

Lessons for The Third Sunday of Easter

April 15, 2018

Psalm 4 ~ *A call for God's answer in times of distress and a rebuke of those who turn away from God.*

Acts 3:11–21 ~ *The people's amazement at a healing gave Peter an opportunity to tell them about Jesus.*

1 John 3:1–7 ~ *By making us His children, God has shown us great love and called us to lead holy lives.*

Luke 24:36–49 ~ *When Jesus joined the disciples Easter evening, he opened their minds to the Scriptures.*

GATHERING THE TEXTS: Putting it All Together Again

Like a cracked Easter egg, Humpty Dumpty couldn't be put together again even with the best efforts of "all the king's horses and all the king's men." Jesus' community of disciples was shattered by his death. Even when they were in the same place at the same time, they were still not a real fellowship until Jesus brought them his peace. We have fellowship with God and with one another when we know our sins are forgiven in the name of Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. In Christ, God puts us together again so that as a restored community we may reach out to others who need to know God's great healing power.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERVICE: Jesus, in Your name I have received forgiveness and salvation. As I share Your name with others help me call them my sisters and my brothers -- in Your name. Amen.

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT: Our minds have been opened by the power of the Holy Spirit so that we recognize Jesus as the promised Messiah. Our hearts have been opened by the Father's love so that we share ourselves and our resources to proclaim the peace of sins forgiven in Jesus' blood.

OFFERING PRAYER: O Holy Spirit, power divine; You opened up this heart of mine,
And by the power of Jesus' blood, I bring these gifts to spread His Word.
Work peace, O Lord, among us all through sins forgiven,
And through the witness of my life bring souls to heaven. Amen.

CONVICTION AND COMFORT: Our hearts are often filled with fear, our minds troubled, and our communities disrupted because we don't understand what it means that *Jesus had to suffer and rise from the dead on the third day*, This message informs our study of Scripture and brings us peace from God, putting power into the dynamic of sins repented and forgiven. Having experienced (*witnessed*) God's grace in Christ, we have now been commissioned as *witnesses to the nations*, in the way we live, people who promote peace in our communities through our lives.

BONUS: "Readings from Acts" *[may be sung to tune LSB 707, evan, 8 6 8 6 iambic]*

The people crowded 'round to see;
They did not understand.
The crippled beggar they all knew
Stood there at Peter's hand.

"He is the Christ, the Promised One,
From God the Father's love.
Repent! And God will cleanse your sins
With mercies from above."

"This man was healed in Jesus' name;
Why do you stand and stare?
He is the one you crucified –
Or don't you even care?"

Grant, Holy Spirit, to Your church
The eager words to say,
That hearts be turned to do Your will
And souls be saved today!

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