

BURNING HEARTS

Luke 24:32 ... "And, they said to one another, 'Did not our heart burn within us while he [Jesus] talked with us on the road, and while he opened the scriptures to us?'"

Today's verse is the account of two of Jesus' followers meeting him as they walked to the town of Emmaus soon after the crucifixion. Jesus was not immediately recognizable to the men because in verse 16 we are told that their "eyes were restrained," an apparent reference to the Holy Spirit hiding Jesus' identity from them. They thought he was an ordinary man so they told him how their Lord was killed and disappeared from the grave. In response, Jesus – who they still thought was a stranger – explained to them the prophecies about the Messiah. The men invited Jesus to their homes. In verse 30, we are told that Jesus broke the bread and blessed it. At that moment – possibly because of the wounds on his hands from the nails driven into his cross – the men realized it was Jesus but he vanished before their eyes.

The men confessed that when Jesus spoke to them, their hearts burned. Has your heart ever burned? Perhaps when your wife first told you she loved you? Or, when you were caught in a lie? Or, when you first saw the face of your newborn baby? Obviously, we are not talking about your heart going up in flames of fire. A "burning heart" is a feeling of strong emotions that shock you, bring you great joy, frighten you, or produce terrible guilt for a sin you have committed. In such situations you may feel your heart pounding in your chest. The blood flowing through your body might turn your face red.

The two men were shocked when they finally understood they had been walking and talking with their risen Lord. Their profound sadness about his death, instantly turned to surprise and joy when they saw with their own eyes that he was very much alive again. It made their hearts pound; they probably blushed and were embarrassed at not recognizing their leader. The prophecies that Jesus explained to them made their blood hot with excitement.

If Jesus means as much to you as you mean to him, your heart should burn when you read his words in the Bible, or when he speaks to you during your prayers. When God delivers you from a dangerous situation, heals you from a life-threatening illness, or provides you with a great blessing, your heart should pound and your warm blood should make you blush and be filled with joy. The Word of God is a living message from God to you, which should shake your world.

If none of this makes sense to you because your heart has never burned upon reading God's Word, hearing his voice, or seeing him deliver you from danger or illness, you may not have a real relationship with him. Meeting Jesus on the road of your life should be a life-changing experience. If you have not yet met Jesus, ask him to dwell in your heart and make himself real to you.

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