

FAITH COMES BY HEARING Bible Study – 4.3.24 (for 4.7.24)

FIRST READING: Psalm 148:1-6, 13-14

¹Praise the LORD!

Praise the LORD from the heavens;
praise him in the heights!

²Praise him, all his angels;
praise him, all his hosts!

³Praise him, sun and moon,
praise him, all you shining stars!

⁴Praise him, you highest heavens,
and you waters above the heavens!

⁵Let them praise the name of the LORD!
For he commanded and they
were created.

⁶And he established them forever
and ever; he gave a decree, and it
shall not pass away.

¹³Let them praise the name of the LORD,
for his name alone is exalted;
his majesty is above earth and heaven.

¹⁴He has raised up a horn for his people,
praise for all his saints,
for the people of Israel who are near
to him.

Praise the LORD!

- 1) There is a word repeated over and over in response to what God has done. What is it? What does it mean to do this?
- 2) The psalmist likens the created order to a majestic symphony or great choir, each with a part to play or sing in harmony. How does each part add to that aim? What results from playing and singing in harmony?
- 3) According to the psalmist, what is the greatest reason to praise the Lord?

Second Reading: 1 John 1:1-4

¹That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—²the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father

and was made manifest to us—³that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.⁴And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.

- 1) John opens this letter similarly to how he opens his Gospel account. What does John focus on about Jesus in these opening words?
- 2) John's eyewitness invites us to something. What is it?
- 3) John's eyewitness also qualifies him to write these things. What has John experienced that he desires to share with his readers?

GOSPEL: John 20:19-29

¹⁹On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." ²⁰When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. ²¹Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." ²²And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld." ²⁴Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵So the

other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe." ²⁶Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁷Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe." ²⁸Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" ²⁹Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

- 1) Why does Jesus make such an effort to show Himself resurrected to His disciples?
- 2) What is the first word Jesus speaks to His disciples and to Thomas? Why is this word important?
- 3) Through the gift of the Holy Spirit, Jesus invites us into activity. What is that activity? Why is this activity so important?