

## **From Broken Hearts to Burning Hearts**

Do you remember a time when you were on fire for God, but somewhere along life's road, you had a disappointment? A leader let you down, someone took advantage of you, your child walked away from the faith, your sickness and pain didn't go away. Whatever the pain, it caused your heart to break, and you grew cold towards the things of the Lord.

The good news is that the risen Lord Jesus still heals broken hearts and sets them on fire today. Jesus did this for two of his disciples on the road to Emmaus in Luke 24.

### **An Unexpected Encounter**

The disciples of Jesus witnessed the incredible entry of Jesus into Jerusalem as people waived palm branches and shouted his praises. They had seen Jesus perform incredible miracles. But then, everything changed. Jesus was arrested, falsely accused, and sentenced to be crucified.

Within days, elation turned to heartbreak and rejoicing to fear as Jesus was crucified and laid in a tomb. The disciples had been certain that Jesus was the promised Messiah who would overthrow the Roman rule over Israel, but now their hopes were dashed. As heartbreak turned to fear, some of the disciples fled Jerusalem, fearing persecution from the religious leaders. Two of them were walking on the road to Emmaus when Jesus began walking alongside them.

Jesus's identity was hidden from them, but he began asking them what they were talking about (see Luke 24:16). One of the two, Cleopas responded incredulously, "*Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?*" (Luke 24:18). Jesus claimed he did not know. They responded by giving him an overview of all that had happened in the last several days (see Luke 24:19-24). It was as if the words came flooding out of their mouths as their emotions spilled over in recounting the events.

### **An Unexpected Unraveling**

They mentioned four key points in their account:

1: "*Jesus of Nazareth was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people*" (v. 19). The people thought Jesus was a mighty prophet because he taught the Scriptures with an authority that they had never seen before. He also performed many

mighty miracles.

2: “*He was handed over by the religious leaders and was crucified*” (v. 20). In fact, it had been three days, and like Jesus, their hopes were dead.

3: “*But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel*” (v. 21). This statement reveals their heartache. They had hoped for a king to reign in Israel; they had placed their hope in Jesus to be a new and greater King David. Little did they know that Jesus had done something far greater; he had defeated sin and death. He had established an eternal Kingdom.

4: Finally in verse 22 and 23, they recall that some women gave testimony of the empty tomb and their encounter with angels. But Peter and John had effectively checked the tomb, and Jesus was not there. They dismissed the testimony of the women as implausible.

Everything the disciples said to Jesus reflected their misconceptions about who he was, even their misunderstandings of the things that he had taught them. Jesus told them that he would suffer and die at the hands of the religious leader; furthermore, Jesus told them he would rise again (see Matthew 17:22-23). But they only heard what they wanted to hear.

### **An Unexpected Truth**

Jesus took control of the conversation and began to teach them from the Scriptures, unlike any teaching that anyone has ever heard. The Author of History let them into the secrets of Heaven (see Luke 24:27). Can you imagine that teaching? They must have been in awe. We don't know what passages Jesus taught, but I believe he traced the line of his divine presence and plan throughout the history of the Old Testament, showing them how it all points to the one man who would suffer and die on the cross for the redemption of many.

Jesus illuminated the Scriptures for them, and later as he broke the bread at the table, he revealed himself to them. Immediately they encountered Jesus, and they became witnesses to his resurrection. In Judaism, two witnesses fulfill the legal requirement of credibility, so this requirement is fulfilled in the case of an alleged resurrection.

When Jesus left them, they said to one another, “*Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?*” (Luke 24:32). Their broken hearts were transformed to burning hearts as they encountered the risen Lord Jesus and he revealed the Scriptures to them. There is power in the Scriptures when Jesus reveals them.

For anyone who has lost hope and is brokenhearted, Jesus is alive and still transforms hearts today. Followers of Jesus have his Spirit within us. When we sit down and meditate on the Word of God, the Holy Spirit reveals truth to us that has the power to make our hearts burn once again.

*Jesus is alive and still heals the brokenhearted today.*