

Thursday April 16, 2020

Luke 24:35-48

Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

While they were talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you.' They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost. He said to them, 'Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.' And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, 'Have you anything here to eat?' They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate in their presence.

Then he said to them, 'These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.' Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.

New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised (NRSVA)

Reflection

Following the resurrection of Jesus celebrated on Easter Sunday, we come to Luke's version of Jesus appearing to the disciples. We begin with an eyewitness account of Jesus walking the road and those who followed Jesus did not recognise him until they insisted he remain with them as it was late. Basic hospitality dictated they provide refreshments for this stranger.

It wasn't until Jesus broke the bread that they had an epiphany or an aha moment.

Think about it this way. You are talking in a group and someone you think is familiar but you can't quite place them joins you. After listening to your conversation for a short while, they ask what exactly are you discussing. You proceed to tell them when they interject. Suddenly they become the centre of attention and what they say makes an awful lot of sense. Each of the group have questions and the stranger responds to them. You suddenly realise you haven't eaten or drunk for a while so you offer to buy this stranger a coffee and cake. They begin to turn you down but you insist; it is, after all, the least you can do. Relinquishing, they sit and begin to eat with you and suddenly you recognise who this is and your brain suddenly goes, 'I know this person!' It's an aha moment or epiphany, a revelation and all that has been said makes even more sense.

So, when these men raced back to the disciples gathered and they didn't believe them, Jesus arrived on the scene and suddenly the whole room was flabbergasted by his appearance. 'Wait a minute, we saw you die on the cross. We left you there then we hear some of the women in our group say you're alive and now here you are among us? How can that be?'

Jesus quiets them down and eats with them assuring them he is alive and well. 'Why do doubts about God rise in your hearts,' he asks. 'I have told you all this was to happen to give glory to God.' Once more he spoke to them of all, he had previously taught and the disciples epiphany or aha moment hit them. This is Jesus, once dead, now very much alive among them! This could only have happened by the power of God. They saw miracles before and the dead were raised, now one who was laid in a grave himself was alive. This is more than some trick. This was divine power at work; this was faith in action. Jesus' work had been done, now it was up to the disciples to do as Jesus did and bring the Gospel, the good news, that God has the power over all things, even death itself. It is one of the foundation stones of our faith, and in the midst of that stands Jesus as the example of how God wants us to act toward one another - with love, grace, mercy and compassion. We are to enact faith from our hearts. Where our heart is there our treasure will be.

Faith comes from the heart and not just the intellect. It is the emotion or spirit within us that drives us to love with all our heart, body, mind, soul and strength.

May the risen Christ enliven your hearts and minds to remember that God is love and because of love, God sent Jesus to bring us back to him through a sacrifice by humanity for divinity to be revealed to us. May God bring you your aha moments as you let go of fear, hatred and self loving, let go of difference, pain and hurts so love is revealed and shown through the good works driven by your heart for the glory of God. Amen.