them for their lack of understanding. They have relied on their own interpretation of Christ's words and the events surrounding them. They have been indifferent to what Jesus was trying to tell them. How foolish not to believe the word of God who is dwelling with them.

--"slow of heart" - sluggish towards God's word and sluggish to know and believe the whole council of God's word. He is telling them that they cannot pick and choose what they want to hear and believe, nor can they interpret scripture to fit their biased outlook on life and faith.

V 27 - To combat this lack of hope, this blindness, this cold heart of theirs, Jesus gives them the greatest sermon ever preached on the Old Testament. The word of God delivered by the Word of God made an impact.

Vs. 28-29 – After reaching Emmaus, these two gentlemen "urged strongly" the stranger to stay for the evening for two reasons:

--First, it was getting dark; the end of the day; Jewish custom was to show hospitality to travelers and others who needed a place to stay for the night and to provide food for the evening. To keep traveling at night posed great danger for man and beast.

--Second, the stranger's words moved the men; they wanted to hear more. Luke says they "strongly urged" the stranger to stay - their begging was forceful.

Jesus initially was not going to stop for the evening - only when he was invited in, urged to stay, did he do this. Learn a lesson here, children of God - your savior is waiting for you to meet him. We are not talking about salvation, but about a daily relationship with him.

Bottom line: The Word of God was having its way with them.

V 30 - Instead of these two men being the hosts, being in control of the meal, Jesus reverses the roles; He takes command of the situation. These men needed to see that Jesus must be in command of their lives: their thinking and faith. He takes the bread, gives thanks for it, breaks it, and began to give it to them to eat. What happened here?

--First, Jesus drove home his teaching: Word and symbol went together.

--Second, these men needed to see that he was the Son of God who defeated sin, Satan, and death through his death and resurrection. They needed to see that spiritual life was more important than physical life. Sin, Satan, and death can destroy life for eternity. We too need to know this.

--Third, Jesus is their companion; He is our companion. If we are not experiencing the risen Christ as our companion, we have no one to blame but ourselves and our own foolish heart and sluggishness toward spiritual things. The Lord Jesus is our faithful companion on the road of our daily lives, and He wants to come alongside to turn our sadness into joy and peace and give us mission and purpose. He wants to restore our hope.

V 31 - Their eyes were opened, and they recognized that the stranger was Jesus. The Word and Spirit opened their eyes. They had just spent an entire afternoon with the risen Savior!

Then, he was gone! He had accomplished his work. He had planned this all along. He planned to restore confidence and hope in these two; he also transformed their thinking.

V 32 - Realizing what had happened, they asked each other "Were our hearts not burning in us while he talked to us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?" They felt their spirits being lifted out of their despair, depression, confusion, frustration, et. He came to them in their greatest need - when hope seemed to be lost. He came to them, even when it was their responsibility to come to him. He showed them that He is their companion on the way. They now realize that the burning desire of their heart is Him and his companionship.

People, Jesus is your companion on the road of life. We need to capture the significance of the Savior who is there, who is present with us every second of our lives. He is the Lord of your journey. Jesus is speaking to you. He desires to speak with you. He desires to give you purpose, mission, and hope. He desires that your heart burns for Him and the life of hope He gives and wants to give.

They were restored to their Savior; they desired to associate with the other believers, they desired to give testimony to the risen Jesus, and they wanted to explain what happened to them and what the word of God meant. They were transformed by the risen Christ.