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## Heart and Soul ... A Weekly Meditation

April 19, 2015

Something Familiar

*“Then the two disciples described what had happened along the road  
and how Jesus was made known to them as he broke the bread.”*

Luke 24: 35 (Common English Bible)

This week I received Brian Wilson’s new album, No Pier Pressure, his eleventh solo album. It is heavy on guest stars including Zooey Deschanel, my favorite guest on the album. Together, Wilson and Deschanel sing a track called, *On the Island*, a breezy lounge tune that imagines becoming stranded in the Caribbean. After listening to this track several times alone I asked my wife to listen and guess who Brian Wilson is singing with. Before the first lyric was sung she answered, Zooey Deschanel! “How could you possibly know that? No one has started singing!” I said. “The whistling,” my wife answered. “Zooey Deschanel’s whistling is familiar to me.” Indeed, the track begins with whistling before the first lyric is sung.

Here, in Luke’s Gospel it is Easter, now later in the day from the experience of the resurrection that morning. Two disciples are walking together along a road, traveling to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. They were talking to each other about everything that had happened in the past few days; the parade into Jerusalem, the arrest and the crucifixion of Jesus. While they were discussing these things, Jesus appears and joins them in their journey. But, they did not recognize that it was Jesus.

Jesus asks the disciples what they are talking about. With brokenness and grief they express their astonishment that anyone would have to ask, “Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who is unaware of the things that have taken place there over the last few days?” (Verse 18) The disciples then proceed to tell “this stranger” all that had occurred. More, they express that their deepest hope had been that the one crucified would be the promised one to redeem Israel. After arriving in Emmaus Jesus pretended to leave the disciples and continue on. But they urged him to stay and share supper with them. After Jesus took his place at the table he took bread, blessed it and broke it. At that moment the two disciples recognized Jesus! Why did they recognize Jesus at that precise moment? According to the Bible, there was something familiar in how Jesus took the bread, blessed it and broke it.

The question that presses against my heart when I read this story is this; will anyone recognize me today as a follower of Jesus? Will there be anything familiar in how I speak, how I behave and the manner in which I love that will result in others seeing Jesus in me? The Christian life has much more to do with our lives than with a mental consent to a collection of thoughts and beliefs. The Christian life is a call to a reorientation of how we are to live. It is a call to an imitation of the life of Jesus. Our progress will be measured when others recognize something familiar in us, something that reminds them of Jesus.

*Prayer: Heavenly Father, You meant that my faith should be alive and vital, full of wonder and power. Give me today a vision of how You intend to use me for Your purposes that I may experience a full maturity of faith, even to the full stature of Christ. Amen.*

Doug Hood