

Saturday 27th July



Hearts on Fire

“Light yourself on fire with passion and people will come from miles to watch you burn.”

[John Wesley]

Not only does the Bible speak often about love, but also it speaks a great deal about light. Light is the first thing created in Genesis; in it is the presence of God. Light is used a symbol of understanding and also of faith. John, in his gospel, uses light and darkness to separate those who have come to faith and those who are still lost, and some of his characters even come into the light. One such example is Nicodemus, who first meets Jesus at night – maybe literally, but also as a sign he does not yet have faith; yet by the end of John’s gospel, the same man is burying Jesus in the light of day – no longer hiding, but also finally having come to faith himself.

Jesus also spoke a lot about light. Jesus is the light of the world, but also encourages us to be the light of the world and not to hide our lights away. John Wesley is speaking of this kind of light – the fire that burns within us, that others can see and be drawn to. It’s a fire lit by the Holy Spirit through a deep relationship with God. It’s a fire that burns with passion for the gospel and with compassion for a world still in darkness.

Many hymns speak of light and fire. A couple that I remember from school would be ‘Lord, the light of your love is shining’ (‘Shine, Jesus shine’) by Graham Kendrick (*Singing the Faith*) which speaks of setting our hearts on fire. Another would be ‘Colours of day’ by Sue McClellan, John Paculabo and Keith Ryecroft (*Singing the Faith*), which speaks of lighting the fire and letting the flame burn.

There is also a hymn that recognises that we may not always feel that light burning brightly within us: ‘Brother, sister let me serve you’ by Richard Gillard (*Singing the Faith*) speaks of holding the Christ-light for each other when we fear it may go out.

*God of light and fire
we worship you, your life-changing and creating power.
Set our souls ablaze with passion for the gospel,
that we may speak and show it to others.
Set our souls ablaze with compassion for others,
that they may get a glimpse of your love.
Set our souls ablaze,
that we may worship you in spirit and in truth.
Set our hearts on fire.
Amen.*

Prayers for July 2019 by Revd Claire Rawlinson
You can download this Prayer for the Week at www.mwib.org.uk
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