

EASTER 3

YEAR A

ACTS 2:14a, 36-41

1 PETER 1:17-23

LUKE 24:13-35

APRIL 29, 30, 2017

Our fears and our griefs have a way of dashing our hopes and our dreams. They might cause us to stop believing the truth about our Lord Jesus and about his promises for this life. When we are confronted with difficult times we might miss the Lord that comes to join us. The Lord might become hidden from us even though he speaks to us through people in our lives. Into our fears and sadness comes Jesus and he walks with us. He is revealed to us through the familiar and traditional parts of our lives in Christ. Those familiar things might be coming to the table of the Lord where we hear the words of life. Jesus declares to us that this life is for you and me. Jesus is known to us as a child is baptized and as the child's parents make important promises. Jesus also comes to us in our times of sadness as we gather at the bedside of those that are sick and they hear words that bring despair. Jesus is present and speaking with us in our times of need. He walks with us continuing to reveal himself through the words of scripture and through those that are sent to us.

Luke 24:15-17 While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, ¹⁶but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. ¹⁷And he said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad.

The two on the road to Emmaus were going home following the difficult events of the weekend. They probably traveled that short distance to Jerusalem and were there for Passover. Although the two were not part of the 12 disciples they were followers of Jesus and likely had been with him to hear many of his teachings including those about crucifixion and resurrection. They believed that Jesus was the Messiah and that he was the one to restore Israel. The two were in Jerusalem when Jesus was

arrested and when he was crucified. As they were on the road to Emmaus they were talking about the events of the past three days. They were talking about Jesus. Although they had known Jesus before his death they did not recognize him as he joined them on the road. They probably felt like they should know him. Later in these verses the two said their hearts burned within them as Jesus spoke to them and taught them. They did not recognize Jesus and they were also surprised and amazed that Jesus did not know of the events of the past weekend. “Are you the only one that does not know?”

How many times do we talk with people we think we should know but can't remember where from? I have been there before. My normal routine is to keep talking hoping they will drop a hint as to where we might have met or what their name is. If we talk long enough the person's name is spoken and the places we might have been are revealed. It would be much easier to just ask so the person's name.

Luke 24:21 But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place.

The two walking to Emmaus were recounting the events of the weekend but did not ask Jesus his name. Jesus may have told them if they asked. They talked with Jesus and reported all that happened. They were sad and they felt defeated. Their hopes and dreams were all but gone. They recalled what the women told them earlier in the day but they did not believe the women. They remained in their sadness and in their grief. They could not see Jesus. The two stayed in Jerusalem long enough to see if Jesus would appear to the disciples and to them. They knew that Jesus said he would be raised on the third day. For the two, the third day was nearly gone and Jesus had not appeared. Since Jesus had not appeared in the expected time it was thought that he was not alive and that there was not more reason to believe that he was the one.

It is difficult to be patient when we are waiting. Denise and I were on our way from vacation Friday. The plane was to leave Las Vegas for Denver at 3:50. Before we could board the plane there was a notice that there would be a delay because there was bad weather in Denver. We waited for a bit knowing that we had another flight to catch at Denver. Another announcement came that said there had been a mistake about the bad weather. The plane would begin boarding as soon as the flight crew was back on the plane. We finally were on board and airborne about 40 minutes later than the scheduled time. This was fine except that meant we would have a shorter time to get to the next flight.

We got to where we needed to be and had 30 minutes to spare except the plane we were to fly on from Denver to Des Moines was also delayed in arriving. We waited some more but then boarded the plane. Once on the plane assumed we would be home only a short time later than expected. Of course the waiting continued because they had to wait for someone to deice the plane because it was cold and snowy in Denver. We finally landed in Des Moines an hour later than expected and still had to drive home.

As we waited I thought about many things. I thought about the people I needed to see in the hospital when I returned. I thought about who I would call if we could not get home for the Saturday evening service. I was ready to call Martha but then she sent me a text asking about our vacation and telling me she was going to be gone this weekend and asked me to make an announcement for her. I went from there to thinking of canceling the service but then was concerned that there might be people needing to come to church that would find the church locked when they arrived. As I pondered and wondered I remembered the other times I was in a similar place and situation. When faced with a tight schedule the Lord has always come through. The Lord came as I worried with words of peace and hope

telling me to not be afraid. The Lord revealed himself to me in a still small voice that boomed into my mind and heart. The Lord was saying that he had me covered. I might be a little tired but he was with me.

Luke 24:30-32 When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. ³¹Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. ³²They said to each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?”

Jesus was revealed to Cleopas and the other person in the breaking of the bread. In the breaking of the bread came revelation but it also brought life back to the 2 from Emmaus. They experienced Jesus and their hearts were filled with joy. They were no longer in the darkness but could see the brilliant light of Jesus.

In a few minutes you and I will be invited to come for a time of healing and of prayer. Jesus comes to us through the breaking of bread but also through the laying on of hands. As we experience this time of prayer we also see Jesus in a new way. We that are facing difficult times are invited to receive the blessing of the Lord. Not only does Jesus minister to us but he also asks us to not be afraid. Allow the Lord to speak to you and to assure you of his love. Let him breath life and hope back into your life.

AMEN