



Monday, April 16, 2012

**READ-** The Gospel: Luke 24:36-48

Jesus appears in his resurrected, transformed body to his disciples. Luke makes very clear that this is no disembodied spirit talking with them – no ghost. Jesus shows them his wounded hands and feet and even eats a piece of fish! He then begins to teach them things they will need to understand to continue his work in the world.

**REFLECT-**

- Jesus is the first human being to be resurrected from the dead and helps his disciples to understand that God will provide a new transformed body for us as well when his Kingdom is fulfilled. It was a difficult concept for the disciples, just as it is for us today. How does that line up with your concept of heaven?

**PRAY-**

O God, help us to trust you and be obedient to your will even though we often don't understand your ways or what lies ahead. Amen.

Tuesday, April 17, 2012

**READ-** Acts of the Apostles: Acts 3:12-19

In the verses just prior to this passage, Peter and John very publicly heal a man lame from birth in the name of Jesus. As the Jewish crowd looks on in wonder, Peter then lambasts them for failing to recognize Jesus as the Messiah and challenges them to repent, accept Christ, and receive forgiveness.

**REFLECT-**

- Compare this Peter who is powerful and bold to the Peter who denied Jesus three times after his arrest. What made the difference? Where in your life do you need the power of the Spirit to make you bold? How is God calling you to step outside your comfort zone?

**PRAY-**

God of power, make me strong and courageous for you to do whatever you are calling me to accomplish for your sake and your glory. Amen.

Wednesday, April 18, 2012

**READ-** The Epistle: | John 3:1-7

John's offers his firsthand, eyewitness testimony of Christ's saving sacrifice and God's grace and mercy expressed to all humanity and creation through Christ. He assures his listeners of God's abundant mercy if only we will confess our sins, repent and turn from our sinful ways, we will be assured of eternal life through Jesus' atoning work on the cross.

**REFLECT-**

- This passage also speaks to our uncertainty of what lies ahead for us, both in life and after our death; yet it affirms God's love for us and our need to be obedient to God's commands so that our lives may glorify God. If we abide in Christ and live by his teachings, then our temptation to sin can be overcome by his presence.

**PRAY-**

Father, thank you for your abiding love and presence with us, guiding us in paths to do your will and share your love with others. Amen.

Thursday, April 19, 2012

**READ-** The Psalter: Psalm 4

The psalmist asks God for help in a time of difficulty and recalls past occasions when God has been gracious. Some interpret God's blessing in terms of abundant material goods; yet the psalmist understands that God's goodness is reflected from within our heart through the way we live and that God is present with us at all times, in want and in plenty.

**REFLECT-**

- Can you remember at time in your life when you were not sure how your basic needs would be met? Did God provide for you and give you strength in that time or did you feel that God had abandoned you? In what ways did this change your faith?

**PRAY-**

Lord, please make me attentive to the ways you love and care for me and for others and to share that love with others who are hurting. Amen.

Friday, April 20, 2012

**ACT-**

Focus Verse: | John 3:2a

Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed.

Our work as children of God begins now in helping to bring God's Kingdom to fruition. We – our minds, bodies and spirits – are not all that we will be when Christ comes again in his glory and heaven and earth are united in perfect peace; yet God still claims us now as his beloved children. Likewise, our world with all its evil and sin can be brought closer to God's desire by the work of his faithful children to bring peace, compassion, and justice now in whatever ways we can. By the power of the Holy Spirit, we can help to bring God's Kingdom closer here and now, in this life and in this broken world. Look for opportunities to do that throughout your day today within your circle of influence.