

It's Easter Sunday afternoon. Time for a walk. A walk to work off Easter dinner. A walk to get some Easter sun. A walk because Spring is in the air and life feels good.

In our lesson, our two Easter afternoon walkers aren't feeling any of that. They should have a spring in their step, fired up with Easter. Instead they're walking heads down, down and out. Why? They had hoped. They had hoped Jesus was the One who would save Israel. But now their hopes have turned to disappointment, doubt, despair. Now they're down and out. Down and out, talking about Jesus being killed. Down and out, talking about those strange reports from the women - Jesus' body missing, angels claiming Jesus was alive.

Here is where hope comes back into the picture. How? The Easter afternoon walkers don't talk themselves into hope. It's Jesus who brings hope into the picture. Jesus catches up with them, starts walking with them. They don't recognize him, but he knows them. Jesus knows why they're walking down and out - they've given up on Jesus. And Jesus knows what they're talking. He wants in on that talk, so he asks: "What are you discussing here?" The Easter afternoon walkers stop dead in their tracks: "**Don't you know what's happened in Jerusalem?**" Sometimes when we're feeling hopeless, we think we're the smartest people in the room and we get a bit impatient with those who don't know things like we know things. But Jesus doesn't let himself be put out. Jesus wants in on this conversation. So he asks again. And this time the disciples talk. They talk about their hopes - how Jesus was a great prophet, powerful in word and deed. They tell how Jesus was more than a prophet; in fact, they had hoped Jesus would be the One to redeem Israel. But then their Jesus was killed, crucified; and now their hopes were crushed.

Ever been there? Disappointed? Down and out? Life not going according to plan. Your world falling part. What goes through our minds? We might start with questions: "Why? What am I supposed to do? What's God up to?" When we don't get the answers we want, when we don't know what to do, when we don't see things working the way we want, then what? Well, what's the only possible answer? Something must be horribly wrong. It doesn't matter what others see or say. It doesn't matter what God has said or done in the past. If we're not getting the answers we want, if we're not seeing what we want to see, if we're not feeling what we want to feel, then something must be horribly wrong. And that, my friends, is where the Easter afternoon walkers were.

At first, Jesus walked along, listening, waiting. Listening to his disciples, he could tell something was horribly wrong. But it wasn't with him. It wasn't with what God was doing or not doing. What was horribly wrong was his disciples' hopelessness, their quit. **"How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe."** What would you expect Jesus to say next? "Why didn't you believe the women?" "Why didn't you believe the angels?" "Why didn't you check out the grave yourselves." We might expect Jesus to say: "Open your eyes; look; it's me!" But Jesus didn't say any of that. Jesus didn't want these disciples to base their hopes on their eyes and ears. Eyes and ears make mistakes. Jesus wants his disciples to base their hopes on the Word of God. So Jesus said: **"How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken."** With that, Jesus gave his Easter afternoon walkers a walking Bible Class - **"Beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself."**

I wish I had a copy or a podcast of Jesus' talk. Instead, Luke gives us the theme of Jesus' talk: **"Did not the Christ have to suffer all these things and then enter his glory?"** "Christ had to suffer?" Why? Two answers. First, that was God's plan. But why? Why was that the plan? Well, someone had to suffer, someone had to pay.

Think about it. I won't say "Put yourself in the place of Jesus' disciples," we've already done that - what they were seeing, what they were hearing didn't make sense. We understand their disappointment, their hopelessness, their quit. At some time, most all of us have been there.

Now try this - put yourself in the place of God. God gives his love, his plan and promise to us. Time and again, he gives us his plan and promise. He shows us again and again: "You can count on me." But when the going gets tough ... when God's way doesn't make sense ... when the way of the world looks so good ... do you see where I'm going? What do we do? Instead of grabbing hold of God's plan and promise, we might hedge on what we give, hedge on what we do for God; we have to look out for ourselves. Instead of grabbing hold of God's plan and promise, we see what the world promises and we can't miss out on what the world offers, so God gets left behind. Instead of grabbing hold of God's plan and promise, when times get tough, we might sulk, lash out, give up and quit. Can you imagine how disappointing that is for God? After all God has done for us, can you imagine how frustrating it is for God to have his plan and promise mean so little to us?

That's why Jesus had to suffer. On Good Friday, we read from Isaiah: "**He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities, ... the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.**" At the cross, Jesus faced God's disappointment, his frustration, his anger, his judgment - all for us.

Now, instead of facing a frustrated God, instead of facing a disappointed God, we get to walk together with God. We have Jesus looking to walk and talk with us: "Come with me! I forgive you! I'm here, still here, with my plan and promise for you!" We hear that so many times, maybe we let it go in one ear and right out the other. Maybe that's why God lets us hit rock bottom now and then. But for those hopeless disciples in our lesson, do you see what God's plan and promise meant for them? "**Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us.**" Even before they recognized Jesus, God's plan and promise in here [Bible] gave Jesus' disciples new life and new hope. When Easter clicked for them, they had a new outlook on life! And they couldn't just sit on it and keep it to themselves!

What about us? We might think that if we just had what those disciples had - Jesus walking and talking with us - then we could be really fired up - fired up with new hope, fired up with new life. Well, we do have what those disciples had! We have the same Scriptures that fired them up. We have the same God working the same plan; he worked it on Easter and he's working it today. We don't have to go through life like God's plan is a bust. We don't have to face our disappointments like Jesus is out of the picture. We don't have to look at God's work like it won't work. We have Jesus alive and well and ready - ready to walk with us, ready to work with us. Come with us, Lord Jesus. Abide with us, Lord Jesus. Amen.

DIVINE SERVICE II

IN OUR WORLD TODAY ... disappointments can crush the hope out of us, especially when we miss how Jesus is keeping his promises to us.

IN OUR WORSHIP TODAY ...we see that there is an Easter truth greater than our what we think possible or reasonable, an Easter truth greater than our disappointments and hopelessness, an Easter truth that re-kindles hope as we see how Jesus keeps his Easter promise!

OPENING HYMN

“Christ the Lord Is Risen Today; Alleluia”

Hymn 442

Christ the Lord is ris’n today; Alleluia!
Christians, hasten on your way; Alleluia!
see the place where he was laid; Alleluia!
praise him for the ransom paid. Alleluia!

For the sheep the Lamb has bled, Alleluia!
sinless in the sinners’ stead. Alleluia!
“Christ is ris’n,” today we cry; Alleluia!
now he lives, no more to die. Alleluia!

Christ, the victim undefiled, Alleluia!
God and sinners reconciled, Alleluia!
while, in strange and awe-full strife, Alleluia!
met together death and life. Alleluia!

Christ, who once for sinners bled, Alleluia!
now the firstborn from the dead, Alleluia!
throned in endless might and pow’r, Alleluia!
lives and reigns forevermore. Alleluia!

INVOCATION

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

CONFESSION

Our Savior Jesus Christ commanded Baptism when he said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

All of us are born into this world with a deep need for Baptism. From our parents we inherit a sinful nature; we are without true fear of God and true faith in God and are condemned to eternal death. But while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. He took away our sin by giving his life on the cross. In Baptism, he clothes us with the robe of his righteousness and gives us a new life. We recall what Baptism means for our daily lives:

**Baptism means that the sinful nature in us
should be drowned by daily sorrow and repentance,
and that all its evil deeds and desires be put to death.
It also means that a new person should daily arise
to live before God in righteousness and purity forever.**

As baptized children of God, we confess our sins:

**Holy God, gracious Father,
I am sinful by nature
and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions.
I have not loved you with my whole heart;
I have not loved others as I should.
I deserve your punishment both now and forever.
But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins
with his innocent suffering and death.
Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.**

ABSOLUTION

God saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit and united us to the death and resurrection of Jesus. Every day God forgives your sins, removes your guilt, and strengthens you to defeat Satan's power. His promise is for you and your children, and he will never forsake you.

Your sins are forgiven. You are clothed with Christ. You are at peace with God now and forever.

Amen.

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Dawson Joseph Miller
Beckham Austin Miller
Sons of Kyle and Kylie Miller

The Gospel according to St. Mark:

People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them.

Dawson and Beckham, I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Receive the sign of the cross on the head and heart to mark you as one redeemed by Christ the crucified.

The almighty God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has given you the new birth of water and the Spirit and has forgiven all your sins. May he strengthen you with his grace all the days of your life. Peace be with you.

EXHORTATIONS

Parents

Dear *Kyle and Kylie*, our Lord Jesus Christ, in instituting Baptism, not only commanded that children should be baptized, but that they should be taught to obey everything he has commanded us. I therefore ask you:

Do you intend to bring up *Dawson and Beckham* in the way of the Lord and to instruct *them* in the truths of God's saving Word so that *they* may grow in faith, serve God with a Christian life, and remain in *their* baptismal

grace all the days of *their* lives? If you are willing to do so, answer: “Yes, and *we* ask God to help *us*.”

Yes, and *we* ask God to help *us*.

M: Brothers and sisters in Christ, our Lord commands that we teach his precious truths to all who are baptized.

. Christian love therefore urges all of us, especially parents and sponsors, to assist in whatever manner possible so that *Dawson and Beckham* may remain children of God until death. If you are willing to carry out this responsibility, then answer: Yes, as God gives me strength.

C: Yes, as God gives me strength.

M: Let us pray.

Merciful Father in heaven, we thank you for the blessing of Baptism by which you offer and grant the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. Help us to regard our baptisms as the robe of righteousness we are to wear all the days of our lives. Look with special favor on *Dawson and Beckham* and grant *them* a rich measure of your Spirit that *they* may grow in faith and godly living. Make us willing to carry out our responsibilities to those who have been baptized, so that all of us may finally come to the blessed joys of heaven, through Jesus our Lord.

C: Amen.

HYMN

“God’s Own Child, I Gladly Say It”
Hymn 679

God’s own child, I gladly say it:
I am baptized into Christ!
He, because I could not pay it,
gave my full redemption price.
Do I need earth’s treasures many?
I have one worth more than any
that brought me salvation free,
lasting to eternity!

Sin, disturb my soul no longer:
I am baptized into Christ!
I have comfort even stronger:
Jesus' cleansing sacrifice.
Should a guilty conscience seize me
since my baptism did release me
in a dear forgiving flood,
sprinkling me with Jesus' blood?

Satan, hear this proclamation:
I am baptized into Christ!
Drop your ugly accusation,
I am not so soon enticed.
Now that to the font I've traveled,
all your might has come unraveled,
and, against your tyranny,
God, my Lord, unites with me!

Death, you cannot end my gladness:
I am baptized into Christ!
When I die, I leave all sadness
to inherit paradise!
Though I lie in dust and ashes
faith's assurance brightly flashes:
Baptism has the strength divine
to make life immortal mine.

There is nothing worth comparing
to this lifelong comfort sure!
Open-eyed my grave is staring:
even there I'll sleep secure.
Though my flesh awaits its raising,
still my soul continues praising:
I am baptized into Christ;
I'm a child of paradise!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God, by the humiliation of your Son, you lifted up this fallen world from the despair of death. By his resurrection to life, grant your faithful people gladness of heart and the hope of eternal joys; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

FIRST READING

Acts 2: 14a, 31-42

Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd:

Seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did his body see decay. God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said,

“The Lord said to my Lord:
“Sit at my right hand
until I make your enemies
a footstool for your feet.” ’

“Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.”

When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”


Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Refrain



I will walk in the pres - ence of the LORD,
in the land of the liv - ing.

Tone



I love the LORD, for he / heard my voice;
he heard my cry for / mercy.
Because he turned his / ear to me,
I will call on him as long / as I live.
The LORD is gracious and / righteous;
when I was brought low, he / saved me. *Refrain*

What shall I return / to the LORD
for all his good- / ness to me?
I will lift up the cup of sal- / vation
and call on the name / of the LORD.
Precious in the sight / of the LORD
is the death of his faithful / servants.
Glory be to the Father and / to the Son
and to the Holy / Spirit,
as it was in the be- / ginning,
is now, and will be forever. / Amen. *Refrain*

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

“This Is the Feast”

Hymn 938 vs 1

This is the feast of victory for our God.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain,
whose blood set us free to be people of God. (Refrain)

This is the feast of victory for our God.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

GOSPEL

Luke 24:13-35

Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; but they were kept from recognizing him.

He asked them, “What are you discussing together as you walk along?”

They stood still, their faces downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, “Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?”

“What things?” he asked.

“About Jesus of Nazareth,” they replied. “He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning but didn’t find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see Jesus.”

He said to them, “How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?” And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued on as if he were going farther. But they urged him strongly, “Stay with us,

for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them.

When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?"

They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together and saying, "It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon." Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended into hell.

The third day he rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Who are you who walk in sorrow
down Emmaus' barren road,
hearts distraught and hope defeated,
bent beneath grief's crushing load?
Nameless mourners, we will join you,
we who also mourn our dead;
we have stood by graves unyielding,
eaten death's bare, bitter bread.

Who is this who joins our journey,
walking with us stride by stride?
Unknown stranger, can you fathom
depths of grief for one who died?
Then the wonder! When we told you
how our dreams to dust have turned,
then you opened wide the Scriptures
till our hearts within us burned.

Who are you? Our hearts are opened
in the breaking of the bread—
Christ the victim, now the victor
living, risen from the dead!
Great companion on our journey,
still surprise us with your grace!
Make each day a new Emmaus;
on our hearts your image trace!

Who are we who travel with you
on our way through life to death?
Women, men, the young, the aging,
wakened by the Spirit's breath!
At the font you claim and name us,
born of water and the Word;
at the table still you feed us,
host us as our risen Lord!

“Alleluia! Alleluia!”

is the Easter hymn we sing!
Take our life, our joy, our worship
as the gift of love we bring.
You have formed us all one people
called from ev’ry land and race.
Make the Church your servant body,
sent to share your healing grace!

SERMON

Luke 24:13-35

HYMN

“Alleluia! Jesus Lives!”
Hymn 455

Alleluia! Jesus lives!

He is now the Living One;
from the gloomy house of death
forth the conqueror has gone,
bright forerunner to the skies
of his people, yet to rise.

Jesus lives! Let all rejoice;
praise him, ransomed ones of earth.
Praise him in a nobler song,
cherubim of heav’nly birth.
Praise the Victor-King, whose sway
sin and death and hell obey.

Jesus lives! Why do you weep?
Why that sad and frequent sigh?
He who died our brother here
lives our brother still on high,
lives forever to bestow
blessings on his Church below.

Jesus lives! And thus, my soul,
life is yours eternally;
joined to him, your living head,

where he is, you too shall be;
you with him at his right hand
victor over death shall stand.

OFFERING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, our Savior and Redeemer, we come to you with hearts filled with gratitude for the abundant blessings you give us each day. Help us to see giving not an obligation but as a joyful act of worship, an expression of our deep love for you and our want to further your kingdom here and on earth.
Amen.

OFFERING

If you prefer to give online, the code at the right will take you to our Online Giving page. We invite our online givers to join in our offering with an "I Give Online" card in the pew racks.



PRAYER – Easter I (Responsive)

M: Lord of life, fill our hearts with Easter joy today and always. Set in our hearts and minds your victory over death and the grave, sin and Satan, and all the trouble of this dying world. Through the good news of your resurrection victory, renew our hope and revive our faith. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

M: Jesus, by baptizing us into your name, you have connected us to your life and death and resurrection to life. You have put our sin to death and have given us a new life to live with God. Enable us, in every temptation and trouble, to think of ourselves as dead to sin and alive to you, so that we may walk in newness of life in all we do. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

M: Lord, in this fallen world, death and sorrow surround us. Touch the hearts of those who grieve the loss of a Christian they love. Direct their eyes to your empty tomb and ease their pain by reminding them that their loved ones will one day rise again. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

M: Lord, so many people hurt with a struggling hope or even no hope. Let the message of the resurrection and new life reach them and awaken faith in their hearts. Use us to bring your word of life to hearts and souls hurting for hope. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

M: Lord, stay with all who are suffering. In your wise mercy, heal those who are sick or suffering and struggling with broken bodies and hearts. As you know best, grant relief to those whose struggles in life seem unending and overwhelming. [We pray especially for...] Remind them that your victory over death and the grave, sin and Satan, sickness and disease, and all the troubles of this world ... remind them and all of us that your victory is sure and certain! Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

M: Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

Silent prayer

C: Risen Savior, help us to live in your victory, today and always! Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

BLESSING

M: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace. **Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN

“Abide, O Dearest Jesus”

Hymn 924

v 1,4,5,6

Abide, O dearest Jesus,
among us with your grace
that Satan may not harm us
nor we to sin give place.

Abide with richest blessings
among us, bounteous Lord;
let us in grace and wisdom
grow daily through your Word.

Abide with your protection
among us, Lord, our strength,
lest world and Satan fell us
and overcome at length.

Abide, O faithful Savior,
among us with your love;
grant steadfastness and help us
to reach our home above.

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