

## Heini's Easter Message 2020

In Chapter 24 of Luke's gospel, the disciples said to the two who had been travelling on the road to Emmaus, "It is true! The Lord has risen". This shouldn't have come as a surprise to them because Jesus had clearly told his disciples that he would have to suffer and die, and then be raised on the third day.

But we celebrate today because, "IT IS TRUE". This is a massive theme in the NT. It means that our preaching is not useless and that our witness about God is not false. It means that as Christians, our faith is not futile – we are not still in our sins. Paul said, *"If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied"*. But it is not just for this life we have hope in Christ, we are not to be pitied, because, again as Paul said, *"For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive"*. If we are one with him in his death, we are one with him in his resurrection.

This is wonderful news for every Christian. Death exists because of man's disobedience to the holy and just God; but if we are in Christ (i.e. have faith in him), then death can't have the final word, we shall live for ever with him in his heavenly kingdom. The Bible says that Jesus is coming back, and when that happens, even our bodies will be raised to be with him to live with him for all eternity.

Now these truths need to be digested and pondered upon. But what I want to do very briefly this morning is to look at the different ways the risen Christ impacted the lives of different people.

- **Mary Magdalen.** The risen Jesus turned her sorrow into joy.

The gospels tell us that she faithfully followed Jesus, and faithfully served him. She was there on Calvary when Jesus was being crucified. Naturally she would have been deeply traumatised by that experience. She still wanted to serve her Christ's body was missing from the tomb. She assumed that his body had been taken which prolonged her trauma.

*"At this, she turned round and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realise that it was Jesus. He asked her, 'Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?' Thinking he was the gardener, she said, 'Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him.' Jesus said to her, 'Mary.' She turned towards him and cried out in Aramaic, 'Rabboni!' (which means 'Teacher')."*

Mary's trauma and grief immediately turned to joy. Grief is something that most if not all people experience. Many of you may have suffered trauma, or indeed, will suffer trauma. When she experienced her grief and trauma, Jesus was closer than she realised. She looked for a dead Jesus; she found one that was very much alive. When there's grief and trauma, search for the living Jesus, he's closer than you think, and he is able to turn the grief into joy.

- **The two on the Emmaus road.** The risen Jesus turned their ignorance & confusion into understanding.

There was only going to be one subject in their conversation. Jesus joined them, but they were kept from recognising them. They first needed to learn important truths without being distracted by the exiliration of seeing him alive.

Despite all that Jesus taught about his kingdom (parables & miracles) they had their preconceived ideas about Jesus the Messiah. They wanted Jesus to free the Jewish nation from Roman rule, but he ended up

being crucified by the Romans. They had been amazed by some women's fantastic stories about angels in his tomb, but ultimately, Jesus was missing. They were ignorant of the truth regarding Jesus, and confused.

*He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself. When Jesus was satisfied that they understood his true purpose "their eyes were opened and they recognised him". No more ignorance, no more confusion.*

Yes, the two on the Emmaus Road had their preconceived ideas about Jesus, but it wasn't consistent with what the scriptures said about him. Through the Bible we get to see the real Jesus, and we get a true understanding of his purpose. *"Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path" (Ps 119:105). "For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart" (Heb 4). "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Tim 3).*

The Holy Spirit will help us to understand the Bible if we ask him. *"But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you."* (Jn 14)

*"Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?"*

- **The disciples.** The risen Jesus turned their torment into peace.

*"Peace be with you" (Jn 20). "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid" (Jn 14).*

- **Thomas.** The risen Jesus turned his doubt into assurance.

*"Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."* (Jn 20)

Just as I am, though tossed about  
with many a conflict, many a doubt;  
fightings and fears within, without,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come

*"The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children" (Rom 8)*

The risen Jesus met these people where they were, and he brought joy, understanding, peace and assurance. He'll gladly meet you exactly where you are, and give to you exactly what you need.