

Immanuel (Augsburg) Lutheran Church
Shobnier, Illinois
Easter 3A
April 26, 2020
Luke 24:13-35

Holy Heartburn

They said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?" (Luke 24:32 ESV)

In the name of Jesus, our crucified and risen Savior,

Alleluia! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Such glorious words were far from those disciples on the road that day. They were despondent and sad as they discussed the events of the past few days. They were still grieving because their hopes had been dashed. They had hoped that Jesus would deliver Israel from the tyranny of Rome and establish His Kingdom on earth. Instead, there was His arrest, trial, condemnation, humiliation, crucifixion, death, and burial. And despite some reports that He had risen from the dead, they were still dazed and confused. It was all so overwhelming. There was no relief in sight. What they needed, and received, was the fulfillment of this word of God, "Anxiety in a man's heart weighs him down, but a good word makes him glad." (Prov. 12:25).

And what a good word they got, though it didn't seem so at first. As they walked those lonely miles toward Emmaus, a stranger joined them and asked what they're talking about. It seemed a silly question – like asking folks if they'd heard of Coronavirus or stay-at-home orders. Didn't **everyone** know what had happened? Was He the only person who hadn't heard about Jesus the Nazarene? So, in their anguish and despair, they told the stranger about this Jesus. He "was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people," they confessed. Yet the religious leaders did the unthinkable. They "condemned [Him] to death, and crucified Him."

And then a remarkable thing happened. This stranger chastised them for their slowness of heart. They just didn't get it! Their faith was weak and their understanding was dull. They hadn't understood what Jesus had taught them. They didn't believe Jesus when He'd told them everything that would happen. So Jesus walked them through the Old Testament, from Genesis through Malachi, to show what the Scriptures had said concerning the promised Messiah. From the promise in Genesis which declared that He would crush Satan's head and that Satan would bruise His heel, to Isaiah's Suffering Servant, Jesus led them in Bible study to show them that the Scriptures indicated that the Messiah **had** to suffer these things before He entered His glory. He showed them how the Bible pointed to Him.

But even with the Master Teacher Himself teaching them, they still didn't recognize Him. When they arrived home, they invited the stranger to stay with them. And then, when their guest

acted as host at the dinner table, they recognized Him. "He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them." Indeed, they had seen Him do this before. And in that action, their eyes were opened and they recognized Him. And then He vanished from their sight.

But that didn't seem to bother them. Rather, they talked about the effect His presence and His words had had on them. Remember that verse quoted earlier? "Anxiety in a man's heart weighs him down, but a good word makes him glad." (Prov. 12:25). Here it is fulfilled in the lives of those disciples. While they didn't recognize it at the time, they did once Jesus was revealed to them. "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?" And while Jesus opened the Scriptures to them, the Father opened their eyes so they could see Jesus in the breaking of the bread. And they realized the delightful feeling of holy heartburn caused by seeing their risen Lord. What a feeling that must have been!

They were so filled with joy they couldn't wait to return to Jerusalem. The walking disciples became the running disciples. They had to tell the others what they had seen and heard. And it couldn't wait. Jesus really was risen from the dead and they had seen Him. News this great just had to be told!

And that's exactly what happens in God's House each week as together we confess the crucified and risen Lord who we recognize in the Word, and on our altar. God opens our eyes that we may see our salvation in Christ, as Simeon did. He opens our ears that we may receive His Word to gladden our heart, fill us with joy, and strengthen us to live as His children. He places on our tongue the very Body and Blood of our crucified and risen Savior to cleanse our lips as did the burning coal that touched Isaiah's lips. This is joy beyond words!

We who suffer broken hearts, grief, anguish, misplaced trust, dashed hopes, and more are restored to joy the same way those disciples were. We who are weighed down by anxious hearts, especially in these days, are likewise made glad by a good word. For as we listen to Jesus in His Word, we don't have to settle for just one post-resurrection appearance, we can enjoy all of them. Because we live at this time, we can see and study the founding, the unfolding, and the flourishing of Christ's church here on earth. By the Holy Spirit, we can "read, mark, learn and inwardly digest" His Word which tells us of God's plan for our salvation and reveals how it was carried out in Jesus Christ. We can look back and see Jesus on each page of the Old Testament, as well as the New. We can look at history, sacred and secular, and see how the church grew through the proclamation of that Word.

Yet, there's more. Jesus is also revealed to us in the sacraments. In our Baptism, He called us by name as He washed away all our sins and delivered to us the benefits of His sacrificial death. He didn't wait for us to find Him, He came to us to make us His children. The work was all His. Likewise, in the Sacrament of the Altar, He personally gives us His very own Body and Blood for the forgiveness of our sins. In that Holy Meal He gives us that which was sacrificed for our sins so that they are forgiven and that gives us life with Him, even now, with the fullness of life yet to come after we conquer the 'final enemy' through Him. Hear our Lord Jesus' words spoken to you as He gives you Himself and reveals Himself to you. Hear His word of blessing that the Body

and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ that you receive will strengthen and preserve you in body and soul to life everlasting. God grant that those words convey you to your heavenly home, where you will feast at the eternal banquet, where your eyes will be truly opened to see Jesus face to face.

Beloved, when we hear our Lord's Word, when He is revealed in the breaking of the bread in our midst, He warms our cold and anxious hearts so that we may joyfully live in His presence forever. So listen to that Word. Believe it and take it to heart. Hear over and over again that Jesus who died on the cross for your sins is alive. See your Savior in the breaking of the bread.

Alleluia! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia! Amen.

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

Rev. Timothy J. Landskroener