

Easter #3

4-18-2021

J.V. Trautwein, Pastor

Vicar Karen Pugatch

Celebrate (Introduction)

“The gospel for the third Sunday of Easter is always one in which the risen Christ shares food with the disciples, meals that are Easter template for the meal we share together. In today’s gospel, Jesus both shares the disciples’ food and shows them the meaning of his suffering, death, and resurrection through the scriptures, the two main elements of our Sunday worship.”

We come together in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Opening Hymn: [“Word of God, Come Down on Earth”](#)

Psalm: Psalm 133

“Answer me when I call, O God of my right!

Thou hast given me room when I was in distress.

Be gracious to me, and hear my prayer.

² O men, how long shall my honor suffer shame?

How long will you love vain words, and seek after lies? *Selah*

³ But know that the Lord has set apart the godly for himself;
the Lord hears when I call to him.

⁴ Be angry, but sin not;

commune with your own hearts on your beds, and be silent. *Selah*

⁵ Offer right sacrifices,

and put your trust in the Lord.

⁶ There are many who say, “O that we might see some good!

Lift up the light of thy countenance upon us, O Lord!”

⁷ Thou hast put more joy in my heart

than they have when their grain and wine abound.

⁸ In peace I will both lie down and sleep;

for thou alone, O Lord, makest me dwell in safety.”

Hymn of Praise: [“Beautiful Savior!”](#)

Prayer of the Day

“Holy and righteous God, you are the author of life, and you adopt us to be your children. Fill us with your words of life, that we may live as witnesses to the resurrection of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever Amen.”

1st Reading: [Acts 3:12-19](#)

2nd Reading: [1 John 3:1-7](#)

The Gospel: [Luke 24:36-48](#)

Hymn of the Day: [“Jesus the Very Thought of You”](#)

The Message: ([Video Link](#))

This week’s gospel reading from Luke is almost like a “deja vu” experience since last Sunday’s gospel lesson, as found in John’s account of the resurrected Jesus’ first appearance among His disciples, seems very similar. Although John continued with the story of Thomas, which Vicar Karen eloquently presented last Sunday, Luke gives his version of the event.

Some may point to the differences and question the reliability of either Luke or John and maybe both. But when you think about it this is not that unusual. Often you can have several people witness the same event or happening and later their recollections of the same experience will not be the same. It may lead to asking yourself if they experienced the same event. Each may recall what happened in light of what their mindset allowed them to see or hear. The fact is what we see and hear is processed and even unknowingly interpreted by all of our previous experiences and emotions. Thereby, again unknowingly, see and hear that which our mind allows us to actually see and hear. The human being is not capable of being truly objective. This frailty of the human being is often taken advantage of by others who wish to manipulate us and often ends up being brainwashing. The extreme usage of manipulation is used by dictators. The legal community relies on this seeming flaw of differing observations in making their courtroom cases. We see this being employed in the current case of the death of George Floyd with the autopsy evaluations by coroners and medical examiners with differing results.

Therefore, it is not unusual to not only see some similarities but also differences in the account of the first appearance of Jesus to His disciples. John was most likely a disciple of Jesus and some would say his gospel was written late in his life and reflected more of his personal convictions and theological thinking than with a historical mindset. His writings tend to emote emotions as well as a theology of love as revealed through Jesus as the Son of a loving God. Therefore, he saw the highly emotional story of Thomas as important in Jesus’ first and second appearance with the disciples as a gathered group.

On the other hand, Luke was not a Jew like the other early followers of Jesus and was not a disciOple. He was a gentile who practiced medicine, a physician. This led him to view man in terms of the actual. Thus he wrote within a historical context which is not only reflected in his gospel but also his book of Acts. Since he was not present at this event he would have been told about it by others who were present at the appearance of the resurrected Jesus. Perhaps he was even told about Thomas but that story did not resonate with him. His account was almost a matter of fact writing as any reporter would write. In fact he related the story about the

human reactions of the disciples as a whole – not Thomas. He wrote, “They were startled and terrified, and thought they were seeing a ghost.” The disciples reactions were very human when actually seeing someone who had died standing in their midst. I guess maybe some of us would either start running or just stand frozen in place out of fear if we would be so confronted. But John did not record such fear.

Unlike John also, the disciples needed further convincing than just His presence. It is here that Luke intertwines John’s story of Thomas and it attributes the Thomas’ doubts as being the disciples doubts. “Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.” Luke then relates, “While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, ‘Have you anything here to eat?’ They gave him a piece of broiled fish and he took it and ate in their presence.”

If Luke knew about the Thomas’s story, it wasn’t important to him for the disciples as a whole were his focus. His account related that the disciples needed more proof in order for them to believe. In his mindset when hearing about the event he saw the disciples having the very normal reaction which people would have with such an experience –fear and doubt. Therefore unlike John whose emphasis upon faith was enough for his readers, Luke picked up on the disciples continuing doubt. They seemed to have needed more proof that Jesus was just not a ghost or mirage of some kind. Luke saw the act of Jesus eating of the fish was of paramount importance for not only the disciples but people to believe, especially in the gentile world. That action was something of the actual world and not just some mystical experience. Such proof was not seen as important to John who was governed by faith no less he had personally witnessed the risen Christ.

Both of the gospel writers though saw the physical appearance of the resurrected Christ as being of utmost importance and therefore they processed what they saw and wrote in light of their own mindset. They emphasized what they thought would be helpful to their readers to believe the good news that Jesus did conquered death and rose from the dead. In either case the central truth would prevail – He is risen!

Both gospel accounts of this event end in reinforcing the writer’s mindset in what they saw or heard concerning this event. John ends with the emphasis on the doubting Thomas which calls for his readers to have faith in order to believe the resurrection which was told to them in the message of this story. “But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.”

Luke ends with a different emphasis for he concluded. “Then he (Jesus) opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, ‘Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.’” Luke places the emphasis on the need for the disciples first to begin witnessing to their fellow Jews in Jerusalem and then proclaiming Christ’s message and His resurrection to all

of the world, all nations - Jew and gentile alike. Luke's message thus became one of mission. Jesus revealed His resurrection to the disciples so that they first would be so convinced in an actual experience that they would then witness to this risen Christ.

We often believe Paul to be the first to place the emphasis of spreading Christianity to the world of the gentiles. Actually Luke was before Paul to bring forth that the message of Jesus was to be for all people not just the Jews. It is reasoned that he followed through with this message by becoming a traveling companion of Paul in at least some of his missionary journeys into the gentile world. We find this assumption in that the accounting of Paul's journeys in the book of Acts, Luke often made mention of "we."

I decided to write this sermon because so often we may think that the Bible contradicts itself or is not accurate in its message. It takes time and the fortitude to come to the understanding of the "what, why's, and wherefores" and the context of what was written in order to gain a thorough understanding of what, on the surface, may seem in conflict. By a thorough study we will discover the real meaning or truth which is presented. Like in real life the compilation and examining of the many mindsets who have witnessed an event will eventually bring forth the truth, so it is with reading and understanding the Bible.

This is so important today when truths have become falsehoods because they are manipulated by personal wishes, ideologies, and self-aggrandizement. This is certainly true when the Bible is quoted to support misconceptions and falsehoods. We have seen the disastrous results when things are just taken on face value and believed without any validation or truthful backing. This is why Luke was so careful in recording this most important event in Christianity. We must also be must careful in believing what we may see or hear as well as what we proclaim. We are fortunate to have the witnesses such as John and Luke so that we can through faith and understanding proclaim the good news that "He is risen!" in order for us to know the truth that God is a God of love for all of us.

Anthem: ["We've Come This Far by Faith" - Virtual Choir](#)

Offering*: ([On-Line giving Link](#))

We give thee but thine own, what e'er the gift may be; all that we have is thine alone, a trust, O Lord, from thee.

The Prayer

Our eternal loving Father, with dangers surrounding us every day we pray that your living hand be our protection. May we as a society face our weaknesses and make the difficult decisions in order to find a better way of life. Let us put aside our egocentric ideologies so that we are not part of the problem but part of the solution. Bring comfort and peace to those so directly affected by the violence which continually invades our lives. Enter the lives of those who continue to directly and indirectly perpetrate violence and hatred upon their fellow human beings. May they see the hurt and destruction they are doing and give them a message of love

to live by. Bring healing and comfort to those who are fighting the virus at this time. Give a sense of urgency and understanding to those who may be resisting being vaccinated so that life may continue for all.

We pray for all who need your comforting and healing presence especially Bob and Pat Allen, Heidi Brackbill, Parker Brennan, the Cronin family, the Elshafei family, the Fultz family, the Johnson Family, Robert Karner, Donna Mayhew, Wendy Neumann, Elise Oliver, Peter Olsen, David Otto, Dottie Reitz, Robert Reitz, Linda Rigby, Colin Shea, Jerry Shea, Jack Smith, the Spiegler family,, Della , Yongyin Sun, Esther and Buck Trautwein, Linda Williamson, Wyatt Lee Wolf, Pastor Jack,
We ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen

The Lord's Prayer

The Benediction

The Lord bless you and keep you;
The Lord make His face shine upon you;
The Lord lift up His presence upon you and give you peace. Amen

And now my brothers and sisters
Live on knowing God's love,
The joy of living this life of love,
And the peace which only comes through the power of His presence within you.
So live on in Love, Joy, Peace, and Power.

Closing Hymn: ["I Know That My Redeemer Lives"](#)

Hopefully, soon we will resume in person services – stay tuned. The online worship experiences will continue as well as the Midweek Thoughts.

*Offering to be sent to:
Bob Brackbill
10274 Raleigh Tavern Road
Ellicott City, MD 21042

Epiphany Lutheran Church
9122 Sybert Drive
Columbia Hills
Ellicott City, MD 21043
<https://www.epiphanylutherancolumbia.org>

Please note that you now have the opportunity of online giving with the link found after the offering designation or here: https://tithe.ly/give_new/www/#/tithely/give-one-time/2627291

Announcement!!!

Weather permitting we will continue our outdoor worship each Sunday, 9:30-10:30 AM. We will be requiring masks and social distancing. Please bring your lawn chair and dress according to the temperature.