

Easter Monday
St. Luke 24:13-35
April 1st, 2024
Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, UAC
Simpsonville, SC
Pastor Jerald Dulas

Jesus Himself Drew Near

In Nomine Iesu!

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Sermon Text:

“And it came to pass, while they communed and questioned together, that Jesus Himself drew near, and went with them. But their eyes were holden that they should not know Him.”

Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:

O Lord, send out Thy Light and Thy Truth, let them lead us. O Lord, open Thou my lips, that my mouth may show forth Thy praise. O Lord, graciously preserve me, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected. Amen.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Amen.

Hallelujah! Christ is Risen! (He is risen indeed! Hallelujah!)

My dear friends, two men were walking on their way from Jerusalem to Emmaus. They were discussing the events that had just happened, as people are wont to do when important things take place in their midst. A week had passed since the Lord + Jesus had entered into Jerusalem triumphantly to the shouts of the crowds, proclaiming, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He Who comes in the Name of the Lord! Hosanna in the Highest!” The same words we sing in the Sanctus whenever we gather together for Divine Service. After His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, the Lord + Jesus was seen daily in the temple preaching about His impending sacrifice for the sins of the whole world.

On Wednesday of that week, Judas Iscariot went to the chief priests and scribes and agreed to betray the Lord + Jesus for thirty pieces of silver, and from that time forward he looked for an opportunity to betray Him in the absence of the crowds.

On Thursday night the opportunity came, for after the Lord + Jesus instituted the Lord’s Supper for us Christians to eat and to drink His Body and Blood in bread and wine, the Lord and His Apostles went to the Mount of Olives to the Garden of Gethsemane. There the Lord + Jesus prayed that the Cup would pass from Him if it was the heavenly Father’s will, but also that He would do the Father’s will alone. After our Lord + Jesus prayed on behalf of His Apostles and all those who cling to Him in faith that they might be preserved in faith to the saving truth, Judas Iscariot showed up with a multitude of soldiers to take the Lord + Jesus away for His trial in front of the high priest, the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes of Israel.

They had found the Lord + Jesus guilty of blasphemy, curiously the same crime that they were themselves guilty of, for our Lord + Jesus, Who is the Son of God, proclaimed the truth that He was indeed the Son of God, but the chief priests and elders did not believe Him. Therefore, they blasphemed the One Who spoke the truth and chose to cling to the lie that this Man + Jesus was only a man and

not the Lord God. After finding Him guilty, they took Him to Pontius Pilate to be crucified on Friday morning.

Pontius Pilate believe the Lord + Jesus to be innocent, and sought desperately to release Him. Even his own wife warned him to have nothing to do with that Just Man. But Pontius Pilate feared man more than he did the Lord God; he feared what Caesar would do if another riot broke out in his territory. Therefore, he sentenced an innocent man, the Lord + Jesus, to death by crucifixion. Our Lord was then crucified on Good Friday, just two days prior to the men walking to Emmaus, with two other malefactors one on His left and the other on His right, and our Lord in the midst of them. The crowds and the criminals mocked Him. One criminal repented of His mockery and prayed that the Lord + Jesus would remember him in His Kingdom.

When the Lord + Jesus died, He cried out with a loud voice and gave up His Spirit. He was buried in a new tomb hewn out of a rock by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. These men wrapped in Him in linen clothes and laid Him in the tomb. They set a large stone over the tomb. And on Saturday, the day of Sabbath rest, the Jews sought permission from Pontius Pilate to secure and seal the tomb so that the Lord + Jesus could not get out, or so they thought. This was the day before these two men walked to Emmaus. That morning, Sunday morning, they had even heard that women had gone to the tomb and found it empty, but they had not seen the Lord + Jesus. Two Apostles had even gone to the tomb and found it as the women had testified, but they also had not seen the Lord + Jesus. The angel at the tomb had told those who saw the empty tomb that the Lord + Jesus was not there; that He was alive; He had risen from the dead.

These are the events that the two men discussed on their way to Emmaus from Jerusalem, a short three furlong walk. Our Lord + Jesus had only revealed Himself to Mary Magdalene up to this point. She saw Him in the place where He was buried and thought at first that He was the gardener, until He revealed Himself to her. Our Lord + Jesus approached these two men walking on the road to Emmaus, and just like Mary Magdalene at first, they also did not recognize Him. He hid Himself from them.

The Lord + Jesus is hidden from mankind. Nature reveals the existence of the Lord God, some of His divine attributes, and that there is right and wrong. Our conscience reveals that we do not always do the right thing, and usually choose the wrong; it reveals our sin. But the natural revelation—nature and our reason—does not reveal Who the Lord God is and how He wants to be worshiped. It does not reveal how corrupt we truly are, that we cannot save ourselves by being a good person. It does not reveal to us how we are to be saved. These things are hidden from our eyes, and from the rest of mankind.

Only the Lord God can reveal these things to us. Only He can reveal to us how we are to be saved. Our Lord + Jesus when He walked with the two men on the road to Emmaus was also hidden from them. They had hoped that He was the One to redeem Israel, but after His death, they had lost hope. They could not see that the Man walking with them was the Lord + Jesus in the flesh; that it was He Who had risen from the grave. The Lord + Jesus reveals Himself to mankind through means. He reveals Who He is, how He desires to be worshiped, how we can be saved from our corruption of sin through His holy Word.

The Lord + Jesus Himself drew near expounded to them on the road to Emmaus all the things concerning Him that made for their salvation. The Word of God that the Lord + Jesus preached beginning at Moses and all the prophets revealed the Lord + Jesus to the Savior of all mankind. The holy Scriptures reveal that the events that happened in the past week for these men were meant to happen; they had to happen, both for the salvation of these two men, Cleopas and Simon, and for the salvation of all of mankind, especially those who believe on the Lord + Jesus. The Christ had to suffer

and die for the atonement of the sins of the whole world on the tree of the holy cross, so that all those who believe on Him and His sacrifice for them, might be justified before the heavenly Father.

Our sin, and the sinfulness of mankind, keeps our Lord + Jesus hidden from us. Our doubt and lack of hope keeps the Lord + Jesus hidden from us. This is why we continue to preach the pure Word of God, and administer the Blessed Sacraments according to Christ's institution, for it is by these means that the Lord + Jesus is no longer hidden from our eyes, but He is revealed as our Lord and Savior. They reveal that we have forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and salvation in Him alone for through these means He Himself draws near to us.

Even though their hearts were burning within them when the Lord + Jesus preached to them the plan of salvation that is proclaimed in the holy Scriptures, and that was fulfilled in the events of the preceding week, the Lord + Jesus was not revealed to them until the breaking of the bread.

Indeed, in this Blessed Supper of which we are about to partake, there are many who see the bread and wine and only see bread and wine—the Body and Blood of the Lord + Jesus is hidden from them. The Lord's Body and Blood is hidden from those who only believe this Sacrament to be bread and wine. But our Lord + Jesus reveals to us in His Word—the Words of Institution that we hear—that His true and substantial Body is present in, with and under the bread, and His true and substantial Blood is in, with, and under the wine. This Body and Blood given and shed for us in bread and wine is for us Christians to eat and drink for the remission of sins. In this meal, through faith, the Lord + Jesus is revealed to us; He draws near to us, and our remission of sins is revealed to us through faith in these words, "Given and shed for you for the remission of sins". For in this meal, we receive all the benefits that our Lord + Jesus won for us by the events that He did in the week that is just passed.

He is revealed to us to be the Savior, for all that He has done for us has been revealed, and all that He desires to give to us on account of His works and merits are distributed in His means of grace. He Himself draws near to all those who cling to Him in faith and gives them forgiveness, life, and salvation in Him. This faith also carries us through this life—through this world filled with sin and darkness—and carries us to our eternal home in Heaven. Just as our Lord + Jesus rose again from the dead after being dead three days, we too on the Last Day will be raised from the dead, and be given new and glorious bodies, so that the Lord + Jesus Himself may draw near to us in Heaven and that we may walk with Him for all eternity, and hear from Him the works that He did that make for our salvation. Hallelujah! Christ is Risen! (He is risen indeed! Hallelujah!) In the Name of our Lord + Jesus, the Christ. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:

Almighty God, be pleased to accompany Thy Word with Thy Holy Spirit and grant that Thy Word would increase faith in us; bring into the Way of Truth all such as have erred; turn the hearts of the unrepentant; and for sake of Thy Name grant succor to all heavy hearts and those who are heavy-laden, that they may through the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ be relieved and preserved so that they succumb not to the temptation of despair but rather that they gain the victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil; through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with the Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

The Votum:

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.

Soli Deo Gloria!