

FAITH COMES BY HEARING THE WORD OF GOD 4.18.2021

Let's look at the Bible readings for the 3rd Sunday of Easter, April 18, to prepare for on-line, drive-in, and in-person worship (10 am) with Abounding Joy.

1ST READING: Acts 3:11-21 The power of the risen Jesus is manifested

¹¹While the lame man who had been healed clung to Peter and John, all the people, utterly astounded, ran together to them in the portico called Solomon's. ¹²And when Peter saw it he addressed the people: "Men of Israel, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we have made him walk? ¹³The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified his servant Jesus, whom **you delivered over and denied** in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release him. ¹⁴But **you denied** the Holy and Righteous One, and **asked for a murderer** to be granted to you, ¹⁵and **you killed** the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead.

To this we are witnesses. ¹⁶And **his name** — by **faith** in **his name** — has made this man strong whom you see and know, and the **faith** that is through Jesus has given the man this perfect health in the presence of you all. ¹⁷And now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. ¹⁸But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ would suffer, he thus fulfilled. ¹⁹Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out, ²⁰that **times of refreshing** may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus, ²¹whom heaven must receive until **the time for restoring** all the things about which God **spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets** long ago."

SOME QUESTIONS TO PONDER RELATED TO ACTS, CHAPTER 3

1. Read Acts 3:1-10 to get the full context of this story of the healing of the man born lame.
2. The crowds mistakenly thought that Peter and John had healed the lame man on their own. What does the word "piety" mean in vs. 12?
3. What does Peter accuse the "Men of Israel" of doing to Jesus (see vss. 13-15)? Why did they do this (see vs. 17)? Compare this with Luke 23:34.
4. How do you interpret this line from vs. 14: "the faith that is through Jesus"? What does that say about the source of faith?
5. What does it mean in vs.16 when it says that faith *in the name of Jesus* has brought healing to this man? What does "the name" imply and include?
6. To what (in vs. 21) does Peter refer when he says, "the time for restoring all the things about which God spoke"?

2ND READING: 1 John 3:1-7 God calls us His children

¹See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. ²Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but

we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. ³And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure. ⁴Everyone who makes a **practice** of **sinning** also **practices** lawlessness; **sin** is lawlessness. ⁵You know

that he appeared in order to take away **sins**, and **in him** there is no **sin**.

⁶No one who **abides in him** keeps on **sinning**;

no one who keeps on **sinning** has either seen him or known him. ⁷Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever **practices** righteousness is **righteous**, as he is **righteous**.

SOME QUESTIONS TO PONDER RELATED TO I JOHN, CHAPTER 3:

1. What gracious promise is given to us in vss. 1 and 2?
2. What do you think it means (vs. 2) when it says *we shall be like him* when Jesus appears?
3. Is there a difference between sinning and making “a practice of sinning?” (vs. 4)
4. As Lutherans we believe that until we die, we will all (no matter how hard we try) continue to be 100% sinners and 100% saints (literally “holy ones,” forgiven sinners). How do we reconcile that with vs. 6?
5. (vs. 7) Do we become righteous (right, holy) by doing right things, or do we do righteous things because God has made us righteous?

THE GOSPEL: Luke 24:36-49 The risen Jesus appears, and commissions His disciples

³⁶As the disciples were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, “Peace to you!” ³⁷But they were **startled** and **frightened** and thought they saw a spirit. ³⁸And he said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do **doubts** arise in your hearts? ³⁹See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.”

⁴⁰And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. ⁴¹And while they still **disbelieved for joy and were marveling**, he said to them, “Have you anything here to eat?” ⁴²They gave him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³and he took it and ate before them.

⁴⁴Then he said to them, “These are **my words** that I **spoke** to you while I was still with you, that everything **written** about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” ⁴⁵Then he opened their minds to understand **the Scriptures**, ⁴⁶and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, ⁴⁷and that **repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations**, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”

SOME QUESTIONS TO PONDER RELATED TO LUKE, CHAPTER 24:

1. The risen Jesus appears to the disciples on Easter evening. What is their reaction (see the bolded words in vss. 37, 38, and 41)?
2. What does the phrase “disbelieving for joy” (vs. 41) mean to you? See also: Matt. 28:16-17.
3. What’s significant about the risen Jesus eating a piece of broiled fish (vss. 38-43)?
4. Of what is Jesus reminding the disciples in vss. 44-46? Should they have been frightened or filled with doubt?
5. What’s the essence of the message the disciples are called to proclaim (vs. 47)?
6. How does vs. 48 apply to you?
7. What is the “promise of my Father” mentioned in vs. 49)?
8. When was that promise fulfilled?