

From bewildered hearts to burning hearts

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- [0 : 0 0] But our verse for a particular focus will be verse 25, verses 25 to 27. And Jesus said to them, Foolish ones and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken.
- Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory? And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.
- And then as we read in verse 32, following on from these words, they, that's the two in the Maus Road, who were in the Maus Road, said to each other, Did not our hearts burn within us?
- Well, he taught us on the road, well, he opened to us the scriptures. I know you've read these verses, this passage many times.
- And I suppose particularly at this time of year, when the Easter story is still very much in our remembering, that we should turn to this particular account of Jesus on the Emmaus Road, this road from Jerusalem to the village of Emmaus, where Jesus meets these two followers, these two who were of that group we read of in the first section there in chapter 24, those who had been with the disciples, those who'd heard the news of the empty tomb from the women, who'd heard the report of the angels telling them that he's not here, that he's risen, the women giving that report.
- [1 : 3 7] And these two having heard, not understanding, not taking to heart what they'd heard, what they'd learned of the risen Savior.
- These two who, as it were, were on that road with eyes that were spiritually close to the truth of the risen Savior. And in the wonderful, the wondrous grace of the Lord Jesus, Jesus coming to them at that time, at that particular time in their bewilderment, just a short time after Jesus has risen from the dead, Jesus meeting with these two, Jesus turning slow hearts through his truth into hearts that burned, that were scorched on fire for the living Savior.
- And that's what I want to look with you this morning. because what we read here is good news. Good news to consider of the Lord Jesus, the risen Savior, the risen Savior who turns slow hearts into hearts that burn for the Savior because of the truth of his word.
- And you'll see these three headings in your notes. Sorry, I don't have time to develop them for the notes, but there's certainly a trust going to come before you. Well, as we said, this is the first day of the week, this is the Sunday morning, and Jesus has risen from the dead.
- The author of life had given his life so that you, so that I, so that all in whom God's favor rests might know eternal life, just as the children were telling us, just as we read, of course, in God's word.
- [3 : 2 2] Because the author of life had paid the penalty for sin and paid it in full by his death. And that morning, being raised to life, the death, the death, the death of the Lord Jesus.
- But of course, Jesus would be with his disciples, with his followers, for a further 40 days. He says, Jesus didn't immediately ascend finally into heaven that day that he rose from the dead.

Be a further 40 days before he would publicly ascend to heaven. And of course, in these 40 days, what does Jesus do? He appears to his disciples and to his followers.

He confirms that he truly has risen from the dead. And in that period of 40 days, he's going to mend broken hearts. He's going to transform lives. He's going to open eyes that were blinded to the truth of the resurrection.

He's going to restore disciples to himself. Especially Peter, who denied Jesus three times just a short time before. In his risen body, he'll reveal that the word of God, that scripture is true.

[4 : 35] All that was said of him, of his suffering, suffering before entering glory, Jesus will reveal that all that was said in his word is true.

And he tells this, the weakened, frail, disbelieving individuals, as we read there in chapter 24. Even these 11 disciples who'd been with him these three years, even these ones who'd heard Jesus tell of his about to be crucified, buried, and risen again the third day.

And even these two on the Emmaus Road, these two who, along with the other disciples, of course, these two who were perplexed, burdened, bewildered, bewildered about all that had happened in the past 36 hours since the time of Jesus, the death there on the cross.

And they're bewildered about that. They're bewildered about what they'd heard, about the women going to the tomb and seeing the stone rolled away and Jesus' body not in the tomb and angels, the vision of angels telling them that Jesus isn't there, he's not there, he's risen.

As we said, as we were reading there at the start of chapter 24, the disciples don't believe. They're not going to believe the message that the women gave them.

[5 : 53] I mean, even though they'd heard Jesus tell them on a number of these occasions of what was to happen, when it came to the reality of the resurrection, they wouldn't believe because their hearts were slow.

Slow to believe what the women had told them. Slow to believe what had been confirmed in the promise of Scripture and the promise of Jesus. Isn't that so often the case?

That you and I, that we can be so slow of heart to believe the promises of Scripture, promises confirmed by our Lord and Savior. Because so often, don't we just live by sight and not by faith?

So often we take the promises of God and Christ and we don't trust them. Or we find it even difficult to trust. Even when things happen in your life and you're bewildered, perplexed, even slow to grasp the sovereignty of God in all things.

Slow to grasp that all things do work together for good for those and to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. Now, of course, that's not to deny that suffering is real when you're undergoing a particularly difficult providence.

[7 : 09] But know that it is always under God's hand. That we mustn't, we can't, must never seek to blank God out of our lives or rest or faith in what appears to be easy rather than what's right according to His will and according to His word and according to His glory.

Because when you are perplexed, when your hearts are in perplexity, what does God's word tell us? Well, we go back to Scripture. We go to what a psalm writer said and wrote that we cling, we cling to the rock of the Lord Jesus.

We come alongside Him as He comes alongside us. And He assures you and He assures me and He assures us that He is with you. The risen Christ will never leave you nor forsake you.

Be assured that the God who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead and that resurrection power, be assured He does all things, all things well for His children in conformity to His will.

So it's for you, for me, to trust Him always, always. And there on that Emmaus road, there's two bewildered men and they need the Lord Jesus to come alongside them.

[8 : 29] They need the presence of Jesus. They need the word of Jesus to turn their slow hearts into hearts that burn for the Lord and fire for the Saviour.

So, what happens? How does that happen? How are our slow hearts turned into burning hearts? Well, as we said, these men, they've obviously been with the rest of Jesus' followers in Jerusalem.

They've been amongst the company, as we said, who'd heard the women's report about the empty tomb. But they haven't taken to heart the women's account of the amazing things that happened early that morning. In their perplexed state of mind, they head back to where they obviously were staying in Emmaus at a short distance from Jerusalem.

The road that they'd taken in following the Lord Jesus, to them, it seemed as if that road had just reached a dead end. And so they think they're off back to Emmaus, back to a village away from Jerusalem.

And no doubt they're thinking they'll be dwelling more in perplexity on the events that had happened. I mean, it's obviously filled their minds because that's the subject of their conversation as we read there.

[9 : 47] They just couldn't grapple with the information before them. I mean, even though they knew the scriptures about the Messiah to come and the suffering Saviour, they find everything too hard to understand.

And in their desperate need for their eyes to be opened to see the truth of their risen Saviour, Jesus appears to them. They don't recognise him.

Their dull hearts keep their eyes from seeing that this is the Lord Jesus, the risen Jesus. To them, he's just another traveller on the road, no doubt. They think he's another pilgrim having come from Jerusalem at Passover time.

There was something different. These two think of this apparent stranger because he seems to be the only one who doesn't know about the dramatic events that happened in these past three days.

And notice very carefully, notice how Jesus draws out from these men what was bewildering them. And, you know, Jesus in pretended curiosity asks them, you know, what things, what things have been happening?

[10 : 54] And when you hear their answer, you see how their answer betrays knowledge without hope. I mean, they're saying, well, they recognise that Jesus was a prophet.

I mean, they knew about the culpability of the religious leaders in delivering Jesus over to the Roman authorities to put Jesus to death. They tell of their forlorn hope at that point in the experience of Jesus.

They thought he'd be the redeemer of Israel. And they say it's the third day since the crucifixion. They don't emphasise the significance of that day. And then they tell the amazing news of the women going to the empty tomb and the news that the angels give them of the empty tomb because Jesus is alive.

And, you know, they're just rattling off the one thing after another. You know, you can just picture these men as there's one thing after another reeling off one item after another concerning Jesus.

They're revealing their bewildered hearts. You know, I can just picture them just saying this in a sort of quick-paced manner and they're saying it just doesn't add up. As far as they had reasoned, they're hoping Jesus was over.

[12 : 07] All that they'd hoped for in Jesus now seemed to be empty. And yet, something else empty puzzled them. The empty tomb puzzled them. Their closed hearts couldn't reconcile all that had happened in these past 36 hours.

And so they're reeling off one to them anyway, one puzzling thing after another. And notice Jesus. Jesus listens with patience. He's letting these men pour out their hearts.

He's letting them voice their bewilderment at all the things that have happened in Jerusalem. Just as Jesus, the Lord Jesus, will listen to you when your heart is in turmoil, when you can't understand his ways with you, when you're bewildered about his providence in your life.

He will listen. He'll listen to you as he listened to these two men on that road to Emmaus. Remember this. Jesus will have the last word if he had the last word with these men in that particular conversation.

What's that last word? It's his word. It's his word of truth. It's the word of Scripture that answers your needs as it answers the needs of these two in that Emmaus road.

[13 : 22] It's that word that draws you to see the God of all grace. It's that word that tells you that our Lord, our God, our Saviour is with you always. It's that word that tells you that it's God who provides for you in all your need.

It's that word that's true because God is true. Now, we can say these things. Sometimes, maybe they trip just too glibly off our tongue. Do you believe all that we've been saying of the word of God, the word of promise and scripture of the God who loves you so much that he sent his one and only son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life?

If that's the measure of God's love for you, how will he not give you all things in your need and needs in life? As we were remarking a few weeks ago in our midweek meeting when Paul wrote to the Romans, Romans 8.32, He who did not spare his own son but gave him up for us all, how will you not also with him graciously give us all things?

Draw close to the word of God and meditate on his promises. Dwell in them. Meditate on the love of God for sinners. Just dwell come to that truth and see that love, that love so great.

The father didn't spare his beloved son and not sparing his son that brought about that death of Jesus that Friday morning. That Friday that so perplexed these two who were conversing there with Jesus.

[15 : 00] It would be that Friday that perhaps might perplex some of you as you grapple with the death of Jesus that brought about salvation brings about salvation for undeserving sinners.

Maybe the empty tomb perplexes you. But listen to Jesus as Jesus spoke to these two bewildered followers. And listening to Jesus, I pray that your hearts will be turned from bewilderment to burning, burning hearts as the fire of Scripture kindles your heart and kindles your heart and fans it into flame so that you truly will show forth and tell forth the love of Jesus for sinners.

Well, what of the Scripture truth that we read here from verse 25 to 27 where Jesus begins, O foolish ones, why is it that so often we get tied up into knots when we struggle with so many of the issues today?

You know, especially concerning the person and work of the Lord Jesus. You know, why is it that so many struggle when, you know, the thought of the Lord Jesus coming to earth and what He did on earth and what He did for our salvation?

Why is it we get so tied up into knots through our own reasoning when we don't turn to God's Word, when we don't turn to the Bible? The skeptics who dismiss the resurrection of Jesus, they'll do it on certain grounds.

[16 : 33] They'll do it on philosophical grounds or they'll do it on grounds of human sense of reason. But when you turn to God's Word, you're told of the promise and the reality of Christ's resurrection we're told of the Word that was given that spoke of the Christ to come who would die for sinners, rise again the third day.

And we need, of course, in Scripture the fulfillment of that Word. And we need, too, in Scripture the consequences of the resurrection of Jesus, particularly as Paul gives us the consequences.

Last Sunday evening, Mike Moore was preaching from Isaiah 53, that Old Testament passage that included prophetic reference to the resurrection of Jesus.

When the soul makes an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring. He shall prolong his days. The will of the Lord will prosper in his hand. Let's go to another part of Scripture to the story of Abraham and Isaac when Abraham offered Isaac on that altar only for God to provide the substitute, the ram that was caught in the thicket and Isaac was released from the altar.

That picture of the resurrection that the writer in the New Testament, the writer to the Hebrews wrote of this, Hebrews 11, he, Abraham, considered that God was able even to raise him, even to raise Isaac from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back.

[18 : 06] We're to go back to God's Word again and again and you'll find the reassurance of the work of Jesus and salvation. You'll find that truth that tells of the hope that that resurrection gives to every believer in the hope and the sure hope of eternal life.

The promise of eternal life that's guaranteed to every believer through the resurrection of Jesus. So don't try and work things out about Jesus based on your own reasoning devoid of Scripture.

Begin with God's Word. You see, these two in the Mayors Road, they're trying to work things out about Jesus on the grounds of their own reasoning, reasoning devoid of Scripture truth.

They've failed to take in what God's Word had said about Jesus in His death, burial, and resurrection. They've failed to consider the Old Testament Scriptures, our Old Testament Scriptures, their Scriptures, that pointed forward to the sacrificial death of the Saviour and the resurrection of the Saviour.

They needed the Word of Jesus to direct their hearts to the truth about these things that they were mentioning, these things that so bewildered them about Jesus.

[19 : 27] just as you and I need the Word of Jesus to establish our faith in Him, to strengthen our hope in Him, and to enrich our love for Him.

Well, let's hear the words of Jesus. The words that He gave to these two followers, words that are still spoken to weak individuals such as ourselves.

And Jesus begins with a chastisement, O foolish one, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. Well, better the chastisement of Jesus than the empty praise of man.

When these two followers, they were foolish in their lack of faith in the Word of God. It's as if they'd blanked out the Word of Scripture from their hearts.

Words that pointed, as we say, to the death and resurrection of Jesus. Words that Jesus Himself had uttered just shortly before His death. I mean, their foolishness. What does it comprise?

[20 : 29] It comprise in their not having digested the Word of God. They haven't truly taken to heart even the Word of God and the Word of Jesus.

They hadn't absorbed that Word in their hearts. They had slow hearts, slow in the sense that they hadn't grasped as they ought to have grasped what they'd heard Jesus tell them about about Himself, confirming what Scripture had said.

And whenever that's the case, whenever we are slow in heart to grasp God's Word, there's always a recipe for spiritual disaster. We're so often ourselves to be slow of heart to believe the Word of God.

Slow learners. All of us in many ways are slow learners of the truth, slow to grasp what should be grasped by faith. What God's Word tells us about our responsibility to believe His Word.

But there's a remedy for that slowness of heart. It's the Word of Jesus. As Jesus says, was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into His glory?

[21 : 38] And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, He interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. Jesus gives a scriptural overview of what was said of Him in the Bible.

From Genesis and the other four books that Moses wrote, the first five books of the Bible, through the prophetic Scriptures that prophesied of the Saviour to come, to be the once for all sacrifice for sin, the Scriptures that pointed to that life given for many.

Be the one, yes, who would be the one who would make that offering for sin, who'd see His offspring, who'd see His heritage, who'd see His own. And in that overview of Scripture, telling that He must suffer all these things.

things that these two followers had trouble in their hearts to comprehend. He must, because it was the will of the Father that the Son suffer in the place of sinners.

He must, because there was no other way by which sinners could be made right with God. No other way in which you and which we could know salvation through the finished work of Jesus.

[22 : 50] And so it's for you and for me to truly treasure the Word of God in our hearts. And for you and for me to go to that Word often and always.

Let the Word of God dwell in your heart. Because we must, I mean, it seems so obvious, but sometimes the most obvious things have to be repeated. We must get back to the Word of God.

And it's been said more than once, even in this building. It's actually one of the great tragedies even of the modern church. Certainly modern Christianity. When the Word of God, when the Bible is neglected.

And that's happening in our homes. It's happening even in our churches. What Martin Luther said 500 years ago could easily still be said and can still be said today.

He said this. The neglect of Scripture even by spiritual leaders is one of the greatest evils in the world. Everything else, arts or literature, is pursued and practiced day and night.

[23 : 57] And there's no end of labor and effort. But Holy Scripture is neglected as though there were no need of it. And I suppose we could contextualize Mark Luther's words.

He talked about everything else, arts or literature, pursued and practiced day and night. well we can contextualize this today. The internet. Everything that we do apart from the Word of God.

Everything else that focuses our hearts and minds apart from God's Word. But we need to get back to God's Word. As our catechism tell us, the Word of God as contained in the Old and New Testaments is the only rule to direct us how we might glorify God.

And that's why we're to rejoice when we see children in our church learning the Word of God. Singing of John 3.16.

When we see our children being absorbed in that Word. They are precious in the knowledge that they have of the Word of God and pray that that head knowledge will become heart knowledge.

[25 : 02] That that Word will truly enter their hearts by faith. because we children are God's heritage. And as we seek to bring before God our children, pray that they truly will see the Saviour.

That they'll know the Lord Jesus as He's revealed to them in His Word. Pray that you'll hear the voice of Jesus speak to you through His Word. That your hearts will respond with joy as the two in that Emmaus Road would later respond with joy as we read in verse 32.

Didn't our hearts burn within us while He talked to us on the road while He opened to us the Scriptures? Burning hearts. This is a wee bit of alliteration.

Scorching hearts just to emphasize. You know, this is what's happening. I have no idea how long Jesus spoke to these two on the road. It must have been a long time.

Certainly long enough for these two to invite Jesus to the home where they were staying. What did they say? The day is far spent as getting late. These men would have lost all sense of time as they listened to Jesus, as their hearts were burning within them as Jesus spoke of Himself.

[26 : 17] Now, Chris, at that point, the conversation, they didn't at that point recognize Jesus. We saw they do it in the house when Jesus had that meal with them when He broke bread, when He opened their eyes to show that truly He is the risen Jesus.

But on that road as they're listening, they lost all sense of time as they were so enthusing in hearing Jesus speak to them. You know what it's like when you're absorbed in something and you lose all track of time?

I go fishing in Lewis. I am totally absorbed, totally lost in time. I can go to the Grest River at half past six and ten o'clock comes and I have no idea where the time's gone because I'm so absorbed in what's happening.

How much more when you're drinking in the Word of God? Time seems irrelevant. Your hearts are engaged with the Word. You're absorbed in the Word of truth.

That Word that brings truly should bring joy to your heart so that your hearts are burning within you as you're hearing that Word brought to your heart.

[27 : 22] That burning that these two there spoke of, that we might say speaks of being on fire for the Lord. I was wanting to know where else in Scripture we see that expression of burning for the Lord.

And there's one part of Scripture, Jeremiah 20 verse 9. In Jeremiah the prophet he says of God's Word, His Word is in my heart like a fire.

His Word is in my heart like a fire. And the context of that was that Jeremiah couldn't keep that Word to himself. because God's Word is that power.

It can't be contained. Well for the two there who'd met with Jesus on the Emmaus Road, their hearts were so inflamed within them because of the Word of Jesus.

That Word that so overpowered them had that overpowering impact on their hearts. God's Word. Why? Because it was no ordinary Word. Because it wasn't their Word.

[28 : 22] It was the Word, that Word from above. It was the Word from the Saviour. That Word penetrated their heart. Because it worked that power of the Word within them like a fire that we might say that can't be contained.

A fire that can't be contained. And I pray that as you have listened to the Word of God even this morning as you listen to God speak to you through His Word, that your hearts will burn within you.

That your hearts will be on fire for the Lord so that you can't contain the Word. So that you'll tell others of the Saviour who gave His life for you.

The one who was buried, who died, who was buried, raised again to life. Seated now at the right hand of the Father who promises that one day He'll return to gather His people to Himself.

That's the good news that we proclaim. That's the good news that should cause the heart of every believer to burn within. As you focus on the Saviour, as you see Him who speaks to you through His Word, that Word that never fails, that Word that's true and eternal.

[29 : 37] So, may God bless to us His Word this morning, now and always. Amen. Let us pray. Lord, forgive us for our cold hearts.

Forgive us, Lord, for neutral hearts that seem so look warm, but indeed do not burn with the love of God in Christ.

Lord, may You through Your Spirit inflame our hearts so that they are truly on fire for You. And may we rejoice in that knowledge that You truly are with us and that You truly will never leave Your people as Your Word promises.

So, may we rejoice in that Word and go before this, go from this place rejoicing, having met with Jesus.

We ask these things in His name. Amen. Amen. Well, let's close in Psalm 36 in St.

[30 : 40] Psalm. Psalm 36.