

## **WE ARE AN EASTER PEOPLE**

### **Lesson 1: The Historical Jesus & Discerning Resurrection Truth.**

*Holy are you and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ.*

*Your Spirit anointed him  
to preach good news to the poor,  
to proclaim release to the captives  
and recovering of sight to the blind,  
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,  
and to announce that the time had come  
when you would save your people.*

*He healed the sick, fed the hungry, and ate with sinners.*

These are essential facts that we claim to KNOW about what Jesus did on earth. How do we know these assertions to be factually true?

We understand them to be factually true because they conform to modern notions and assertions about “truth:”

1. **The Principle of Criticism**: Our judgments about the past cannot simply be classified as true or false, but must be seen as claiming only a greater or lesser degree of probability, and therefore always open to revision.
2. **The Principle of Analogy**, which means that we are able to make such judgments of truth probability only if we presuppose that our own present experience is not radically dissimilar to the experience of past persons.
3. **The Principle of Correlation**, which means that the events of history are so related and interdependent that no radical change can take place at any one point in the historical scheme of events without effecting a change in all that immediately surrounds it.
4. **The Principle of Causality**. Every event has a cause and that cause must be able to be isolated and examined. There is no such thing as an event without a defined cause that is open to empirical verification.

Each assertion quoted above from our Communion Liturgy about the Jesus of History may be seen to conform to these Canons of Historical Truth.

But what about the assertion that on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day he was resurrected from the dead and rose from the grave and appeared many times to his followers?