In dir muss brennen

Für die Evangelisation muss man selber brennen

„Ausstrahlung ist, wenn jemand innerlich brennt und man es äusserlich spürt.“

(Gerhard Schöne)

In you must burn what you wish to kindle in others

(Quote from Augustine, 354-430 AD)

How can one meet the longing and need of the world if one does not carry with him the "remedy" which removes the problem at its root? The love, power and omnipotence of Jesus, burning like a fire within us through the Holy Spirit - is the answer to the longing and need of the world. This fire can be had by anyone who wants it. It can spread to anyone and everyone who wants this fire. But how can we pass on this fire if we ourselves are not burning? But how can the world's longing be satisfied if we do not bring the fire to it?

Everyone remembers when they were set on fire by Jesus. Some almost couldn't keep it to themselves and wanted to pass that fire on. Others may have just beamed so hard in front of them that people took notice, of the fire that was so obviously burning.

It is a miracle every time people get to experience God's love and power in their lives and start burning themselves.

Burning yourself

"Radiance is when someone burns inside and you feel it outwardly."

(Gerhard Schöne)

Fire has three characteristics:

Fire gives light. Light scares off certain animals, while it virtually attracts others. Transferred: people who like to live their lives in hiding don't want light coming into their lives. Others crave it.

Fire gives warmth. Warmth is vital for human beings. Warmth also represents security - with a warm blanket in front of the fireplace - you feel at home.

Fire burns anything combustible and purifies metal. The Bible thus gives us a beautiful image for the process of healing. The silversmith knows whether the silver is pure when he sees himself reflected in the silver.

Spiritual Arsonists

"An elderly woman in the United States faithfully prayed for young dynamic George. Her prayer was that this young man would not only come to faith, but become a missionary to boot. She began praying for him when he was still in high school. For many years she prayed without anything happening. George grew up in a family where knowing God personally was not an issue. One day George received a Gospel of John in the mail. Then in March 1955, Billy Graham held a crusade at Madison Square Garden. For the first time, George heard a clear message about love. At that event, George chose salvation, which was made possible for him through Jesus Christ, and surrendered his life to the cross. Some people wonder if decisions like this can really have lasting effects. George Verwer would answer those doubts as follows, "I tell you, what happened to me that night many years ago was a reality in my heart and has been all my life every day since that night." This elderly lady's faithful prayer was answered and out of prayer came the worldwide missionary organization OM (Operation Mobilization). Thousands of people are on the mission field with this organization, taking the love of Jesus out into the world. A faithful prayer warrior who prayed in faith until God answered her request - a spiritual arsonist!"

Emmaus - Jesus Sets Fire anew

Bible study on Luke 24:13ff.

Part I

Where do you have your question marks that rob you of the freshness of faith?

... heart has become sluggish (v. 25)
How often do we find ourselves in the position of not understanding a situation in our lives. We ask "Why?" and "Why?" something had to happen. In such situations in life, there is a great danger that our hearts will become sluggish. The Emmaus disciples had many questions, couldn't place what was happening, and hung their heads.

Does what you know about Jesus have the power to infuse your everyday life with joy?

... there is sadness instead of joy (v. 17)
Even the elementary facts of salvation (the tomb is empty - HE'S ALIVE!! v. 22) no longer cause the disciples to rejoice. We too theoretically know all that Jesus did for us and what we are through HIM. But is this more than just head knowledge?

What fixes your gaze that you can't perceive Jesus?

... the near, present Lord is no longer perceived and recognized.
Though Jesus walks beside them - they do not recognize Him. Their eyes are as if held (v. 16). We often see all kinds of things too: Our problems with various people and with ourselves - but Jesus, who walks beside us and is always with us, we do not perceive. We are fixated on our worries.

Are we also mourning past experiences of faith because we no longer experience anything with Jesus today?

... they look back longingly and live backward (vv. 18-19).
For the disciples, the highlights of their faith are exclusively in the past. That's when they experienced Jesus. Now they rummage in the past: yes then, that was powerful - but today?

What promises do you know? By what does it show that you believe them and have rock-solid confidence in them?

... faith is weak.
The promises and assurances of the Bible (prophecies v. 25) no longer take hold in everyday life. Their power remains closed to me. I know many things in my head, but I can no longer get them into my heart. The promises of the Bible lose their luster. Although I know them, they do not give me motivation and strength for my life.

How easy is it for me to submit to God's will, especially when I really wanted otherwise?

... deep within us is disappointment because everything turned out differently than we had hoped. "We hope that it is he who will redeem Israel" (v. 21). The disciples were disappointed in Jesus. Why didn't he do it the way we thought and wished? He is just the sovereign Lord who makes no mistakes. How quickly it happens to us, too, that we make Jesus the agent of our desires.

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Part 2

What put you off?

Causes of frustration in general:

"If you cannot inflame others, you yourself still live in sins."

(Klaus Bockmühl)

- When **(recurring) sin** plagues us and keeps taking us away from God.
- When we cannot **forgive others** (being inwardly bound)
- When we are so busy doing **things for God's purity,**we no longer have time to refuel with God. We've forgotten what it's like to rest in the bosom of God. All too often we forget that we too may be ministered to.
- When we **stagnate** at some point - not getting anywhere because pride is holding us back, for example
- When we **prefer to help others,** instead of taking care of our spiritual growth by letting others help us
- When **doubt plagues us** and we don't take the time to face the doubts and struggle through them

Evangelism frustration

Disappointment may still be deep in your bones when you think about the subject of "evangelism."

Example 1: I took a friend to the evangelistic event - the evangelist was full of pressure - I was totally embarrassed that my friend had to endure this - I'm pissed at this idiot of a speaker - who knows if my colleague won't do the store you forever now ...

Example 2: I was asked to give a short input at a regional floorball tournament. It was all about the sport. Then a 15 minute break is turned on. Here I am now standing in front of the kids, which in the face was written: "Just make it short, then we can continue to play!" Totally devastated after the input - thoughts chasing through my head, "Was it even worth it? 15 minutes and then straight back into the game - surely that was just a token exercise for the leaders, better to leave it out altogether!"

Example 3: For years I told my young people about Jesus, tried to endear him, invite them to a life with him - but none of them came to faith with me. But then, in a youth service of another church - there it happens - they decide for a life with Jesus. Actually I could rejoice, but I ask myself: Why not with me? What am I doing wrong? What does this other preacher have that I don't? Is there even a point to my efforts?

Do you know these kinds of frustrating experiences? Have you ever talked about it? Vent about it. Speak them out, Write your frustration experience in relation to evangelism on a separate paper.

Exchange the experiences with each other and deposit them on the cross in prayer. Symbolically burn the paper with the frustration experiences.

Your paper is now in the past. Frustration is now in the place where it belongs - on the cross!

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Part 3

Jesus for you

V15: "Jesus drew near." He approaches you, He is there for you, and He is for you. He sees that your wick is only smoldering and He cares about you. He cares about you when you are down in the dumps, when you don't like it anymore, when you are frustrated and disappointed. Your dejection does not leave Jesus cold, it sets him in motion. He takes the initiative. He doesn't want your smouldering wick to go out completely. He wants to set you on fire anew.

How does he do that?

For you ... in twain

V. 14 "...they talked with one another about these things.": don't stay alone with a frustration. Be honest with others as well. Process it in conversation, what moves you. Every leader should have such a confidant before whom he can become honest.

V. 15 ... in conversation, Jesus draws near. As if Jesus draws near to us just where we become honest before one another.

V. 17 He joins in the conversation. This takes the conversation out of the merely interpersonal level. Suddenly Jesus actively brings Himself in and gives the conversation a different direction, He opens up a different perspective.

For You ... in prayer

Finally, both despondents are no longer with themselves, no longer just with the problem - but with Jesus - focused on Him. In conversation with him. A vibrant prayer life is indispensable because through it we take Jesus into what moves us. Our prayer life will always be contested because the Adversary does not want us to turn to Jesus. He knows that if we call on Jesus, he will be pleaded with and will come and intervene.

Example: revival in Uganda began with two despondent pastors becoming honest with each other. They admitted to each other that there was nothing left of their love and passion for Jesus. Then they prayed together for renewal. This was the quiet beginning of a great spiritual movement that is still felt in Uganda today.

For You ... in the Word of God

V. 32: New fire comes where people "open the Scriptures." God's words are still Jesus' most popular and effective means of setting you on fire anew. God's Word is where despondent disciples receive new fire from God. His words are bread for your soul

Bible reading will always be contested. For he enemy does not want you to catch fire for Jesus. Don't always read the Bible with the ulterior motive: what can I pass on to others (in the Jungschi) but first with the thought: what does God want to give me now? Read the Bible first for yourself! The interpretation of the Bible and the telling of the biblical stories in the children's and youth work (and also otherwise in the church work) will have to remain the central point, if we also want to kindle a fire in others.

"I read 4 chapters of Proverbs and 5 chapters of Psalms every morning. Proverbs brings me closer to people; Psalms closer to God."
(Billy Graham)

Do I read God's Word; even the T? Am I doing Bible study?

Am I allowing God's Word to be opened to me by Jesus? Do I strive for deeper understanding, for interpretation? Or am I always just scratching the surface?

Do I believe what I read? Am I asking for faith in his promises? (v. 25: The disciples lacked faith above all things; cf. Hebrews 11:1)

If you have faith like this - how does it show? (What do you dare? What do you rely on?)

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For you ... on the cross

Let the cross set you on fire anew

"And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him." (v 30-31)

... it happens when Jesus comes to the central thing, the most important thing of all - his dying on the cross. He had spoken of this before /v. 26: "Did not Christ have to suffer?" - Jesus proved that on the basis of the prophets), now he makes it vivid on the broken bread and he hands it out to them and they understand:

This is for me!

He did that for me.

Then, all at once, when it comes to the central event of salvation, their eyes are opened and they recognize Jesus Christ.

The core and star of the biblical message is that Jesus died on the cross for my sins so that I might be forgiven, so that I might be saved, so that I might live again in reconciled relationship with the Father. That is the center of the gospel. That is the good news that saves. This message runs throughout the Bible - from Genesis to Revelation! God's plan of salvation for you!

Not to lose sight of what happened at the cross, we regularly celebrate the Lord's Supper. There it literally becomes flesh and blood to us what Jesus did for us. He, the bread of life gives the disciples bread of life to eat. He invites to his table. He gives what we really need. He provides for us. He gives forgiveness. He gives cleansing. He gives eternity.

Is the central point of the Gospel, "Jesus died for me on the cross," the most important thing in the world that moves me, makes me concerned and grateful at the same time?

"Are we still affected people? Those who are not themselves affected cannot affect others."

Promises for you

Jesus says to you:

"The bent reed I will not break, the smoldering wick I will not snuff out." Matt. 12:20 - not even with you.

"I have come to kindle a fire on the earth, and I would that it were already ablaze" Luke 12:49 - by this He also means you

Jesus is inviting you to himself now. He is the Lord who cares about you, who knows your frustrations, who understands your disappointments, who pursues you and wants to help you up. It's the same Lord who gave his power to his disciples at Pentecost - like fire from heaven he sent his Spirit and sets his people on fire with it.

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