**Luke 24:13-35 April 26, 2020**

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Our text for this morning comes from the Gospel of Luke the 24th chapter here re-reading these words. “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory? And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.” This is our text.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Big news is not easily ignored. Especially today, in the midst of a pandemic, in the midst of daily briefings and updates on executive orders. Especially when there are new regulations on being out in public, and serious concerns about people’s health. Big news can’t possibly be ignored when every single channel can be playing the same live broadcast, or every radio station can be switched in the case of an emergency. Big news changes our everyday lives whether we are personally affected by it or not. An attack against America will immediately trigger a change in our daily routine. Not only will we want to know the facts of what happened, this is an event we will discuss with our friends, family, and co-workers for weeks, even months to come. And while big news in the world can vary from it’s impact and destruction, one thing will always be true when it comes to life-changing events, and it’s no different than what we are going through today. And that is that big news, is easily, misinterpreted. It is easily confused. Speculation runs wild when it comes to big news. What will this mean? How will it change our lives? How long will we have to continue living the way we are now?

Big news. That’s certainly what the disciples that we find in our Gospel lesson on the road to Emmaus were discussing. While it may feel like a lot of time has passed since we celebrated Christ’s death and resurrection, these disciples were discussing these events because they had happened *that very day.* The road to Emmaus narrative of Luke chapter 24 takes place the very same day of Christ’s resurrection, only 3 days after Christ’s Passion. Jesus being beaten and dragged through the streets of Jerusalem were fresh in their minds. And they were now interpreting this big news. The events of what had happened to Jesus Christ, and the new news that He had risen from the dead was spreading like wildfire. Not only was Jesus Christ’s popularity at an all time high from His teaching and miracles in His ministry, but He had come to Jerusalem at a point of time when people were gathering together for Passover. And the fact that Jesus had rode in on a donkey and been hailed as a hero, and in only a few short days, been condemned to death and crucified was the big news for the people of Jerusalem. These disciples were returning and discussing what everyone else was thinking about, arguing about and speculating about. That is, except for one man.

Jesus Christ appears to them and asks them about what they were discussing. And it is remarkable that Luke includes their reaction, because it’s a part of this narrative that we often overlook. It was so astounding to these disciples that this man would even have to ask what they were talking about that they stood still and looked sad. So much had changed in their lives in this short span that the idea that they could be like this man and have no memory of it just left them dumbfounded. It would be as if you came upon someone on a walk or in the grocery store and they had no idea why people were wearing masks, why you couldn’t go sit down at the M-22 Grill and get a bite to eat, or why everyone was distancing themselves from each other. How could this person exist? Where were they these past few months? How could they not know?

It’s amazing isn’t it? To think about these disciples here this morning. Two men who had been with Jesus in His ministry, had seen miracles and heard his teaching, and yet could not seem to put the pieces together about what He had done for their salvation. They were confused. All the information was there but they did not know how to interpret it. No doubt they had heard speculation about who Jesus was and why He came, we see that in the answers that the disciples give Jesus earlier in the Gospels when Jesus asks them who the people say He is. And we also see it here in their answer about what they were talking about saying that they had hoped that Jesus would be the one to “redeem Israel.” All of the answers were right in front of them, but they just couldn’t quite grasp the enormity of these big events that had taken place.

Easter comes and goes so fast that sometimes it is hard to process all that is going on in our own lives too isn’t it? From Palm Sunday to Easter Morning it is a whirlwind of emotions, where Jesus is instituting the Lord’s Supper, dying on the cross, and rising again. We have the benefits of scholars, theologians, and resources that can help us make sense of all that we see and experience during this Holy Week, but unfortunately, we still don’t really get it. We still overlook the enormous magnitude of Christ’s death and resurrection. Especially this year, when we weren’t able to meet together in person, it can feel like Easter just sort of came and went without any kind of recognition on the monumental observance that it is. In some ways Easter comes and goes so fast we forget about it when the chocolate eggs and bunnies are all eaten. Easter just kind of fades away as we put away the plastic eggs for next year. Oh well, what else is going on? What else did Jesus do? What will we talk about now Pastor, what else does the Bible have to teach us? How often have we looked at Christ’s Passion and His resurrection in an aloof way? Or not even bothered to continue in the study of His Word?

These disciples were walking with Jesus Christ, He was right in front of them, yet He was hidden from their eyes. All they had to recognize Him were what He was saying to them, His Words, and eventually their hearts burned from His teachings. So, it is for all of us. Christ is with you, right before your eyes, present in His Word, and do you even see him? Or are you as foolish, as these disciples were? Jesus calls them foolish and slow of heart. And so are we, when we fail to recognize that Christ is right before our eyes, speaking to us, guiding us, and revealing His glory through His Word and Sacraments.

Because that’s where we see him. That’s where the disciples saw him the clearest. While the 9th and 10th commandment speak about the dangers of covetousness and how it’s sinful to be jealous of something that God has blessed someone else with, we all at one point in our lives, when we are taught the accounts of what happened in the Bible get a little jealous of some of the gifts that the people of God were blessed with. And while some have been jealous of Samson’s strength, or Solomon’s wisdom and riches, imagine for just one second what it would be like, to have Jesus Christ interpret the Scriptures starting from Moses. Imagine the experience of sitting in front of the greatest teacher of all time, telling You the truth of the Bible. These disciples described this teaching by saying that their hearts were burning when Jesus opened up the Scriptures for them, when Jesus revealed the truth that all Scripture points, to Him. Finally, in that moment, the Big News wasn’t the speculation, the Big News was as clear as crystal. The Big News was that the Christ had come to Earth, He had died for their sins, and that He had won the victory over death once and for all.

That’s is the message of the Bible. That is the truth of His Word. That is the final piece in understanding and interpreting this Word of God. It all points, to Jesus Christ. It all reveals to us the plan of the Savior who came into this world to die and rise again in order to save us, His fallen creation. Everything that Christ did and that was done in the Old Testament is meaningless, if Jesus Christ did not die on the cross and rise again from the grave. His death was the culmination of not just His ministry, but the events that were put in place from the moment that man had initially fallen into sin. And these disciples now saw him, and heard him, and understood, for the Scriptures had been interpreted for them. They saw Christ in the creation of the world. They saw Christ in the passing down of the covenant from generation to generation. And they saw that Jesus Christ dying and rising again was for their salvation. Jesus Christ was revealed to them, not in His physical presence, but through His Word.

And as Jesus sits down, took bread, blessed it and gave it to them to eat, they recognized Him for who He was, the Christ. The one who had instituted a meal for the forgiveness of their sins with bread and wine. It only took one element of the Lord’s Supper for their eyes to be opened, and now that Jesus was revealed in both Word and Sacrament, He no longer needed to be physically present. He disappears from their sight because they knew the truth, they understood where He was to be found, and they ran and told the other disciples that Jesus Christ had risen indeed.

These disciples were confused, but their confusion was put to rest in a proper interpretation of the Scriptures and in the breaking of the bread. So it is for us. Our Easter joy has not ended, even though it’s a very different experience this year to observe the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The message of Easter, the Big News that has been revealed to us has not passed away, but now it has been interpreted. We are saved. We are redeemed. We are made Christ’s very own and He is revealed to us, not by Him appearing in a video online, or in a radio broadcast, or appearing to you in your own home in some supernatural way. But in the means that He has provided for our benefit. He is present in His Word. He is present in His Holy Supper instituted by God himself for us to eat and drink for the forgiveness of our sins. If you want to see Christ, call me, text me, e-mail me, reach out and set up a time and come to Trinity and receive him as he is revealed to you. For His body and blood are truly present in the Lord’s Supper, under the elements of bread and wine, for the forgiveness of your sins and the strengthening of your faith. That’s Big News. That is an amazing mystery that can only be understood in the revelation of the Scriptures. And that is worth talking about as we go throughout our days and our week, not the superficial news of this material and finite world, not the endless speculation of a timeline for this disease, or a vaccination, or a case total, or a death toll, and what it means for our world, but the everlasting gifts that God has provided for our benefit and to bring us closer to our heavenly home.

Easter continues. The Big News is ours to dwell in, and more than that, to share. While the world may have moved on from this joyous holiday we remain basking in the light of the empty tomb. For our hope is found, in the events that those disciples were discussing. Our hope remains in the fact that Christ died on the cross. And our new life stays rooted forever in the Word of God. As Peter says in our Epistle lesson we have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding Word of God. For all flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass, the grass withers, and the flower falls, *but the word of the Lord remains forever.* What is this Word? It’s the Gospel. The Gospel of Christ who came, who died, and who rose again. Christ is Risen! Alleluia! He is Risen Indeed! Alleluia! He is not dead. Praise be our crucified and risen Lord who has saved us.

Amen.

The peace of God which surpasses all human understanding keep our hearts and minds through faith in Christ Jesus Our Lord.

Amen.