

Notes for Next Sunday

Third Sunday of Easter

The Point of this Week's Readings

First Reading (Acts 3:11-21). Peter is speaking to onlookers who had witnessed him healing the beggar at the temple entrance. He urges them not to be surprised at the power of the risen Jesus living in those who have faith in Christ. He then preaches Law to them for what they had done to Jesus but does not stop there. Peter then reintroduces them to Jesus: his suffering, death, resurrection and ascension. They are urged to repent and believe in Jesus so that they can inherit eternal life.

Epistle (1 John 3:1-7). John reminds the readers that righteousness results from being God's child. It is all his work. We have been born from God through water and the Spirit in Holy Baptism. Our new nature will want to live as a child of God. In our sinful flesh we will be tempted to sin. Christ will help overcome these temptation and assist us in practicing righteous behavior in contrast to the world around us.

Gospel (Luke 24:36-49). Jesus dispels all doubt when He offers absolute proof of His resurrection. Again, He points to Himself as Scripture's center, but now includes the mission to all nations through the Holy Spirit's power. There is the danger that we keep to ourselves when Jesus is equipping us to go out—we accept the fact that He is risen but deny the mission on which He sends us. The resurrected Christ truly equips us for our witness to Him with the Holy Spirit, whom He provides.

For more in-depth commentary on each reading, read the notes found after each text below.

FIRST READING – Acts 3:11-21

¹¹ While the beggar held on to Peter and John, all the people were astonished and came running to them in the place called Solomon's Colonnade. ¹² When Peter saw this, he said to them: "Men of Israel, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? ¹³ The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate, though he had decided to let him go. ¹⁴ You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you. ¹⁵ You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this. ¹⁶ By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through him that has given this complete healing to him, as you can all see. ¹⁷ "Now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did your leaders. ¹⁸ But this is how God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, saying that his Christ would suffer. ¹⁹ Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, ²⁰ and that he may send the Christ, who has been appointed for you—even Jesus. ²¹ He must remain in heaven until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets.

3:11 held on. Remarkably, the lame man is physically present even at the hearing before the Sanhedrin after the apostles' arrest (4:14). He is a persistent reminder of the power of Jesus' name. (Tannehill)

3:12 men of Israel. This was to remind them of their responsibility as people who had been especially blessed in receiving God's written word and God's revealed religion. It was to challenge them to react responsibly to the miracle they had witnessed and the message he would preach. (PBC)

3:13 handed over. Strong emphasis on their complicity in Jesus' death. Perhaps some faces were familiar from Pilate's courtyard and from Calvary. (TLSB)

3:15 You killed ... God raised ... We are witnesses. The hammer blows of the Law pounding and crushing, exposing sin and sinfulness for what they really are, followed almost in the same breath with the most unbelievable and joyous words human ears can ever hear – the Gospel. (LL)

3:16 faith in the name. Jesus' holy name works not by magic but through trust, or faith. (TLSB)

3:17 acted on ignorance. Peter did not mean to say that ignorance is innocence. They could not be excused for disowning God's servant and killing the author of life. But Peter was leading into the thought that God in his grace had used their evil act for his good purpose and that the gracious Lord was ready to forgive their sins. (PBC)

3:19 your sins ... wiped out. † Your sins will be forgiven as a result of faith (here called "turning to God"), a gift of God by the working of the Holy Spirit through word and sacrament. (CSB)

EPISTLE – 1 John 3:1-7

How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. ² Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. ³ Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure. ⁴ Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness. ⁵ But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin. ⁶ No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him. ⁷ Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. He who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous.

3:1 how great is. John can hardly get over the greatness of God's love. Can anyone blame him for the amazement? That God should love us so as to come down from His glorious heaven to this sinful earth to redeem us by suffering and dying in our place – the whole story is so amazing it can hardly be believed. (LL)

3:2 dear friends. "Dear friends" is a weak translation (lit. "beloved," "ones whom I love," "dearly beloved.") (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 10, Part 2)

3:2 when he appears we shall be like him. You were a dying sinner before God called you His child in Baptism. When Christ comes in glory, He will reveal the glory that He has given to you now. (TLSB)

3:3 hope. Not a mere wish, but unshakable confidence concerning the future. (CSB)

3:6 keeps on sinning. A person who practices sin habitually is only a sinner and not a child of God. Such a person cannot know the love of God in Jesus. (TLSB)

3:7 do not let anyone lead you astray. There is no true Christian life without a complete break with the old life of sin. Those born of God deplore and reject their own sinfulness and daily repent of their sins. Christians are born with the desire to grow in the righteousness of Christ, which has credited to them through faith in Jesus. (TLSB)

GOSPEL – Luke 24:36-49

³⁶ While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." ³⁷ They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. ³⁸ He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? ³⁹ Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have." ⁴⁰ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. ⁴¹ And while they still did not believe it because of

joy and amazement, he asked them, “Do you have anything here to eat?”⁴² They gave him a piece of broiled fish,⁴³ and he took it and ate it in their presence.⁴⁴ He said to them, “This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.”⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.⁴⁶ He told them, “This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day,⁴⁷ and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things.⁴⁹ I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”

24:36 Jesus himself stood among them. Behind locked doors (Jn 20:19), indicating that his body was of a different order. It was the glorified body of the resurrection (cf. Mk 16:12). (CSB)

24:37 were startled and frightened. Not just startled or afraid, but “scared out of their skin” afraid. The appearance of Jesus apart from his Word and Spirit brings fear. Only through the Word comes faith and peace in the promises of God. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 2)

24:37 they saw a ghost. People in those days generally believed that the souls of the dead were able to roam the earth. There was a great fear of ghosts. However, it was unthinkable that a dead person could make bodily appearances. (PBC)

24:41 did not believe it because of joy and amazement. Jesus’ request and consumption of the food counter the disciples’ disbelief and skeptical amazement. Jesus’ intent is to replace any doubt with faith. (CC pp. 1038-1039)

24:45 opened their minds. God opens hearts and minds through His Word and faith. Jesus does for the many what He had done for the Emmaus disciples (v 27). (TLSB)

24:49 clothed with power. miraculous *power.* Dynamite. (QV) The Holy Spirit’s power makes their witness effective. Luther: “It’s as if he would say, ‘I’ll place armor on you that will withstand every shot’ ” (AE 54:149). (TLLSB)