

SERMON: HOLY HEARTBURN

Luke 24:27-33

(27) Then beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. (28) And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and He made as though he would have gone further. (29) 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. (30) And it came to pass, as He sat at meat with them, He took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. (31) And their eyes were opened, and they knew Him; and He vanished out of their sight. (32) And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scripture? (33) And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together and them that were with them.

Introduction

There are some things that have a good version and also a bad version. There is good cholesterol and bad cholesterol. There is constructive criticism and destructive criticism. Trouble by the usual definition implies that it is bad and undesirable, but John Lewis coined the term “good trouble.” There is the usual form of heartburn which produces an uncomfortable physical sensation. We want to quickly get rid of this type of heartburn and there are many over-the-counter, and prescription medications, which will ease the pain. There is also holy heartburn. This is the good type of heartburn. Our text describes two individuals, one named Cleopas and one unnamed, who experienced this holy heartburn.

Before we go any further, let’s review the narrative.

These two followers of Jesus were walking from Jerusalem to Emmaus on the first Easter afternoon. Emmaus is a village about seven miles west of Jerusalem. They were joined by a stranger who we know now to be the risen Christ. Like Mary, they did not recognize Him initially. The stranger asked them, “What interesting current event are you so vigorously discussing and may I join the conversation?” They said to Him, “Are you the only stranger in town, who came to celebrate the Passover, who does not know the things that have taken place in these last few days?” Jesus wanting to hear their perspective asked, “What things?” In response to this question, they began to express their profound disappointment at the recent tragic events in Jerusalem. While Jesus of Nazareth was considered a great prophet, they had hoped that He might even be more – the Messiah who would have redeemed Israel. Yet, His crucifixion had dashed all such hopes. Jesus rebuked them softly for their shallow understanding of the Scriptures. Jesus asked them, “Does not the Scriptures predict the suffering of the

Messiah?” Jesus then took them through the Old Testament passages relating to the Messiah and how it was necessary for Him to face death to atone for our sins.

When they got to Emmaus, Jesus gave them an opportunity to let Him walk away. They insisted that He stay with them. For one thing, it was late. Perhaps they also wanted more of His Biblical teachings. They sat down to eat and as Jesus gave thanks and broke bread, they recognized Him for who He was. At that instance, Jesus disappeared from their presence. The two joyfully rushed back to Jerusalem to report their experience. There they found the apostles already announcing the same message: Jesus is risen indeed! Let’s look at some of the things that will give us holy heartburn.

Exposition

1. When the Scripture Is Correctly Expounded To the Point of Illumination.

2. When the Risen Christ Meets You Where You Are and Provides Meaningful Fellowship.

3. When The Risen Christ Validates Himself And Renews Your Faith.

Closing Statements

These two individuals contracted holy heartburn because the words of Jesus touched their hearts in a profound and memorable way. It was much more than intellectual comprehension. Holy heartburn is healing, not hurtful. Their grief and despondency was gone, thanks to the holy heartburn. After walking seven miles to their home they were energized to rush back to Jerusalem to spread the good news. Make no mistake: The risen Savior will give you holy heartburn and there is no cure for it. So just enjoy it and spread it to others. It is incurable and contagious. Give God Glory! Give God All the Glory!

Related Scripture

Luke 24:1-53

End Notes:

1. Luke provides three accounts of resurrection appearances: the women at the tomb (24:1-12), the appearance to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus (24:13-15), and the appearance to the eleven apostles in Jerusalem (24:36-49). It is interesting to note that Luke devotes more time describing the appearance on the Emmaus Road than on the other two appearances. Over the years, this has brought about much friendly theological debate and speculation.

2. The other traveler may have been Cleopas' wife, Mary. She may have been identified in John 19:25. They are probably returning home after celebrating the Passover in Jerusalem. They probably thought the stranger walking with them was doing the same.

3. It may seem strange to us that many did not recognize the risen Christ. We must not forget that people during this time did not travel as much as we do today. There was a limited gene pool and there were many instances of people with identical physical features. It was not uncommon to have a "dead ringer" or as the Germans would say a "doppelganger." The apostle Paul was mistaken for an Egyptian trouble maker. In the ninth chapter of the Gospel of John, the Pharisees asked the healed man's parents to identify him to verify that it was not someone who looked exactly like him. Also, remember eye glasses and contact lenses had not been invented, so people's vision was not as clear as today. So, the two individuals on the Emmaus Road did not readily identify Jesus and Mary thought the risen Christ was the gardener. Plus, they were not expecting to see Him after a horrible crucifixion.

4. Perhaps they ate at Cleopas' house. It was customary to allow the guest to serve as temporary host. This was a common courtesy of that day. Thus, they allow Jesus to serve as host. The host would literally break the bread after the prayer of thanksgiving. Some scholars believe that when Jesus broke the bread they saw the nail prints in His hands and knew without a doubt it was Jesus Himself.

5. The Greek verb for burn is in the imperfect past tense. Grammatically, imperfect means not finished or not complete. The syntax of this verb implies an action that started in the past but whose duration continues to and beyond the moment of utterance. So it could be translated this way: "Didn't our hearts start burning as He talked to us along the way and our hearts are still burning right now."

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