

Jesus patiently teaches about Easter.

Text: Luke 24:36-49 for 4/15/2018 by Pastor Bolwerk

We could probably all agree with the statement, “Teaching takes a great deal of patience.” Whether you are teaching a child how to tie their shoes, or teaching a teenager how to drive a car (that lesson make take patience and nerves of steel), or even trying to teach your parents or grandparents how to use a smart phone, all of these lessons take patience on the part of the teacher.

But how many times would you have to teach a certain lesson before you started to run out of patience? For the young child learning to tie their shoes we would be more willing to teach that lesson many times, understanding that it might take weeks for them to master that skill. Yet, when trying to teach an adult how to use a smart phone we might feel that teaching someone once or twice should be enough for them to learn how to use it. If an adult kept asking us over and over how to do the same thing on a smart phone we might start to get a little frustrated.

How many times does a person need to be taught about Easter before they understand what Easter is all about? Perhaps a better question to ask is, “How many times do we need to be taught about Easter before we truly understand what it’s about?” As we look at this portion of scripture from Luke’s Gospel we see the remarkable patience of our risen Savior as ...

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I. Jesus patiently teaches a message of hope.

II. Jesus patiently teaches a message to be shared with others.

It’s a good thing that as true God Jesus has infinite patience for teaching his disciples. While he was alive Jesus had taught his disciples at least three times that he was going to suffer, die, and rise again on the third day. Yet, now that Jesus has risen from the dead he is going to have to teach them that same lesson again! For some reason disciples just didn’t “get it” when it came to the lesson of Easter, so when they see the risen Christ standing before them they panic.

But instead of becoming upset with his disciples Jesus patiently makes it clear that he really is alive. **He said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? 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.” When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, “Do you have anything here to eat?” They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate it in their presence** (vs. 38-43). First, Jesus patiently points out the problem the disciples are wrestling with: They are troubled because they are doubting that this is really Jesus standing before them. So, Jesus removes their doubts. He shows them the marks of his crucifixion on his hands and feet to prove that the body they see is the same one that hung on the cross. Then Jesus encourages his disciples to touch him to prove his human body is real and not just some ghostly vision. Finally, he eats something in front of them, so they will have no doubts that he is really alive.

Realizing this this truly is Jesus standing there, the disciples doubts turn into joy. Once the reality of his resurrection has sunk in a little then Jesus goes on to patiently teach his disciples, again, the gospel message that he has taught them before. **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.” Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, “This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins**

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will be preached in his name to all nations (vs. 44-47). Christ takes his disciples back to the same message he had been sharing with them throughout his ministry. He also points out that this is the same message that the entire Old Testament proclaimed. For all the times that Jesus had taught them this gospel truth before his death, his disciples still didn't get it. So, he patiently teaches them again this incredible message of forgiveness, hope, and life. And Jesus drives home the truth of that message of resurrection and life with his physical presence there among the disciples. His presence proves that everything he said is true.

Far too often we don't "get it" either when it comes to the message of Easter. I'm not talking about mastering the factual details of Easter, that Jesus died on a cross and then three days later rose from the dead. We've known those facts from the first year we were old enough to sit in a pew and hear the Easter message. No, I'm talking about correctly understanding the "what does this mean" part of Easter. What does the reality of a risen Savior mean for our hearts and lives?

Sadly, we tend to give evidence every day that we haven't mastered that lesson. Our lack of understanding of Easter shows up on those evenings when the frustrations of all the day's disappointments fill us with sarcasm, discouragement, or even despair. Our lack of understanding Easter shows up on those mornings when we look at the pile of tasks waiting for us – at work, at school, or around the house – and we feel overwhelmed before we even get started. Our poor understanding of Easter shows up when we worry about every unfulfilled need or unsolved problem. We feel hopeless as if the only solution to our problems and difficulties is resting in our frail human hands.

Sure, we know the facts of Easter, but the glorious meaning of Easter has so much more to teach us. How desperately we still need the patient teaching of our risen Lord to open our naturally dull minds to understand the comfort and power of Easter!

And that is what our Lord does. Jesus still patiently comes to us, not to judge us in our un-Easter-like fears and doubts. Instead he comes to comfort and strengthen and encourage us. Even though Jesus doesn't stand before us physically he still presents himself to us in an equally powerful way: Through his word. Through the power of his Easter gospel we see our Lord and Savior showing us his hands and feet, displaying to us the marks of our forgiveness. Through his almighty Word our Lord calms our hearts by reminding us again how all of God's eternal plan of salvation has been fulfilled at a bloody cross and an empty tomb. Jesus comes to speak peace to our hearts, assuring us that no power of heaven or earth will ever separate us from his love and forgiveness. Our Lord comes to help us see that his saving purpose for our lives is clearly written on every page of Scripture. By his amazing Word Jesus fills us with the power of Easter so we can truly live. Easter fills us with the power to live our lives to the glory of God, and to love those around us with the very love that Christ has shown to us. How grateful we can be that Jesus is a patient teacher, as our Savior patiently teaches us his message of hope.

But teachers don't just teach to fill a student's head with knowledge. Part of teaching is also helping students understand what this new-found knowledge is to be used for. As the ultimate teacher, our Lord does that for his believers. Jesus patiently teaches a message to be shared with others.

This message is not just for the disciples. This message isn't even just for believers. Jesus told his disciples, **"This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things"** (vs. 46-48). This is a

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message for the entire world! Sure, the disciples would start proclaiming the message of Easter to the people of Jerusalem. But our Lord made sure that his saving message would spread from Jerusalem to around the entire globe. Jesus patiently taught his disciples his Easter message of hope, so they could boldly and clearly spread that message to the ends of the earth.

Jesus made especially sure that his message of hope would be shared with you. The powerful message of Easter, which has been proclaimed across the centuries, has reached your ears and touched your hearts. That message of hope has performed a miracle in you, it has created a living faith in you. Through that gospel message you have come to believe that through Christ's death and resurrection you have the forgiveness of all your sins. You trust that it is only Jesus' saving work that puts you in a right relationship with the Almighty God. And you know that in Christ you will rise to live forever in the glories of heaven. You have witnessed that change in your own hearts and minds as the Holy Spirit guides your faith to follow Jesus on the path to heaven. You see how the power of Jesus' Easter message has changed you.

As witnesses of these things, you too have a message of hope to share with others. This sharing isn't something forced, it is something that comes from a heart filled with the hope of Christ's resurrection. Our faith moves us to get ready to share that message. As the Apostle Peter said, "**Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have**" (1 Peter 3:15). In gratitude to our Lord and Savior we want to be prepared. We want to patiently listen to our Lord as he patiently teaches us his truths. Then, having been filled with our Jesus' saving word, we patiently share his message of hope with the people around us. We simply answer those who ask us for the reason for the hope that we have. It is the hope of Easter. It is the knowledge of our Lord's forgiveness which fills us with the hope of eternal life.

Thanks be to Jesus that he is a patient teacher. To this very day Christ continues to patiently teach us about Easter. May the power of our Lord's resurrection fill us with the comfort, joy, and peace that we need to face every troubling part of our lives. May Jesus' resurrection fill us with the undying hope of an unending life to come. Amen.