

“Fire Starters”

Luke 24:13-35

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Luke 24:13-35

On the Road to Emmaus

¹³ That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁴ and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. ¹⁵ While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. ¹⁶ But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. ¹⁷ And he said to them, “What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?” And they stood still, looking sad. ¹⁸ Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?” ¹⁹ And he said to them, “What things?” And they said to him, “Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰ and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him. ²¹ But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened. ²² Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning, ²³ and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive. ²⁴ Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see.” ²⁵ And he said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?” ²⁷ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

²⁸ So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, ²⁹ but they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent.” So he went in to stay with them. ³⁰ When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. ³¹ And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. ³² They said to each other, “Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?” ³³ And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, ³⁴ saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!” ³⁵ Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Introduction - Happy Easter! He is risen!

With wrong expectations, you can be disappointed by God. It is not that God was somehow lacking; but often, because of our limited perspective, we feel as if He let us down. We thought He would do something, but He did not do it. We thought that we are trusting in the promises of His Word, but the promises did not come true - at least not yet.

We thought we were praying in line with His will, but He did not answer. God did not come through as we had hoped.

This is where these travelers in the passage were at as they walked away from Jerusalem to Emmaus. They had hoped Jesus was the promised Messiah who would redeem Israel, but their hopes had been crushed after the crucifixion. They did not understand why God had let them down and were disappointed in life and at God. They were talking about these things as they walked. Then a stranger caught up to them - the risen Lord Jesus Christ. But God had closed their eyes from recognizing Jesus. Why would God do that? He had some important lessons to teach them. The overall lesson is that God will turn our disappointment to hope if with his people we will seek the risen Savior through faith in His Word.

I. Fire Killers - There are some things that will kill the fire burning within our hearts for Jesus Christ.

A. Disappointment in life

Luke 24:17 – *And he said to them, “What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk” And they stood still, looking sad.*

They were disappointed in their stage of life.

Luke 24:19 – *And he said to them, “What things?” And they said to him, “Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people,*

They were hyped about Jesus. Similarly to how we can have raised expectations for a movie or food, when the raised expectations are not met, we get disappointed. People and pictures we see on television or social media often times show only the successful moments. We are not shown how hard they worked to get there but only how successful they are and what pleasure they can give to you. This can raise our expectations in life.

Luke 24:21 – *But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened.*

The people had hoped in a wrong hope, wrong expectation. This is in movies, food, even friendships and jobs. We become friends with people who we think is going to give us what we want. They look or act like someone we know. But they disappoint you because they are not that person. You may have wanted a dream job, thinking and expecting that you would be happy with it. But in that job, there are difficulties: relationally, financially, ethically, etc. Some say that there are four rings in marriage: engagement ring, wedding ring, bo-ring, suffer-ring. Even if you marry your dream person, you will have difficulties.

The Bible never says to expect happiness in this life. It says expect suffering in life. The Bible prepares us to be tough. It does not prepare us to be selfish.

We must teach our children to expect suffering in life, disappointment, and hardships; and, balancing that with provision of God's strength so that they can have faith. By the grace of God, we can overcome and go through anything and everything for the glory of God.

B. Misinterpretation of reality

Luke 24:21 – But ***we had hoped*** that ***he was the one to redeem Israel***. Yes, and besides this, it is now the third day since these things happened.

They had hope in a political Messiah who would bring about political success to their country. Though it is not wrong to expect that, it is not what Jesus came to do in this world. Jesus did not come to conquer the physical world by force but He died to conquer our hearts by love and sacrifice. They were thinking about the Bible through their own understanding and not by what it actually says.

Whenever we are disappointed about Christian life, it is a misunderstanding or lack of understanding of the reality of eternity. Whenever you are disappointed or not totally happy, you are still on a journey not at your destination. In this world, you can be happy somewhat but there will be misery because of sin. In the next world, we will be completely happy. Christian happiness will come in eternity.

C. Walking in the wrong direction

Luke 24:13 – The very day two of them were going to ***a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem,***

They were walking away from Jerusalem. But, Jesus is in Jerusalem. Symbolically, they are walking away from Jesus and towards what they think will give them greater happiness. Following Jesus is not giving them what they want, so they were walking away from Jesus. We may be disappointed with God because our expectations do not match His sovereign purpose.

Luke 9:23 – And he said to all, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny ***himself*** and take up his cross daily and ***follow me***.”

The central theme of Luke is just following Jesus. Remember this verse [23] and just live it daily.

Physically and spiritually speaking, the disciples were going away from Jesus. When we are not given what we want, we deviate from the path of the cross. When you are disappointed, a narrow path slowly becomes wider. We rationalize “it is okay”, “not bad”, or “you do not have to be legalistic to do” _____. It becomes our excuse for compromise, deviation, and seeking pleasure; you seek

happiness elsewhere.

The reality of happiness comes not necessarily from the fulfillment of desire but denial of desires. Less is always more in terms of your heart battle. A believer is unhappy for now because you have wrong desires and wrong expectations.

Realize that it is not the end but a process. The Lord is leading you. You may be walking through the valleys of shadow of death right now, but He will lead you into green pastures. The valleys of shadow of death is not your destination but a path, *through* not *to*. Eventually you only want what you can get and will never lose.

Question: What is the first thing that you really wanted in your life?

For me, it was a bicycle. My brother was always the type to ask for things but I never asked for things. One day when I asked for a bicycle, my dad bought it the next day. I really wanted a bicycle at the time. Right now, I want an airplane.

Our wants and desires change. We need to always guard our heart and desires so that we will not be spoiled. Happiness and contentment in life comes not through the addition of things but through the negation of your desires for useless things.

In Heaven, there will infinite, unending pleasure and happiness because Jesus who loves us will give more of Himself. To the degree you kill the wrong expectations and desires, even in this world, you can be as happy and content even now. Just desire to follow Jesus.

What about the people who are walking? Is there hope for these two discouraged people to change?

When they were not seeking or walking with Jesus, Jesus came to them. The resurrected Christ not only knew where they were physically but where they were spiritually. The omniscient Savior understood. The word “omniscient” sounds so cosmic and cold, but Jesus’ knowledge of His followers is tender and personal. He knows exactly where you are. He is chasing after you. He is coming to you to help in your heart.

Psalm 139:2-3 – You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar. ³ You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways.

He is acquainted with all your ways because He wants you to just walk on that narrow path for His glory and for your eternal happiness.

I. Fire Igniters - How can our hearts be on fire for God?

This is the theme of Luke and Christian Life:

Prayer is talking to Jesus → He talks to us through Word → when fire is ignited, they talk to other people

A. The Word

Luke 24:27 – And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

The root of “interpreted” is where we derive the word “hermeneutics”. Hermeneutics is the science of Bible interpretation. “Interpreted” means to unfold the meaning of what is said - not what we think it said - to unfold the meaning of the Holy Spirit and human author’s intention. It means to explain, to expound, to translate into one’s native language. For the travelers, interpreting the Scripture means explaining it in a way that they can understand.

The travelers were in despair. But we cannot be profoundly comforted by that which we do not know or read. We need to study our Bible.

Question: Do we want direct revelation from God or just written revelation?

There are different kinds of church camps. There is the charismatic circle who emphasizes direct revelation and direct intimacy from God. Then there is the reformed circle that emphasizes the written revelation. Through the Word, we must have a personal, intimate relationship with God.

Jesus uses the Bible explain who He is. They understood after He interpreted the Scripture to them. There is an objective aspect of revelation and then the subjective aspect of understanding the written revelation. There is an objective of the correct doctrine - knowing the author’s intent - and a subjective aspect of deep intimacy of meeting Jesus Christ as we meditate through the Word.

Do not read the Bible like chewing gum, spit it out, then do other things. The Word of God is like eating food. Take the Bible in and make it part of your system, emotion, logic, who you are. Through the Word, you meet Jesus.

B. Jesus

The whole Bible is about Jesus

Luke 24:27 – And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

“Moses and all the Prophets” represents a summary of the Old Testament.

Luke 24:44-45 – Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand

the Scriptures.

Every verse has the treasure of Jesus in it. We must read, meditate, memorize, declare, teach, live, love it. We must read the whole Bible because verse 27 says, “all the Scriptures”. We need to learn to devour the Word. We need more verses to have more of Jesus. We need all the verses to have all of Jesus.

Remember this song:

In the morning, when I rise (x3)

Give me Jesus (x3)

C. Experience

Luke 24:31 – *And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight.*

Their eyes were closed before being opened. This is not in the physical since but in a spiritual sense.

Luke 24:16 – *But their eyes were kept from recognizing him.*

Question: Why did Jesus conceal himself from them?

We all need to see Jesus but not in the physical sense. The theme of Luke is intentionally emphasizing God’s Word. The fire came before they were able to see Jesus. When they were understanding the Scripture, a fire was burning in their hearts. After this, then they were able to recognize Him. The world would not be the same after that. Get the Word of God and the Word will get to you.

Some people think Word of God is like a sculptor. You obey and it forms you. When you make a mistake, it becomes the wrong sculpture that has to be broken.

The Word of God works like a GPS. When you make a mistake, the GPS recalculates. The Word of God has power to correct our wrong path - wrong thinking, wrong heart, and wrong disappointments. We follow Him as we listen to Him, and when we go the wrong way, recalculate. There is consequences: it takes a little longer, you lose gas. But you will get there.

Until we become a walking GPS, we need to walk with Jesus. For those who have failed, do not worry. You are not a sculpture that has to be broken. You are just on a journey, recalculating. He will lead you to the right path. Keep walking.

III. Fire Setters - How can we become the ones who can set others on fire for God?

A. Revelation

*Luke 24:32 – They said to each other, “Did not **our hearts burn** within us while he talked to us on the road, **while he opened to us the Scriptures?**”*

There are a couple things that burns my heart to read the Bible:

1. Psalm 119, the longest chapter in the Bible, is all about God’s Word. It makes me just burn for love for Jesus and for the Word.
2. Whenever I read this verse in Luke, the same burning happens. When I was a small group leader, my prayer was [and is still], “Lord, whenever I minister to somebody, as I lead the Bible study or as I counsel somebody or as I pray for someone, may this happen. May this happen, every time I use the Scripture to minister to people.”

“Burn” means to set on fire, light bruening, or to consume with fire. Fire is not always indicated by your emotion because we have sinful emotion and spiritual emotion. When sinful emotion is too big, it seems like our spiritual emotion is not there. It is not always indicated by your emotion but love that overcomes selfish emotion. Our love for Jesus overcomes everything.

A great example of this is loving your enemies. The Bible says to love your enemies. So, you do not feel like going to your enemies to talk to them. Circumstances are not there. You do not want to hurt your pride. You want take a bat when you go to them. Instead, ask for forgiveness and hopefully you can forgive them. Your love for Jesus overcomes everything in the midst of hardships and difficulties.

*Romans 5:5 – and hope does not put us to shame, because **God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit** who has been given to us.*

The Holy Spirit is using the Word and prayer. Your heart experiences His love. Your desire and love for Jesus overcomes and overpowers everything - your sinful emotions, circumstances and hardships, your sickness, your family problems. You just keep on going loving Jesus.

What are you doing here at 5 in the morning? What if someone asks you? Tell them, “We’re just loving Jesus.”

As the Holy Spirit is pouring His love into our hearts, we cannot help but to love Jesus. We praise. We worship. Everything else is just a reaction, revival, rejuvenation, resurrection, recalculation. We are loving Jesus and being loved by Jesus. He puts this fire in our hearts so that we cannot help but express the fire in everything we do in our lives.

B. Resurrection

*Luke 24:33 – And **they rose** that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together,*

“They rose” or they got up. It is symbolic of spiritual resurrection. The proof of an encounter with the resurrected Lord is your resurrected heart.

C. Direction

*Luke 24:33 – And they rose that same hour and **returned to Jerusalem**. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together,*

Remember they were going away from Jesus. Now they are going to Jesus. They were on the narrow path again to follow Jesus Christ - denying themselves and carrying their cross.

D. Community

*Luke 24:33 – And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them **gathered together**,*

Those who were with them gathered together as a community. They gathered so that they can scatter. When we gather together, we are strengthened and empowered. We pray together. We love each other. We get and give more of Jesus because of one another.

You always have to be in the community. Never do anything alone in your Christian life. Whenever you leave CFC, always find a church as soon as possible. It might take some time. Make sure that church knows when you die. You may attend a church but if they do not notice you are gone, you do not really belong in that church. You have to a holy entanglement in the family of Jesus Christ.

E. Proclamation

*Luke 24:34 – **saying, “The Lord has risen** indeed, and has appeared to Simon!”*

Question: How do you think that they said, “The Lord has risen”?

*Jeremiah 20:9 – If I say, “I will not mention him, or speak any more in his name,” **there is in my heart as it were a burning fire** shut up in my bones, and **I am weary with holding it in**, and I cannot.*

Jeremiah is saying there is fire in his heart. He cannot repress it because it is burning. You cannot help but talk about God.

They were saying “The Lord has risen” with burning hearts. They are setting others on fire for Jesus.

Conclusion

Our simple purpose of life becomes: we need to set the world on fire for Jesus. One heart at a time.

Fire starters are items that start fires. On Amazon, there are a variety of fire starters. More specifically, there are 2,672 kinds of fire starters. They all look different: some big, short, long, tall, etc. Imagine 2,672 ways to start a fire. That is like the body of Christ. We all look different. We all have different personalities and gifts. But we have fire in our hearts.

Let us do it differently but let us set the world on fire.

What are you doing at 5AM? Just loving Jesus.