Bible Study for Easter Sunday, April 17, 2022

Our texts for this Easter Sunday are:

- Isaiah 65:17-25

As a study set-up I want you to know that these questions are designed to make you think deeply. The Resurrection event is a story that shifted the trajectory of humanity, meaning it is actually a really big event. So, I want us to spend some time thinking deeply about what this whole event means for us.

**Luke 24:1-12**  But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in, they did not find the body. While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, “Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again.” Then they remembered his words, and returning from the tomb, they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest. Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the apostles. But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened.

While we get Luke’s Resurrection story this year, the Resurrection accts are in all 4 Gospels; Matthew 28:1-10, Mark 16:1-8, Luke 24:1-12 and John 20:1-8. I encourage you to read all of them and do a comparison of the difference in details. Each Gospel tells the story of the Resurrection from a different perspective. What most basic elements are present in each story?

As we look at Jesus (God in the flesh) on the Cross, we see a picture of the punishment for sin that should have been poured out on us, but that Jesus stepped in and took that bullet on our behalf.

- How should an awareness of the cost of sin and the price that Jesus paid, change our perception of sin and judgment?
- I wonder if (as Lutherans) we spend so much time telling our people that God loves them that we lose the big-ness of how sin and judgement are meant to impact us. And therefore not fully understanding the big-ness of what Jesus did for us?
- How should it change our understanding of our identity as children of God?

One thing that happens when we move from Palm Sunday to Easter morning (w/o the rest of the story) is that we miss the impact of the Holy Week events. And while these events are not in our reading for Sun, I encourage you to read it (Luke chap 22 & 23) as I do not believe we can understand the impact of the Resurrection until we feel the pre-story. In the breadth of the Holy Week story, we hear how the Temple curtain, which was a really large veil/curtain separating the Holy of Holies and the rest of the temple, was torn in two. The Holy of Holies was the place where God “resided/dwelt”
and only the Most High Priest (and never the rest of the people) had access to this place. At Jesus’ death the curtain was torn in half.

- What is significant about the veil in the temple being ripped in two?
- Does this detail alter the impact of the Resurrection story for you? How so?

Do you think the Resurrection story stays an amazing story no matter how many times we have heard it? Why or why not? Why might we get numb to the awesomeness of this story?

Why do you think that God did not raise Jesus from the dead on Friday afternoon or Saturday morning? Why wait for the third day to do something so important? Complete speculation here as the Bible does not fill in the details on this for us 😐.

Why would Jesus have allowed someone else (an angel, a young man or two men in a white dazzling clothes) to share the exciting news with the women?

- Why not appear directly to them?

Why might it be significant that this Good News was first discovered and announced to the women, not the disciples themselves? Can you find any similarities to this in Jesus’ birth story that Luke shares?

The entire Resurrection story is beyond understanding/logic. Yet this is how God chose to convey God’s message of “this is not all there is to this life” to God’s people. Speculate on why you think this was the path God chose, meaning what could God be trying to get us to do/see in choosing that method?

**Isaiah 65:17-25** For I am about to create new heavens and a new earth; the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind. 18 But be glad and rejoice forever in what I am creating; for I am about to create Jerusalem as a joy, and its people as a delight. 19 I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and delight in my people; no more shall the sound of weeping be heard in it, or the cry of distress. 20 No more shall there be in it an infant that lives but a few days, or an old person who does not live out a lifetime; for one who dies at a hundred years will be considered a youth, and one who falls short of a hundred will be considered accursed. 21 They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. 22 They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands. 23 They shall not labor in vain, or bear children for calamity; for they shall be offspring blessed by the Lord—and their descendants as well. 24 Before they call I will answer, while they are yet speaking I will hear. 25 The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox; but the serpent—its food shall be dust! They shall not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, says the Lord.

What do you like/dislike in this text? What imagery stands out to you?

How might we understand the Resurrection event to be creating something new? Not just new for humanity but all of Creation?