

Gleaning In The Fields Of Light

The Road To Emmaus In Our Souls

By Ken Woodley

The Road to Emmaus is all around us.

There is no set path. No particular interstate highway or country lane.

The Road to Emmaus just is—stretching out in every direction.

North. South. East. And west.

We journey upon it each day, whether we realize it or not. Every paved mile that we drive is upon the Road to Emmaus. Each sidewalk step that we take is upon the Road to Emmaus.

Left, right, left.

Through the woods.

Across a field.

Upstairs and down.

For our entire life.

Forward, or backward, day by day.

Curiously, however, we often fail to sense its presence. There are so many distractions along the way. One moment we are deep in contemplative prayer and the next minute we suddenly find ourselves in the middle of life's often tumultuous cacophony of desperate voices and events.

We become like the two disciples described in the Gospel of Luke, walking toward Emmaus and so busy talking about the crucifixion of Jesus and rumors of his resurrection that they fail to see that he is walking right beside them.

The experience is not unlike walking out from a forest of wondrous peace into Times Square.

But even Times Square is part of the Road to Emmaus.

The Road to Emmaus is everywhere—no exceptions.

And Jesus is there—no exceptions—for those who seek him.

Jesus is there, waiting for us to recognize him.

Waiting for us to recognize him in our hearts.

To recognize him in our souls.

To recognize him in each other when we walk his footsteps into the world.

Every day and every step we take hold such promise.

Every day and every step offer us the chance to make the dreams that Jesus has for us come true in this world that so desperately needs those dreams to come true.

But how?

Sometimes, we just need to pull over into a spiritual rest stop and let the tumultuous caterwauling of the world's traffic of distractions wash over us and away.

Often, we most readily recognize the Road to Emmaus—and who journeys upon it by our side—only when we stop for a moment to look around and feel the scenery of our soul and the sunrise of our hearts burning within us.

That is when Jesus is able to “break bread” with us, even if there is not a crumb or a crust or a loaf in sight.

Quite possibly, however, another person *is* by your side, walking the same steps on the Road to Emmaus. In close proximity physically, but also close in the spirit of friendship or love. So close that it is as if the two of you are one single loaf of bread.

But it can also be a fleeting moment, paths crossing briefly in the middle of one single day. Even a handful of minutes or seconds can be enough, and whether you truly know each other or are strangers at a shared crossroad.

For a brief moment there is true communion.

Because the Road to Emmaus is entirely inside us.

Wrapped up in our soul.

We are the pavement and dusty windings.

We are the journey and the destination.

So, stop now and feel what might be all around you, waiting to be recognized for what it is.

And for who he is.