

# A Burning Heart

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by Maxine Fream Phipps Gash (6/15/2014)

There is a beautiful and well-known painting by Robert Zund entitled “The Road to Emmaus” which I have always admired. Zund was a great landscape painter and he concentrated his efforts on capturing the glory of the world of nature more than human emotions. But what is so fascinating about the Emmaus story is not the road but the human response to what took place there. *Luke tells us that when Jesus taught the two disciples, their hearts burned within them.*

Have you ever heard thoughts expressed that made your heart burn? I have, on a few rare occasions, but they were memorable. Now this is a different thing from just having a fresh idea, learning a new skill, or gaining more knowledge. We have those experiences all the time.

**Kyle Idleman** has a new book out with an illustration of an electric light bulb on the cover and the title, AHA! I haven’t read it yet, but I intend to. He’s not only an excellent writer but a godly minister. Also his grandmother has been my neighbor for twenty-five years! We all enjoy “Aha!” moments in our lives. From the days when we first learned to tie our shoestrings, to learning to drive a car, to dealing with computers, there is a satisfaction that comes from attaining knowledge and putting it into practice.

My mother taught me to type when I was seven. (She had taught Business College before she married my father). That skill served me well through high school and college. Later, I turned in my old manual Royal for an electric typewriter, then moved on to a word processor which I thought was wonderful. Graduating to a computer was tough, especially with DOS. When Bill Gates came out with Windows, computing got a lot easier. I learned lap tops, cell phones & Kindles. Now this old great-great grandma is trying to manage a smart phone, which is either smarter than I am or I’m dumber than it is. Take your choice. I need that light bulb to come on!

But the burning heart is something else. It is more than what affects the intellect or even the emotions. It goes down deeper, into the heart, into the very spirit of a person – something that changes the whole view of life itself, and has eternal consequences. It occurred in my life when a godly professor gave me insights into the holiness of God. My heart burned. I recalled those disciples on the road to Emmaus and thought, “So this is the way they felt!” It happened again when another gifted teacher helped me understand the nature of the Holy Spirit. Just reading a book provided another occasion, as the author made clear some truths about the Trinity that I had not comprehended before. Profound truths, truths that take a mature intellect to grasp.

Nevertheless, there are some spiritual truths that even a child can experience. Charles Phipps, who spent most of his life as a missionary in Italy, and to whom I was married for ten short months, composed a song which chronicled my feelings also. It began like this:

“When I was a little child, Jesus came to me;  
Spoke of faith and joy and love; Spoke of Calvary.  
Little did I understand, Little did I know;  
But He took me in His arms, Set my heart aglow.”

May the realization of the Savior’s love always set *your* heart aglow!

In the Lamb, Maxine