

WELCOME 5th November 2023 – All Saints' Sunday '23 A

Mark 16:1-7 & Romans 6:3-11

Welcome! It's great to be together again today! Along with your worship order you have in your hands **Growing Praise** inserts & **Bible Study Qs** that are able to lead you deeper into God's word/work in your life, & help you share that w/ someone else. We also use them for our **Zoom Bible Study Catch-ups on Friday @ 1p.m.** Link will be on website...Tuesday...Wednesday...

As we move into this week... "Show & Tell" – every child's *favourite* day in preschool/K. It's so simple...Take what's precious to you. Tell the story of "Why." Show/demonstrate its importance in your life. Nothing could be easier: "Show & Tell"

"For we died & were buried with Christ by baptism into death.

And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may walk in newness of life."

You've seen this ^b/₄ - **"If** the resurrection **DID NOT** happen; *nothing* matters. You can go your merry way. But if the resurrection **DID** happen, then nothing **ELSE** matters & you must deal with **that** above everything else." Everything Jesus ever said or did was either **wiped out** when he was brutally killed or **proved true** when he rose from the dead...

HE IS RISEN!...are the most precious words in all of Scripture...the most crucial...

The resurrection **IS** the central event of the Bible from "In the beginning..." to "Amen."

HE IS RISEN!...is the power of God that raises you to newness of life in Christ now & anchors your future w/ Christ for all eternity. They are the most important words in all of Scripture **AND** in the life of disciples like you & me. Without that we have nothing.

And from that 1st morning when the tomb was found to be empty to this very day the sole work of Jesus' followers has been..."Show & Tell" Take what's precious to you. Tell the story of "Why." Show/demonstrate its importance in your life. Nothing could be easier: Christ is risen and in Him so are you!

Let's pray...and then explore & experience that together...

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Luther's Prayer

Behold, Lord,
An empty vessel that needs to be filled.
My Lord, fill it.

I am weak in faith;
I beg you to strengthen me.

I am cold in love;
Warm me and make me fervent
That my love may go out to my neighbour.

I do not have a strong and firm faith;
At times I doubt and am unable to trust you altogether.

O Lord, help me.
Strengthen my faith and trust in you.

In you I have sealed the treasures of all I have.

I am poor;
You are rich and you came to be merciful to the poor.

I am a sinner;
You are upright.

With me there is an abundance of sin;
In you is the fullness of righteousness.

Therefore, I will remain with you of whom I can receive
But to whom I cannot give. Amen

Let's hear God's word...

FAITH CHAT:

1. "Your life as a Christian should make non-believers questions their disbelief in God." What do you think Dietrich Bonhoeffer meant by that?
2. How is the resurrection essential to his understanding?
3. How well do you think the church of 2023 carries that out? Why?

ALL SAINTS' SUNDAY '23 A – THREE BIG WORDS: HE IS RISEN

Wm Barclay, in his commentary on Mark writes, “One thing is certain, if Jesus had not risen from the dead, we would never have heard of Him...The attitude of the disciples was that everything had finished in tragedy Friday evening.” Absolutely true. Look at what Mk records. The women buy spices to anoint the body of a man they watched die & discuss the impossibility of rolling away the huge stone blocking the entrance to the tomb. You do those things only if you expect to find a dead man at the end of the trail. If you’re going to resume your life w/ Jesus...that’s not what you do. **But** once you discover **HE IS RISEN**: alive again after suffering the horrors of crucifixion & the apparent finality of death...What do you do? If “**He is risen...going ahead of you...just as he told you before he died!**” What do you do?

All the gospels tell us...It’s hard to see sometimes because we’ve become so familiar w/ the resurrection narrative...there’s a HUGE shift here...On the way **to** the tomb, the women worry they may not be able to get to Jesus because of the stone in front of the tomb. Once they arrive they find they have the exact **opposite** problem. The stone is gone; so is Jesus. Jesus is unavailable not because his lifeless corpse is sealed away behind a boulder. He is unavailable because the stone is gone & so is He...He is alive & on his way to continue the Father’s business!

Every time I read one of the 4 gospel-Easter narratives it just blows me away. Every. Single. Easter account records that Jesus doesn’t hang around the tomb very long. He doesn’t sit there saying, “See! I told ya’.” In every recounting of that 1st Easter once Jesus is free from the clutches of the grave, once he stamps “**IT IS FINISHED**” on sin, death & evil, he’s on the move. **HE IS RISEN** & outta there & directs his followers to do the same. Every. Single. Time. The essential point seems to be Jesus has better things to do than sit around the graveyard.

But not only is Jesus moving on from the cemetery as fast as **HE** can go...that is **PRECISELY** what his followers are told to do: **Now go & tell his disciples, including Peter, that Jesus is going ahead of you to Galilee.** Imbedded in each of the accounts of the resurrection are the commands, “**Go**” “**Tell**”. So integral to the life of the followers of Jesus is that movement away from the smoking ruins of sin/death back into the world to deliver the wondrous news **HE IS RISEN!**...that Paul would write to the church in Corinth...*I passed on to you what was MOST IMPORTANT & what had also been passed on to me. Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. He was buried, & he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said.* – **1 Cor 15:3-4** You see it? Christ’s death/rez are **MOST IMPORTANT** & like the other side of a coin pass it on. **HE IS RISEN** & Go Tell are the essential elements of the church’s witness. Take what’s precious to you. Tell the story of “Why.” Demonstrate its importance in your life.

HE IS RISEN -- Go Tell...The resurrection at its heart is not just about the empty tomb but about the fullness of life the risen Jesus guarantees as we live w/ him the risen life he gives everywhere we are every day we live. He returns not just **FROM** the dead but **FOR** life w/ his people in the on-going demonstration of God’s plan purpose & power to redeem, restore & recreate all that is in Him. Mark opened his gospel this way: “*The beginning of the good news about Jesus Christ, the Son of God...*” – **Mk 1:1** He wraps it **up**...*Now go & tell...* Tell what?

HE IS RISEN...determines your destiny...**HE IS RISEN**...tells the world the good news of life/love stronger than death --- that death/tears are not what God has planned for us -- that life eternal is ours through Jesus Christ -- that God is not confined/boxed in by any earthly limit, but Christ is alive & goes ^{b/4} us to be w/ us wherever we are... God who rules over all things seeks to be God for us through the life of God w/ us Jesus Christ living in us. **HE IS RISEN** is not just some empty tomb somewhere on some Judean hillside. **HE IS RISEN** is a living Jesus who calls you by name...breathes his spirit into you...speaks his word into your heart – forgives you again & again – calls you into his life & work in this world. **HE IS RISEN** is a living Jesus who calls you his own & defines your life by his victory.

HE IS RISEN is your answer when your greatest hopes are crushed & your worst fears come to pass. **HE IS RISEN** is your response when pain is constant & relief a mirage. **HE IS RISEN** is your approach to each day when frustration/disappointment greet you & contentment seems a fantasy. **HE IS RISEN** is your strength when fatigue is larger than your pay check. **HE IS RISEN** is your new beginning when failure shame guilt hurt are your strongest memories. **HE IS RISEN** is your freedom when addiction won’t let go or your kids just can’t get life to work in their favour. **HE IS RISEN** reminds you that the One you call Father is fully sufficient for your life: *Whom have I in heaven but you? I desire nothing on earth more than you.* - **Ps 73:25** *My lips will praise You because Your unending love is better than life.* - **Ps 63:3**

HE IS RISEN tells us again that in Jesus the Father’s desire to save is stronger than the grave’s desire to devour...that God’s love is for all & death is not the end...that evil will be defeated & there is no life so ruined that it cannot be redeemed & transformed by the same power of God that raised Jesus from the dead...that there is nothing that can separate you from God’s passionate love for you & God’s passionate desire for your good.

HE IS RISEN points us to the living Jesus who releases us into the world to be the his presence carrying Christ’s forgiving restoring reconciling love to the farthest corners of the planet...to the houses on our streets...to the people in our homes.

I asked earlier... If **"He is risen...going ahead of you...just as he told you before he died!"**
What do you do? Here's what you don't do: *The women fled from the tomb, trembling & bewildered, & they said nothing to anyone because they were too frightened. - Mk 16:8*
Don't do that...Don't let that be the end of the story in your life...fearful, bewildered, unsure, uncertain...Don't let **HE IS RISEN** be your private possession...From that 1st morning when the tomb was found to be empty to this very day the sole work of Jesus' followers has been...**"Show & Tell"** Take what's precious to you. Tell the story of "Why." Show/demonstrate its importance in your life. Nothing could be easier: Christ is risen and in Him so are you!

"For *we died & were buried with Christ by baptism into death. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may walk in newness of life."*

TAKE IT HOME - *As you leave today, be specific & share w/ your neighbour...*

Where in the week ahead do you want to remember **"He Is Risen!"** most of all?

With whom would you like to share that assurance & hope?

Let's pray with that in mind...

*Lord of life; bring your resurrected life as a light to those in darkness.
Lord of peace; bring your resurrected peace to those enslaved by fear.
Lord of love; bring your resurrected love to those in need of comfort.
Lord of eternal joy; release your resurrection joy to work in our lives today & always.
In the name of the risen Jesus Christ we pray...Amen*