

## Word of God – Word of Life

Luke 24:1-53

*Jesus Lives! In Us, Among Us, For Us and Through Us*

One way of letting Luke's magnificent, multi-layered account of the first Easter shape our lives is to let each of the three sections first speak for themselves – making connections with our own Easter faith.

In each section Luke shows people moving from sorrow to joy; from bewilderment to understanding; from unbelief to faith. They (and we) are asked to remember the words of Scripture and the very words of Jesus.

Luke 24:1-12 – Faithful, but broken-hearted women discover an empty tomb and hear a message of incredible hope and joy. Their witness, while true, is dismissed.

Luke 24:13-35 – Two disciples on the road of broken dreams and shattered hopes hear words that begin to burn away their sorrow and fears. They receive in the breaking of bread more than their dreams could contain.

Luke 24:36-53 – One emphasis here is that the Risen Lord is none another than the servant-minded Jesus who was betrayed, forsaken, suffered and died. Keeping Cross and Empty Tomb together empowers our mission of proclaiming repentance and forgiveness to all people.

Luke ends the story of Easter and his entire Gospel on notes of blessing, of joy and of continuing worship in community.

The suggestion is that you spend one week with each section perhaps reflecting on how your own faith journey includes both sorrow and joy, perplexity and understanding, doubts and faith. You might also be alert to ways that the Risen Lord is present in your life and in our congregation.

*Our Lord has written the promise of resurrection, not in books alone, but in every leaf in springtime.*

~ Martin Luther

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*Living into Resurrection*

Some gleanings from Luke's three Easter scenes:

- Belief in the resurrection of Jesus did not come easily to any of the disciples. By showing the hesitant, stumbling journey from doubt and sorrow to belief and joy, Luke demonstrates that the resurrection is no wishful fantasy seized on by gullible folks.
- In the Easter narrative and throughout Luke's Gospel three threads that connect us to the Risen Lord Jesus are masterfully woven together: the deeds and words of Jesus; the entire narrative of the Hebrew Scriptures, and the Lord's Supper.
- In his Easter account, Luke pairs Jesus' death and his resurrection; Jesus' teachings and the Lord's Supper; repentance and forgiveness. Each one interprets and enriches the other. This continues to be true for the Church today.

*The Pull of God's Good Future  
An Easter Reflection*

We usually think of our lives in the present as being shaped by the events, choices and circumstance in the past. Jesus' resurrection and ascension indicate that our lives and choices are also shaped by God's good future.

Because Jesus lives and reigns to all eternity we are free to live in anticipation of God's reign and to align ourselves to God's character and wishes as revealed in Jesus.

With an anchor as a symbol for hope (Hebrews 6:19), we can imagine our congregation as a fragile boat in a swift flowing river unable on our own to make headway against the fierce current. An anchor is set far upstream into the future and the Spirit brings to us the rope of faith so that we can pull ourselves into God's renewed creation.

We neither earn nor bring about the inheritance that awaits us. Instead our lives are already being transformed by the future Jesus has secured for us by his life, death and resurrection.

*Jesus' resurrection is the beginning of God's new project not to snatch people away from earth to heaven but to colonize earth with the life of heaven. That, after all, is what the Lord's Prayer is all about.*

~ N. T. Wright