

Acts 10:34-43 Meditation – Signs of Resurrection

Do you remember Peter? Three years back when Jesus first began his ministry, Peter was the brother of John, who sort of got dragged into this whole following Jesus thing. Depending upon which Gospel you read, you get a sense that Peter really wasn't so sure at first. But then, Peter was definitely sold on Jesus so much that he was the first to know who Jesus was as the Messiah, the Anointed One of God. And yet, at the start, even though Peter seemed like a bold, tough guy, he really wasn't. Those character traits at first seemed really strong, but Peter's brashness really was there to hide his frailty. He, really like many of us, blustered his way into the life of faith. He was afraid on the mountaintop when Jesus was transfigured. He doubted Jesus when sinking in the water, trying to walk on water just like Christ. At one minute he shouted that Jesus was the Messiah and then told Jesus what to do, which by the way, got a sound rebuking. And then, when it really counted, Peter floundered and denied that Jesus even existed, because to be fair, the pressure is on sometimes when you don't have the courage to follow. Even after the Resurrection, even after witnessing the Risen Christ himself, Peter goes fishing because he simply doesn't know what to do with that. And, some days, do we?

So, what happened to Peter that he became so eloquent, so bold in proclamation, so open as to exclaim that the Resurrection promises give us a God who shows no partiality, a God who forgives sins and brings all who believe new life? This is a new Peter! Sure, if you read the book of Acts, you see that Peter still has some learning to do. But, this is a follower who has been changed. And, what changed him? He was changed by the risen Christ, and then could not help himself but to spread gift of God's promises.

Although we are living through an unprecedented time right now, a time not seen for a century, the early Christians no doubt could relate to the strife and trouble of the world. These were people who were dragged into arenas and butchered for their faith. And, even those first

witnesses of the Resurrection were afraid. They hid themselves from the authorities behind locked doors, sort of like their own stay at home, stay safe policy. They could not endure the thought of what could happen to them. But, then the Resurrection gave them the courage to begin again, even from the very places of their brokenness.

Christ is risen, dear friends and He is alive. As those first disciples did, are we open to seeing the Risen Christ among us? Will we proclaim like Peter in this reading from Acts or continue to be afraid of what will happen to us, acknowledging that while we still may worry, we have the overwhelming and transforming power of goodness around us if we but look to see it is already there.

Only just yesterday, I saw abundant signs of the Resurrection life in our church ministries! The Resurrection life was there in the voice of a beloved member who told the story of her mother entering eternal life on Easter Day. The Resurrection life was there as our Community and World ministry made a feast for 60 people at the Sojourner House Homeless shelter yesterday. I heard words of Resurrection life from our Caring Ministry and Senior and Home Visitation Ministry who are sending homemade cards to those who are alone. These ministry members also make those much needed phone calls to some of our older ones. I saw Resurrection life in our Preschool teachers, who continue to tell stories and sing songs for their classes. And, I saw last night in our Faith Family Ministry the continued desire to spread signs of goodness to the community of Eau Claire, talking of ways to have yard signs with words of hope. Driving by, one might think that the church is an empty building but no! The Church is alive because Christ is! And the Resurrection life is near you even now.

Where are you seeing “signs of goodness” in your life even now, dear friends in Christ? The forgiveness, the love, and the grace of the risen Lord stands before you. Take time today to look for it wherever you may be. For the risen Christ longs to give you life. Alleluia. Amen.