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St. Paul's Lutheran Church
2100 16th Street SW
Austin, MN 55912-1749
Pastor Ted Barthels
Sermon preached on
April 30, 2017
2nd Sunday after Easter

Scripture Lessons: Acts 2:14a, 36-47, Luke 24:13-35
Hymns: 341; 53; 196; 50:1,2 (242:1-3)

Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Sermon Text: 1 Peter 1:17-21

And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay *here* in fear; ¹⁸knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, *like* silver or gold, from your aimless conduct *received* by tradition from your fathers, ¹⁹but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. ²⁰He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you ²¹who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. (NKJV)

This is the Word of God.

Sanctify us, oh Lord, through Your truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

In Christ Jesus, Risen and Ever-living Savior, fellow Redeemed:

INTRO: Celebrate --

This Sunday is called Jubilate. It means "Rejoice!" That is a key word for the observance of Easter. We know that Jesus greeted the women on their way back from the empty tomb with "Rejoice!" We also like to rejoice as we celebrate Easter. The thing is we celebrate Easter as an annual event. What Jubilate Sunday is about

is celebrating the resurrection of our Savior as a daily event. That was what we see happening with the early Christians in our epistle lesson from Acts. They weren't just a little bit happy for a day or two when they learned about the salvation that was given to them in a crucified and risen Savior. It filled their hearts with joy that was expressed in daily praise and thanksgiving and worship. They loved one another and went from house to house and lived that joy in the Lord as they took care of one another. And the Word of the Lord spread, and the kingdom of God grew.

In our gospel lesson the Emmaus disciples were so filled with joy that even though it was late and dark, and even dangerous to walk the seven miles back to Jerusalem, they had to go; they had to share their joy in knowing a risen Savior with the rest of the disciples. When they arrived they found the rest of the disciples had also been given that joy of knowing a Risen Savior, and they exclaimed: "The Lord is risen indeed!"

So where are we on this scale of resurrection joy? Have we allowed the good news of a risen Savior to become old and stale so that we rarely think about it? Or -- is it still such a joy in our hearts that it overwhelms the daily trials and the sorrows that afflict us so that even in our greatest trials we still know joy and hope in the Lord?

The Spirit has blessed us so that we are --

THEME: Raised with Christ to Joy-filled Sanctified Living.

Easter brings us the ultimate attitude adjustment so that we begin --

I. Conducting our Lives with Reverent Awe.

Peter opens our text with these words:

1 Peter 1:17 "And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay *here* in fear;"

Now, on first reading we may not see anything here but the law. Peter reminds us that God is the one who will judge each person's works. Peter tells us that we need to remember this when we are making our choices in life. Putting it like that it is all law, and one

seems to be directed to the law to try to appease God Almighty as the judge of all the earth.

That doesn't work. It can't work. Approaching God without Jesus as our crucified and risen Savior means one is not approaching Him as Father. That one little word "Father" makes all the difference. When the world references God as Father, it is not as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, but as the Almighty Creator of the universe. That "father" relationship with God was destroyed by the fall into sin, and mankind was estranged from God. He was no longer Father and would not be Father again until that relationship was restored through faith in the Savior who died for us and rose again.

That relationship was restored even in the days of the Old Testament through faith in the promises of God. "*Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness,*" (Romans 4:3) and so God was his Father in heaven. Job, in terrible distress and sorrow, confessed, "***I know that my Redeemer lives!***" (Job 19:25) Yes, Job centuries before Jesus was born believed in a Savior who died for us and rose again. God was Job's Father in heaven. So believers of old lived sanctified lives here in fear; fear not meaning the knee knocking fear experienced at Sinai, but the reverent awe of a God who is gracious to save to the point of offering up His only begotten Son that we might live through Him.

The greatness of our God's love drives us to live in awe of our Father in heaven. We live confident that He has declared us righteous and holy before Him by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. We shall stand before Him on the last day unafraid, unaccused, uncondemned.

We conduct ourselves in this life knowing this grace:

1 Peter 1:18-19 "Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, *like* silver or gold, from your aimless conduct *received* by tradition from your fathers, ¹⁹but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

God redeemed us from sin and death. A ransom was paid for your soul. This ransom paid for your body as well, to redeem your

mortal body that it might be glorified and relieved of all the ravages which sin brought into the world. We were bought and paid for by a great and costly and precious ransom.

People have tried to buy off God. It has happened countless numbers of times. People have offered church leaders thousands, even millions of dollars. At the same time lonely little dollars have been solicited from the masses of poor who are desperate to be saved from their sins. Silver and gold did not redeem us. Neither did the blood of sheep or goats or bulls in Old Testament sacrifices, or even the blood of other mere humans offered to idols. Yes, even the blood of a good man, if there were a truly good man, could not redeem any one. The psalmist taught this lesson already in days of old.

Psalm 49:6-8 “Those who trust in their wealth And boast in the multitude of their riches, ⁷None of them can by any means redeem his brother, Nor give to God a ransom for him—⁸For the redemption of their souls is costly.”

We were redeemed, we could only be redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, the blood of the incarnate Son of God. This blood is of infinite value that paid the blood price for every sinner to ever live on the face of this earth. There can be no doubt that this includes you. Jesus’ precious blood redeemed you to God. Knowing that you were not redeemed with something as common and mundane as gold or silver or any other earthly treasure, but with the blood of the Only Begotten Son of God, we will conduct our lives in holy awe. How could we not be in awe of such a great Savior! How could we not be moved to joyous and holy living by such a loving, all sufficient sacrifice that delivered us from death? He saved our eternal souls!

Our Jesus who died for us rose again and lives for us on high where He has prepared a place for us, where He makes intercession for us before the throne of God. Jesus our Risen Lord serves as our Advocate, assuring us that we remain in God the Father’s good graces because of Jesus’ merit.

We are in the position of

II. Possessing Faith in God Only through a Risen Savior.

Peter reminds us about Jesus that --

1 Peter 1:20 “He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.”

God planned our salvation before the creation of the world. Yes, God knew that if He created us with a free will to serve God or ourselves, that mankind would turn against God. But He made us in His image anyway. He made us good, indeed, very good! He knew we would betray His love and His trust, and so in His grace, even before time began, He determined to send His Son into the world to suffer and die for us and rise again. In the days of the Old Covenant they had the promises of God, and the Spirit gave faith in those promises. In these last days God has shown us His Son. He sent Jesus into the world, “born of the Virgin Mary,” Jesus, God’s holy Son, “suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. ... The third day He rose again!”

God did this for you, so that you might know “*the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent*” (John 17:3). And so our text concludes:

1 Peter 1:21 “Through Him (*you*) believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

What amazing grace is wrapped in the resurrection message! If Jesus had not risen from the dead you would not know God. You would not have been delivered from sin’s power. You would be caught in the darkness of the devil’s lies. You would have no hope in the world. It is only through Jesus that we have faith in God. On the night before Jesus’ went to the cross for us He presented Himself to the disciples as the only way to God.

John 14:6-7 Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. ⁷ “If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him.”

Through Jesus we know God the Father. We have open access to the throne of God’s grace because we have been given faith in

Jesus as our Crucified and Risen and ever-living Savior. God the Father glorified His Son that all might know the salvation that is in Jesus' name. What a difference that makes in our lives! It removes the bleakness of uncertainty for our futures. Peter tells us, "Now your faith and hope are in God."

We know the only true God as our Savior God. We believe in Him, we know His words and promises are true. Our hope for life is in Him. Now we have confidence as we proceed through life, the confidence that God will bring us also into glory. Such confidence of life and salvation in a Risen Savior relieves our hearts of the burdens and griefs of this life, and brings us joy that looks forward to eternal life. We have the joy of salvation! This is the joy that fills our hearts that moves our hearts as we live our lives.

Even as we share in the benefits of Jesus' death, so we have also been raised with Him to newness of life. We live in the joy of a Sanctified Christian life. The conduct of our lives reveals our holy awe of Jesus who died for us and rose again so that our faith and hope are in God.

AMEN.

"Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." Amen. (Romans 15:13)