

2022 Resurrection Sunday Service

"Burning Hearts"

Luke 24:13-15

A message by Pastor Phil Ballmaier

(4/15/2022)

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A few years ago (actually 25 years ago to be precise), our family vacationed in West Virginia at historic Williamsburg. While we were there, we got a chance to take a tour through an old colonial church. (Finish)

The only fire we bring into this place for God is that which comes from the hearth of our own hearts and from the privacy of our own homes. And the only fire that will be there is the fire we kindle daily through our communion with Him.

God wants us to have burning hearts, but too often our hearts are lukewarm or even cold.

Paul admonished Timothy to *"stir up the gift of God"* (2 Timothy 1:6).

The Amplified Bible translates it:

2 Timothy 1:6 (AMP)

⁶That is why I would remind you to stir up (rekindle the embers of, fan the flame of, and keep burning) the [gracious] gift of God, [the inner fire] that is in you...

The greatest need in the church today is men and women with burning hearts.

We have a lot of good programs that have put into practice sound biblical principles—but what we lack is spiritual passion. For many Christians today their enthusiasm for the things of God has waned and their fire has all but gone out.

This brings us to our text this morning:

Luke 24:1-6, 13-18 (NKJV)

¹ Now on the first *day* of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain *other women* with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. ² But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb.

³ Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴ And it happened, as they were greatly perplexed about this, that behold, two men stood by them in shining garments. ⁵ Then, as they were afraid and bowed *their* faces to the earth, they said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? ⁶ He is not here, but is risen! [as He said!]...

¹³ **Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem.** ¹⁴ **And they talked together of all these things which had happened.** ¹⁵ **So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them.** ¹⁶ **But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him.** ¹⁷ **And He said to them, "What kind of conversation *is* this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?"** ¹⁸ **Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, "Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?"**

So here we see two disciples of Jesus that found themselves in a similar place—their hearts were sad, and their passion had not only cooled—it was all but gone!

First of all, before we try to determine what the problem was that was causing them to lose their spiritual passion—let’s look at what they *hadn’t* lost.

Or in other words, *what they still had* in their relationship with Jesus.

I. What These Two Disciples Still Had

Luke 24:18-19 (NKJV)

¹⁸ Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, "Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?" ¹⁹ **And He said to them, "What things?" So they said to Him, "The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people..."**

A. They still had a love for Jesus—verse 19

Even though their hearts were broken, and their dreams were shattered—they still spoke of Jesus with fondness—there really wasn’t any bitterness in the way they spoke of Him.

There are a lot of Christians who, when things don’t go their way, or their dreams are shattered in some way they become bitter against God—even angry, but to their credit not these disciples.

B. They still believed in Him—verse 19

Maybe, not to the degree they had just a few days earlier—I mean they no longer believed He was the Messiah of Israel.

But they still referred to Him as **“a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people”**—so their faith, although damaged, was not completely destroyed.

II. What These Two Disciples Had Lost

A. They lost hold of the promises that Jesus had given to them

They had forgotten the things He had told them and the promises He had made to them.

- 1. Three times He had told them that He was going to be crucified—but that He would rise again on the third day.**
- 2. He likened Himself to Jonah... “As Jonah spent 3 days and 3 nights in the belly of great fish, even so the Son of Man will spend 3 days and 3 nights in the heart of the earth.” (Matthew 12:40)**
- 3. He had said to them if the temple of His body would be destroyed—in 3 days, He would raise it up again.**

But it seemed they hadn’t taken those promises to heart (or maybe even ignored them altogether) because they didn’t fit into their preconceived ideas of what Messiah would do when He finally came—not to die but to establish the Kingdom!

It was a classic case of picking and choosing what we want to hear from God's Word while rejecting the rest.

But even when Christians do believe the promises of God, they often loose heart and forget what God has promised when things don't go the way they had expected and wanted—and on their timetable.

They immediately forget all the promises He has given to them (like these 2 disciple that day)—and in the process become totally discouraged, defeated and even depressed—forgetting:

Ecclesiastes 3:1 (NKJV)

¹ To everything *there is* a season, A time for every purpose under heaven:

Galatians 4:4 (NKJV)

⁴ But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law,

Galatians 6:9 (NKJV)

⁹ And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.

A. They lost hold of the promises that Jesus had given to them

B. They lost hope—verses 20-21

Luke 24:20-21 (NKJV)

²⁰ and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. ²¹ But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel...

How black things can look when we lose hope that God is going to come through—*“He had His chance—now it's too late.”*

Proverbs 13:12 (NKJV)

¹² Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but *when* the desire comes [when a hope is realized], *it is* a tree of life.

Or in other words, when we're deprived of hope we become emotionally sick and that will lead to depression and in some cases suicide.

Webster's dictionary defines **hope** this way—*“To desire with expectation of obtainment.”*

**Humanly speaking just because we hope for something doesn't mean it's guaranteed—
unless it's hope rooted in a promise of God.**

In the Bible God has given His children many promises—all of which are designed to give us hope.

Peter called these *“exceedingly great and precious promises.”* (2 Peter 1:4)

Many of these deal with everyday life, where God has promised to provide everything we need to live physically from day to day.

Matthew 6:31-33 (NLT)

³¹ “So don't worry about these things, saying, ‘What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?’

³² These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. ³³ Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.

Philippians 4:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹ And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

God, who created us, knows how important hope is for living our lives here on earth—and how prone we are to lose it when things get tough.

That's why, in His Word, He constantly tries to encourage us not to lose hope in Him and in His promises to us—

Jeremiah 29:11 (NLT)

¹¹ For I know the plans I have for you," says the LORD. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.

Romans 15:13 (NKJV)

¹³ Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

God wants His people to have hope because He knows it is an essential ingredient for life—He knows that when hope is gone life becomes unbearable and even impossible.

A. They lost hold of the promises that Jesus had given to them

B. They lost hope—verses 20-21

C. They lost sight of Jesus because of the circumstance—verses 15-16

Luke 24:15-16 (NKJV)

¹⁵ So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. ¹⁶ But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him.

Once we begin to lose our faith our spiritual vision grows dim—and we get very '*near-sighted*.' In other words, we see only the size of our problem and not the size of our God.

We can get so focused on the circumstance that we no longer see things through the eyes of faith but only through the eyes of flesh—and like Peter walking on the Sea of Galilee who got his eyes off of Jesus and on to his circumstance and began to sink—and so do we!

D. They lost their joy—verse 17

Luke 24:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ And He said to them, "What kind of conversation *is* this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?"

Even though the Lord was standing right next to these 2 disciples (as He is with us)—they couldn't see Him—their eyes were blinded by sorrow and loss and shattered dreams.

It reminds me of Mary Magdalen outside the empty tomb weeping—here the risen Christ was standing there trying to encourage her, her eyes were blinded by sorrow and loss and shattered dreams—just like us at times.

E. They lost their fire

Their spiritual enthusiasm and passion was gone.

Jesus put it this way to the church of Ephesus in Revelation chapter 2—*“You have left your first love. You’re still going through the motions, but you’ve lost the emotion in your relationship with Me.”*

All of this is a picture of many in the church today.

Many people have suffered bitter losses or disappointments—and so like the disciples on the road to Emmaus:

- *They still have a love for Jesus—although they speak of their relationship with Him often in the past tense (nothing much happening with the Lord in their life today).*
- *They still believe in Him—somewhat, their faith is severely damaged but not totally destroyed.*
- *They’ve lost hold of the promises that God has given to them in His Word.*
- *They’ve lost hope that God is ever going to work and that things are ever going to change.*
- *Their spiritual vision has grown dim, they can’t see the Lord is with them and still working in their lives.*
- *They’ve lost their joy.*
- *They’ve lost their passion for God.*

III. How Did Jesus Deal with Them?

A. He comes to them—verse 15

Luke 24:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵ So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them.

It seems that Jesus spent most of the afternoon with them, talking to them and teaching them—even though neither of them were of any great importance. In other words, they weren’t apostles just ‘ordinary’ disciples. Yet we must understand that—Jesus is no respecter of persons; He has no ordinary disciples—we’re all special to Him.

He cares about you and what you’re going through. (1 Peter 5:7)

He knows if you are having a crisis of faith right now and I believe He’ll come to you in some way, shape, or form to encourage you. Maybe He’ll come to you thru a circumstance (like He did with Peter in the storm he was going thru)—or maybe thru a verse or passage in His Word during your morning devotions—or thru someone you may or may not know that He comes to you thru to encourage you and help you gain perspective again.

It’ll really be Jesus coming to you but if you’re not careful you may miss Him! (Mark 6:48)

B. He reproves them for not understanding all that God had said in His Word—verses 25-26

Luke 24:25-26 (NKJV)

²⁵ Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?"

➤ *What was their basic problem?* They did not believe *all* that the prophets had written about the Messiah.

That was the problem with most of the Jews in that day—they saw Messiah as a *conquering Savior*, but they did not see Him as a *suffering Servant*. (Isaiah 53:3)

As they read their Scriptures (our Old Testament)—they only focused on the Scriptures that dealt with the glory but not the suffering of the Messiah.

(Explain—"Messiah ben Joseph" and "Messiah ben David")

This is the problem with too many Christians today—they want blessings but not adversity—they reject the cross but still want the crown—forgetting that crucifixion Friday proceeds resurrection Sunday! Therefore, they tend to only read those portions of Scripture that appeal to them and ignore the rest—as if the Bible was like the salad bar at Sizzlers!

Paul reminded us in Philippians 1:29:

"For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake."

C. He teaches them from the Word of God—verse 27

Luke 24:27 (NKJV)

²⁷ And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

Paul the apostle admonished the Ephesian pastors in Acts 20:27—to teach their people *"the whole counsel of God"*—which is why we teach verse by verse. (Comment)

Jeremiah 23:28-29 (NKJV)

²⁸ "The prophet who has a dream, let him tell a dream; And he who has My word, let him speak My word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat?" says the Lord. ²⁹ "Is not My word like a fire?" says the Lord, "And like a hammer *that* breaks the rock in pieces?"

➤ *"But I'm always studying the Word, and my heart still feels cold."*

➤ Yes, maybe that's true—but do you study it to learn about Jesus? In other words, do you want to understand and draw close to Jesus through your study of the Word—or do you study to increase your head knowledge but not your love of Jesus?

D. "He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself". (verse 27)

Notice something else; the fire was not rekindled while they talked *about* Him with each other on the road—the fire was only kindled when they began spending time *with* Him and talking *to* Him and He to them. We can only really know Him by *communing* with Him.

Luke 24:35 (NKJV)

³⁵ And they told about the things *that had happened* on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread [fellowship/communion].

IV. What Was the Results in These Disciples Lives?

A. Their hearts were rekindled for God—verse 32

Luke 24:32 (NKJV)

³² And they said to one another, "*Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?*"

B. They had a burning passion to tell others about the risen Lord Jesus—verses 33-34

Luke 24:33-34 (NKJV)

³³ So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those *who were with them gathered together*, ³⁴ saying, "The Lord is risen indeed...

Conclusion

Richard C. Halverson was the United States Senate Chaplain from February 2, 1981, until his retirement on December 31, 1994—before that he pastored the Fourth Presbyterian Church in Bethesda, Maryland for 23 years.

I am told, he was a wonderful man of God with a heart as big as his physical stature.

I read a short, condensed version of his biography in the book, "*They Found the Secret.*"

"During a time, as a young man, when the Holy Spirit was working on him to surrender his life completely to God, one night while at a Bible Conference in San Bernardino, CA. he couldn't sleep and felt compelled by the Spirit to write out, what later came to be known, as the four commitments of The Fellowship of the Burning Heart.

He said, "*Having come to a personal belief in the Lord Jesus Christ and realizing that the urgency of the hour in which we live demands the highest type of Christian discipleship...*I am therefore committed to the following principles:

1. I AM COMMITTED TO THE PRINCIPLE that Christian Discipleship is sustained solely by God alone through His Spirit; that the abiding life of John 15 is His way of sustaining me. **Therefore** I pledge myself to a disciplined devotional life in which I promise through prayer, Bible study, and devotional reading, to give God not less than one hour per day. (Psalm 1.)

2. I AM COMMITTED TO THE PRINCIPLE that Christian Discipleship begins with Christian character. **Therefore** I pledge myself to holy living, that by a life of self-denial and self-discipline, I may emulate those Christ-like qualities of chastity and virtue which will magnify the Lord. (Philippians 1:20, 21.)

3. I AM COMMITTED TO THE PRINCIPLE that Christian Discipleship exercises itself principally in the winning of the lost to Jesus Christ.

Therefore I pledge myself to seek every possible opportunity to witness in order that I may always be engaged in winning someone to Jesus Christ. (Matthew 28:19; Acts 1:8.)

4. I AM COMMITTED TO THE PRINCIPLE that Christian Discipleship demands nothing less than absolute consecration to Jesus Christ.

Therefore I present my body a living sacrifice, utterly abandoned to God. By this commitment, I desire that God's perfect will shall find complete expression in my life; and I offer myself in all sobriety to be expendable for Jesus Christ. (Romans 12:1, 2; Philippians 3:7-14.)

Understand, to start a fire and to keep it going you need three things: 1. *A spark*; 2. *Something flammable*; 3. *Oxygen*

1. The **spark** comes from the Holy Spirit through **prayer** and **faith**.
2. The **something flammable** is a **willing heart**—a heart devoted to God (not watered down with the cares of this life).
3. The **oxygen** is your **commitment to God** everyday as outlined in the above principles.

Once God lights a fire in our hearts we must continue to stoke and feed it every day—this is the secret of 'burning hearts' for God!

Remember, the resurrection was never intended by God to be one day on a calendar—He intended it to be a dynamic everyday way of life! It starts by believing in Jesus and receiving Him into your heart by faith—which is how the fire is lit in the first place. But it is then tended to every day through the principles listed above in the Fellowship of the Burning Heart.

If you would like to know more about what it means to be a Jesus-follower—please reach out to us. It would be our greatest privilege to lead you into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

Reach out to us [here](#).

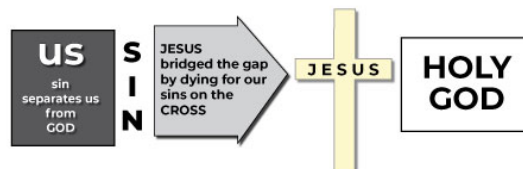
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THE WRONG WAY TO GOD



"I AM the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to The Father except through Me." John 14:6

THE ONLY WAY TO GOD



"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." John 3:16