

- *Two discouraged disciples*

1. Disciples with no grasp of Jesus' resurrection will become utterly discouraged

- *Jesus unrecognised*

- *Talking without reaching any positive conclusions*

2. The remedy to discouragement

- *Jesus rebukes them for their failure to take account of the scriptures*

- *Their problem was slowness of heart*

- *Jesus broke bread and gave thanks – and immediately their eyes were opened*

- *True also for us – believe the Scriptures then experience Jesus' resurrection power*

We meet two disciples who are very depressed. It is the day of Jesus' resurrection but they do not know it. They are utterly miserable and discouraged.

1. **Disciples who have no grasp of the resurrection of Jesus will find themselves utterly discouraged.** This is the way it is with these two men. They are disciples, and Jesus is alive! But they have not yet realised that Jesus is alive. Their discouragement shows itself in two ways. It shows itself in their appearance. Their faces are downcast. Anyone looking at them can see they are utterly depressed.

It shows itself in their talking. They walk eleven kilometres, talking about the failure of all of their hopes. They 'talk and discuss' all the way. When Jesus draws near they want to tell out the whole story to Him as well.

People who are depressed either talk too little – running away and hiding themselves – or they talk too much, going over and over what has happened, but without coming to any encouraging conclusions. These men have done eleven kilometres of walking and talking but they are still discouraged!

2, **The remedy to discouragement is to discover that Jesus is alive!** Jesus helps them out of their distress and discouragement.

First of all, He rebukes them. How foolish they are. How slow and sluggish to read and grasp hold of God's Word. We must notice that Jesus does not say, 'But I am Jesus! Here I am. I am alive!' He talks to them about the resurrection in the Scriptures. If they had been more eager and attentive to their Old Testament Scriptures they would not be so discouraged. The Old Testament is full of descriptions of a suffering Messiah who subsequently would be crowned with glory and honour. If they had paid more attention to the Scriptures they would not have been so surprised about the death of Jesus, and they would not have been so sceptical about the women who were telling them that Jesus was alive. Their problem was slowness of heart. They did not have sufficient spiritual eagerness to search the Scriptures looking for the truth of God.

After Jesus has shown them His resurrection in one way, He shows them His resurrection in another way. He repeats what He had done in the Lord's Supper three days earlier. Immediately their eyes are opened and they realise that Jesus is indeed alive from the dead. Once they have seen the resurrection in the Scriptures, Jesus is ready to show them in another way that He is indeed alive.

This is the way it will be with us. God wants us to believe His Scriptures. Jesus is indeed alive. Once we have come to see by sheer faith that Jesus is alive, then there will be other ways in which we experience His resurrection power.

We must notice exactly what the disciples said. '*Did not our hearts burn within us when He opened to us the Scriptures?*' What made their hearts 'burn' was not the moment when they realised they were talking to the risen Lord Jesus Christ. Their hearts were burning even before

• *Hearts burned as they understood the Scriptures*

Likewise for us...

• *In this life we meet Jesus through the Scriptures first*

• *Confirmations of faith follow*

• *What a transformation!*

• *From slow heart to burning heart*

• *Jesus is to be found all over the Old Testament*



• *Reading the Bible with Jesus by our side*

that time. Their hearts started burning when they saw the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ in the pages of the Old Testament. They experienced Jesus in the Scriptures before they realised to whom they were talking.

We shall never in this life meet with Jesus in His physical resurrection body. Jesus has ascended into heaven and I do not think anyone ever meets Him in His resurrection body. Not just yet. We shall meet Him in that way – but only after this life. We have to meet with Jesus in the way that the Emmaus Road disciples first met with Him. They saw through the Scriptures and by the Holy Spirit that Jesus is alive. Then Jesus did something that confirmed their faith. They had to have faith in the Scriptures first; then their faith was confirmed. That is the way it will be with us. Through the witness of the Scriptures we know that Jesus is alive. We talk to Him through our faith in His resurrection. He talks to us by the Holy Spirit and our hearts burn within us.

What a difference there is between the beginning and the end of this story. They begin with a slow heart. They end up with a burning heart. They begin with scepticism concerning the reports they have had from the women. They return full of faith. They had walked eleven kilometres from the place where they had heard about the women seeing Jesus, and they were full of depression all the way. Now they return full of faith and joy. They walked eleven kilometres with depressed faces. They go back eleven kilometres all the way to Jerusalem, radiant with joy. They have met with the risen Lord Jesus Christ. But remember they met with the risen Jesus first in the Scriptures. Their hearts started burning within them as Jesus read the Scriptures to them.

Jesus is to be found all over the Old Testament. Jesus began with Moses, and then He went on to the prophets, and to the rest of the Scriptures. He went through the entire Old Testament showing that these Scriptures were all about Him. What a Bible study that was! The Holy Spirit was present in power and the greatest expositor of the Scripture that there ever was, was present with them. This is the way to read the Bible – with Jesus by our side. It can still happen by the Holy Spirit. And when it does our hearts will once again burn within us.

	<p>Dr Michael Eaton is highly respected internationally as a theologian, author, preacher and teacher. He lives in Kenya where he is one of the leaders of the Chrisco Fellowship. His <i>Preaching Through The Bible (PTTB)</i> books are highly popular worldwide. Michael Eaton puts the theological and practical meaning of the Bible in a clear and down-to-earth way so that what is written can be easily understood by the reader.</p>	
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