

9-6-20 Burning Hearts

Luke 24:13-35

How many went home with the song, Looking for Love in all the Wrong Places, stuck in their head?

How many listened to it for old times' sake?

Anyone watch Little Shop of Horrors?

I am going to do it to you again this week. The song that got stuck in my head this week was, "Burning Hearts" by Survivor.

I think the way things are today our hearts have the tendency to smolder and we need them burning. We can read about this in the lives of two individuals in the bible.

Read Luke 24:13-16

As I read this scripture, I began to imagine how they felt. How I would feel in their position. I think many of these words can fit in many of life's places today.

Disappointed: sad or displeased because someone or something has failed to fulfill one's hopes or expectations

Discouraged: having lost confidence or enthusiasm; disheartened

Frustration: the feeling of being upset or annoyed, especially because of inability to change or achieve something:

This made me think: What are some things that have left you feeling disappointed, discouraged, and frustrated?

Would it be safe to say that 2020 has been a disappointment in many ways?

Believers today are stuck in an awkward situation. The church is in an awkward situation. The temperature today has left many if not all of us disappointed, discouraged, and frustrated.

If you are a student of the bible, you know that uncertain times are coming, but that doesn't make it any less unsettling.

What can we do with the disappointment, discouragement, and frustration?

Caleb Kaltenbach, Pastor and Author of "Messy Grace", said, "What if we talked about Jesus, the truth, His love and grace as much as we talk about politics, covid, mask or not to mask, conspiracy, news, and sports?"

I think its important that we recognize what these feelings can do to us.

Let's take note of what dejection, disappointment, discouragement, and frustration does in our lives.

I. Cause Us to Walk Away from the Fellowship (vv. 13-16)

- As these two disciples journeyed, they were moving away from the fellowship of the other believers in Jerusalem.

- **Read verses 13-16**
- They were headed seven miles to the village of Emmaus.
- Scripture says, **“they talked together of all these things, which had happened.”**
- What exactly was it they were talking about?
- Look at **verse 19, “The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth.... (v.21) But we were hoping (trusted) that it was He who was going to Redeem Israel.”**
- The word translated as hope or trusted in verse 21 is “elpizo” means all our hope, trust, expected, all our eggs in one basket.
- All their hope, everything they trusted in, expected had been shattered. They were in a place of despair.
- They couldn’t even hear what they were saying. Yeah, we heard from multiple sources that Jesus body was no longer in the grave and angels appeared stating, He was alive. They had what Paul Harvey use to say as the rest of the story.
- When we (believers) allow ourselves to become preoccupied with our dashed hopes and frustrated plans we often withdraw from the strength found in one another.
- I have witnessed frustration, anger, and bitterness in the body of Christ (church), but nothing like I am witnessing today. Literally, it looks like hatred of each other.
- If we are not careful, we are allowing the devil to steal our love for the brethren.
- What is it that a fellow believer could say or share that would justify you hating them? Even if they were wrong, we are not justified to walk away.
- It has become too easy to quit, walk away, disown each other, this is not biblical or Christlike behavior. God forgive us if we have gotten to a place that says, because you have wronged me, many times in ignorance, I am done with you.
- Unfortunately, we are seeing people walking away or breaking fellowship because of wisdom, truth, being shared and their heart is to proud to hear it.
- **Read Proverbs 9:6-12**

II. **Cause Us to Live in the Past. (vv.17-24)**

- **Read verse 17-19**
- Jesus asks, what kind of conversation are you having as you walk that is making you sad?
- **Verse 18**, Cleopas is beside himself with the question. “Dude, where have you been? Have you been hiding under a rock? How haven’t you heard all the things that have been going on?”
- **Verse 19, Jesus says, “What things?”**
- Cleopas gives him the cliff notes version of the past 3 years of Jesus life.
- God never asks question to get information (omniscience). He is asking so that WE can answer HIS questions.
- Jesus asks them what they are discussing and why they are so obviously sad. In asking this question Jesus allowed these disciples to express their deepest hurts, angers, and frustrations.
- Why did Jesus draw near to two obscure disciples? We can take heart today in the fact that Jesus often made His most remarkable revelations to the least remarkable people. Here we see two people who are never heard of before and never seen again after this. Which just points out there are no unimportant people to Jesus.

- They summed up their condition very neatly when they said in verse twenty-one, "But we were hoping (trusted, KJV) that it was He who was going to redeem Israel." Notice the use of the past tense, "we were hoping, trusted," which strongly implies that this was not relevant to the present or they would not have so discouraged and distressed.
- The saddest death of all must be the death of hope. They had hoped but now the flame of hope was all but extinguished.
- What do you think the disciples were thinking locked up in the room after the crucifixion? Maybe reminiscing about better days, times? How about after Jesus ascended to the Father? How great was it to see his plan fulfilled, but what do we do now, without him? Then after Pentecost when all the persecution of the church heightened. "Wow, Peter, that day when all those people were saved, was the best day of all. Look at us now locked up?"
- Don't we have the tendency to live in the past? Remember the past better than maybe it was? Maybe the past was better, but we can't live there anymore.
- The best days for believers are always ahead of us. The best days of this church are still ahead of us. We can't allow the disappointment and discouragement to derail us!
- When we give into disappointment, discouragement, and frustration we take our eyes off the field, the possibility of a great, God planned moment.

III. Cause Us to Question God's Care (vv.25-35)

- **Read verses 25-26**
- Gotta love Jesus' response.
- Circle the word "all". When He says they are slow (tardy) to believe "all" that the prophets have spoken, it indicates that disciples were selective. They believed part of the word of God, but not all.
- These disciples had been guilty of believing the word of God selectively, believing those things that fit in with the neat little box that they had created for God. Their understanding of the Scripture was worked by their assumptions and preconceptions and even by their sin. And so is ours!
- Heartbreak happens this way: we think God should do something based on our faulty knowledge of His word. He doesn't do it. We get discouraged and think God let us down, that He has disappointed us. But the problem is not with God but with us.
- His words are not meant to harm or insult but to challenge their belief. What truth are you not believing?
- Is It That That God cares about you? **1 Peter 5:7, "casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you."**
- Is It That God can provide for you! **Phil. 4:19, "And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."**
- If we find ourselves hurting and despairing and do not find that Scripture speaks to our situation, it is caused by one of two things. Either we do not know it well enough or we do not believe it.
- **Read verse 27**

- Beginning in Genesis with the promised sacrifice (**Gen. 3:15**) and going through the suffering servant in **Isaiah 53**, the pierced one in **Zechariah 12:10**, and the messenger of the covenant in **Malachi 3**, Jesus introduced Himself to these disciples through the Old Testament.
- **Read verses 28-29**
- As the two travelers approached the end of their journey, the stranger appeared to be going on. Traveling at night was both difficult and dangerous, so they insisted that he stay with them saying in verse twenty-nine, "Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." And He went in to stay with them."
- **Read verses 30-31**

Let me illustrate with the words that Mark Buchanan wrote of his own experience in his book entitled "Your God Is Too Safe." He wrote that when he was saved, "I hit the ground running. Immediately, I volunteered for everything, anything, that I felt vaguely interested in and marginally qualified for. I led the youth group; I helped with the music, I taught Sunday school; I wrote the church newsletter; I became a camp counselor; I served as a mentor to several young men.

But something, somewhere, went awry. The zeal fizzled. The fire in my bones became only an ache in my joints. My running became plodding. My lightness became heaviness. My joyfulness became jadedness. I joined the ranks of the murmurers and faultfinders – those that did not like the music or the sermon or the color of the carpet in the church – and I found their number legion." [Mark Buchanan. Your God Is Too Safe. (Multnomah, 2001) p. 9-10]

- The truth is that God wants to set our hearts on fire. He wants to give us a burning passion for life.
- We all long for the eternal but are too easily contented with the temporary.
- We all want to be a part of something worthwhile but end up wasting time. Let' turn back to where we left off.
- **In 2 Timothy 1:6 Paul tells Timothy, "Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you.."** this verse can be summed up in three words, Again,... Alive,... Fire. Perhaps this is what we need.
- In the midst of these two disciple's frustration and discouragement God intervened.
- Jesus showed up with His presence (**verse 15**)
- Jesus opens their minds and stokes the fire in their hearts with His word. (**verse 27**)
- **Read verses 32-35**
- The result in the life of the two disciples was, that although by this point it is already late, they cannot wait till the morning. They must tell someone what has happened. They had to share their experience and no one in Emmaus would understand.
- One of the best signs of recovery from depression is a desire to be back among other believers. They had to go back to where the other disciples were gathered. Verse thirty-three tells us that they decide that they must return at once to Jerusalem.
- So, the long discourage walk to Emmaus now became a joyous run to Jerusalem with renewed strength and encouragement.
- Their grief had blinded them. Their attention to their own loss and sorrow prevented them from focusing on God and finding out what God was doing for them at that very moment.

Conclusion

Are we WHERE we are supposed to be?

Encouraging, Edifying, Serving, Supporting our fellow believers.

Are we PREPARING OTHERS for Jesus' presence?

Are we helping other believers to grow nearer to Christ?

Are other believers helping us to grow nearer to Christ?

Are we letting them help us?

Are we helping to prepare unbelievers to trust Christ as their Savior?

Are we being led by the POWER that comes by having the Holy Spirit and being submissive to the Holy Spirit?