

## EASTER TRANSFORMING THE HEART

[Luke 24:13-41](#) “.....as ye walk, and are sad?..... O fools, and slow of heart.....Did not our heart burn within us? .....and while they yet believed not for joy.....”

The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead on Easter Sunday morning is a clearly established historical fact which few would care to dispute. Even the devils know about the resurrection, but knowledge alone does no good. If we accept the Easter story as a mere fact without any change of heart, Easter will mean little or nothing to us.

Easter is the most exciting day in the whole church year, and it should arouse in us a revival, an awakening, and a spiritual exhilaration. Easter is a time of life and living, not one of apathy or indifference. It should be said of our cold, dead nature that it is changed and risen with Christ to newness of life.

Our text tells us of two saddened disciples who were walking along the road to Emmaus on Easter evening. Let us join these two dejected men, it will do us a world of good. We shall see how Easter caused a change of heart in them, and we hope that a similar transformation will take place in us also.

(Full passages for reference only.)

<sup>13</sup> And behold, two of them were going that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about seven miles. <sup>14</sup> And they talked together of all these things which had happened. <sup>15</sup> And it came to pass that while they communed and reasoned together, Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. <sup>16</sup> But their eyes were held, that they should not know Him. <sup>17</sup> And He said unto them, “What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another as ye walk and are sad?” <sup>18</sup> And one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto Him, “Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which have come to pass there in these days?” <sup>19</sup> And He said unto them, “What things?” And they said unto Him, “Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people; <sup>20</sup> and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death and have crucified Him. <sup>21</sup> But we trusted that it had been He who should have redeemed Israel. And besides all this, today is the third day since these things were done. <sup>22</sup> Yea, and certain women also of our company, who were early at the sepulcher, made us astonished. <sup>23</sup> And when they found not His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels, who said that He was alive. <sup>24</sup> And certain of those who were with us went to the sepulcher and found it even so as the women had said, but Him they saw not.” <sup>25</sup> **Then He said unto them, “O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! <sup>26</sup> Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?” <sup>27</sup> And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.** <sup>28</sup> And they drew nigh unto the village whither they were going, and He made as

though He would have gone further.<sup>29</sup> But they constrained Him, saying, "Abide with us, for it is toward evening and the day is far spent." And He went in to tarry with them.<sup>30</sup> And it came to pass, as He sat at meat with them, He took bread and blessed it, and broke and gave it to them.<sup>31</sup> And their eyes were opened and they knew Him. And He vanished out of their sight.<sup>32</sup> And they said to one another, "**Did not our hearts burn within us while He talked** with us on the way and while He opened to us the Scriptures?"<sup>33</sup> And they rose up that same hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together and those who were with them,<sup>34</sup> saying, "The Lord is risen indeed and hath appeared to Simon!"<sup>35</sup> And they told what things were done on the way, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread.<sup>36</sup> And as they thus spoke, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them and said unto them, "Peace be unto you."<sup>37</sup> But they were terrified and afraid, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.<sup>38</sup> And He said unto them, "Why are ye troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?<sup>39</sup> Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me to have."<sup>40</sup> And when He had thus spoken, He showed them His hands and His feet.<sup>41</sup> **And while they yet believed not for joy**, and wondered, He said unto them, "Have ye here any meat?"

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### 1. THE SAD HEART

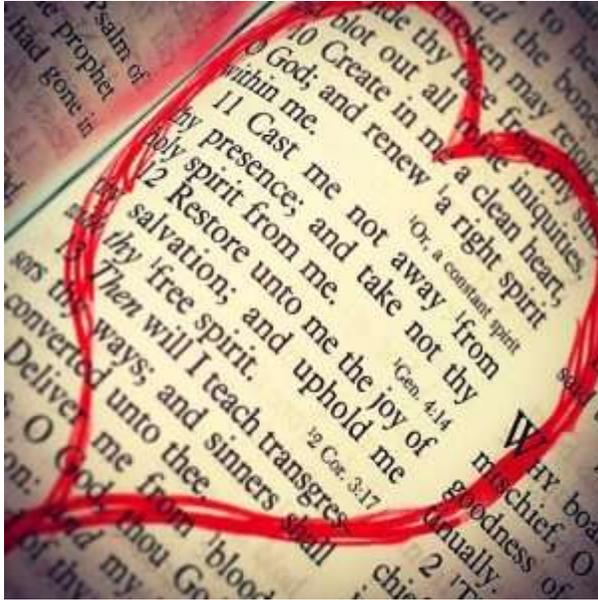
Jesus was such a wonderful person that His disciples proved their love for Him by outstanding loyalty. Most of them left everything they had behind them, gave up their families and possessions, and offered the best years of their lives in the service of Jesus. No one can doubt their devotion to Him. In v.21 they said they "trusted" Jesus, meaning, they believed Him and His claims that He is the promised Messiah of the Old Testament.

It was a terrible blow to the disciples when Jesus died.

Any funeral is sad but this one was much worse. They did have a very faint hope that He might rise the third day as they remembered Him say, but this faint hope was fast fading with the fading light of day. All their ideas and plans of a kingdom under Christ were disappearing rapidly. No one can be happy in life without hope, when hope is lost, happiness is lost. Look how sad and dejected they were because they thought Jesus was lost to them. As we walk along with these troubled disciples another person joins our little group and asks them why they are so sad.

### 2. THE SLOW HEART

These disciples had only the Old Testament, and they were trained from their youth to accept it without question or doubt. But they were too sluggish and slow to accept the prophecies which spoke of the sufferings and death of the Messiah. They had some vague ideas and hopes of an earthly kingdom of the Messiah and forgot, temporarily, passages like [Isaiah 53](#) and [Psalm 22](#). For that reason they were called "slow of heart" by Jesus whom they did not recognize at this time.



Jesus was perhaps recognizable as His old Self, but with such sad, slow, and sluggish hearts how could they know Him? Is it not strange, He was walking with them, and they saw Him, and still they did not “see” Him? We know, too, that the Lord withheld recognition from their eyes, but their dejected frame of mind did not help them in the least.

### 3. THE BURNING HEART

Somehow, quietly in their gloomy hearts, the Holy Spirit was changing these disciples through the words which Jesus taught them on the way. A slight burning began to be felt in their sad and slow hearts. They began to suspect something about the stranger with His confident words and answers.

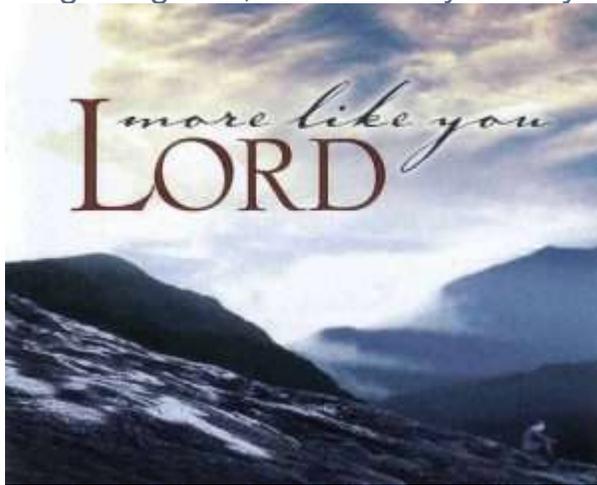
There was something vaguely familiar about Him, but they could not quite discern it as yet. However, the comforting words which He spoke were lifting the gloom from their hearts, a transformation was taking place. Notice how the Lord dealt with His disciples: first He built their faith firmly on the Word of God and the Holy Spirit, after that He was willing to be recognized. They were attracted to the Lord without being sure of His identity. “Abide with us,” was their sincere invitation to Him. They wanted more of the Stranger, for He caused their hearts to burn.

“And they knew him.” Suddenly, as if scales fell from their eyes, they saw and recognized the risen Lord. When Jesus is near us He always sets the heart on fire. Easter is a heart transformation, and all who believe that Jesus rose from the dead will have burning hearts, as these disciples did.

### 4. THE JOYOUS HEART

When these Emmaus disciples hurried back to Jerusalem to tell the good news to the other disciples, Jesus suddenly appeared before them all. In v.41 we read, "And while they yet believed not for joy." Surely that is putting it mildly, but it is sometimes very hard to describe a condition of the heart. All the pre-Easter gloom and sorrow disappeared, and they had a complete change of heart by the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the grave. For a time the future of the disciples looked dark indeed, but the Easter resurrection changed all that, and they were confident that He would take care of all things in due time. O happy disciples of Jesus, you passed through a period of sadness to a time of great gladness.

"I am the resurrection and the life." Jesus proved the first part of that claim by His own resurrection from the grave, and He will prove the second part when He calls us forth from the graves to live with Him in eternity. Through faith in Jesus as our Savior we can now cry out, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"



Have you ever been so happy that it hurts? Have you had a heart transformation? Is your heart burning with joy? True faith in the resurrection of Jesus can have only one effect upon us, extreme joy over the fact that we are going to heaven to be with Him forever in glory.

All of us should join the society of burning hearts! Our hearts should be afire because Jesus is with us and near us. "Abide with us" should be our invitation to Jesus. He will accept our invitation and walk home with us today from church and will brighten our homes and our whole lives. Yes, He will be with us always as He promised, even unto the end of the world. Hallelujah! He is risen! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! AMEN.

PRAYER. Praise and honor be to Thee Lord Jesus. Through Thy resurrection from the dead Thou hast driven away every sadness from our hearts and hast made us the happiest of people. Walk through life with us

as Thou didst walk with those two disciples. Abide with us always, for we need Thy presence every hour. We long for the day when we shall see the final fruits of Thy victory over death, the day when we shall behold Thy face in glory. Till then, we shall sing Thy praises, O Father, Son, and Spirit, ever one God, world without end. AMEN