

Pastor T.C. Arnold  
The Resurrection of our Lord  
Luke 24:1-12  
April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2010

**Grace, mercy and peace be to you from God our Father and from our RISEN LORD and SAVIOR Jesus Christ who on this day broke forth from death into live to show us that His resurrection is indeed our resurrection. Dear friends in Christ.**

For the past six weeks during our Midweek Lenten Services we focused on the Seven Words of the Cross. If we think about the numbers involved... six ... for the six weeks of Lent and six weeks of Midweek Lenten Services... conjures up images of death, sin and the devil. But then our focus goes to the cross where death, sin and the devil are conquered. We hear the Words of pardon that say, "*Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*" We hear the word of promise from the cross when Jesus says that the man hanging on the cross next to him, "*Truly, I say to you today you will be with me in paradise.*" Then, there is the faithful word, "*Eli, Eli, Lema Sabachthani, which means, My God, My God why have You forsaken me?*" And Jesus would utter other words. He would say a compassionate word to His mother and the disciple He loved, "*Woman, behold your son!*"... "*Behold, your mother!*" A suffering word would be next when Jesus said, "*I thirst,*" as the time of His death was drawing oh so near. Then there is the dying word, "*Father into your hands I commit my spirit.*" And then it all came together in the fulfilled word which was the theme of our Good Friday Service two days ago, "*It is finished.*"

There were seven words from the cross. How appropriate that there were seven of these words. Seven is a number in the Bible that reminds us of God's fulfillment and completion. He did all we ever needed on the cross – it is finished – it is complete. Today we celebrate those seven words made complete in the visible resurrection from the dead – the same resurrection that Jesus promised to His disciples and to all of you. Today our word is "The Vindicated Word." He is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Jesus' word is vindicated. In other words His Word is cleared from criticism. He now can defend all His words by the unquestionable visual proof – the resurrection. He would show them He is alive. He told them time and time again that He would do it – and He did it. He is risen from the grave – death could not hold Him.

And while Jesus' word is vindicated, others still had trouble believing the testimony of those who saw with their own eyes. In the Gospel text read today we hear how Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James as well as other women were on their way to anoint the body of Jesus with oils to give Him a proper burial according to the Jewish custom. Instead of seeing Jesus they saw angels who told them Jesus had been raised from the dead and to go and tell the others. They went and did as they were told – but their words were not met with the same trusting spirit of faith that we might expect from true disciples of Jesus.

When the women told the disciples of the things they saw and heard, the disciples reacted unexpectedly. It says in the text, "*But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them.*" Are you kidding me? After all the Lord had told them would happen. Jesus explained to them time and time again that He would be delivered into the hands of the elders, the scribes and chief priests, be murdered and then on the third day rise again (in Matthew 16:21 & Matthew 17:22ff). Were they not listening? Did they not believe in the first place? The testimony of faithful women was falling on deaf ears. The "Idle talk" that the women were apparently speaking could best be understood as something much stronger to the disciples. The

word “*Layros*” in the original Greek might be better understood in a stronger sense than just idle talk. A better translation would be “pure and utter nonsense” talk – completely off the mark.

Jesus vindicates His Word by His resurrection. But the disciples would not believe the testimony of the faithful women. They had heard their Lord time and time again tell them of what would happen – but when it happened – they did not believe. At least they didn’t believe right away.

But then, Peter, wanting to see such things, went to the tomb and to his amazement looked in and “*saw the linen cloths by themselves and he went home marveling at what had happened.*”

Today there are some who hear the testimony of faithful people and choose not to believe – even after it has been told to them time and time again from the lips of the savior himself. His Word is Golden and just by saying that you have life because of what He accomplished on Good Friday is enough. But the Lord gave more and He said He would give more. It’s not “utter nonsense” either. It’s the truth and what we see calls this truth to mind even 2000 years after it happened.

Today, Jesus vindicates His promise. He Himself is the embodiment of this vindication. The Vindicating Word is Jesus. He is the Word made flesh that dwelt among us, like it says in John chapter one. He is the Word that is alive again and we count on that promise with ears and with our eyes. The words of the women are truth – though some do not believe. They are truth and the truth has set us free. The truth is the Gospel of Jesus Christ and on this most holy day – our celebration of HIS resurrection – vindication has absolutely happened. Jesus is risen from death’s dark prison. A blessed life has Jesus given to us.

Six weeks of Lent. It sounds like a number associated with sin, death and the devil. Seven “fulfilling” Words from the cross uttered from our Savior’s lips. They sound like everything is coming to pass and about to be made perfect. One Vindicating Word, Jesus in the flesh, who stands before the people. He did it and now the world may know that what was said on the cross is fulfilled in their very presence. Jesus is present among us today. He is alive! He is risen! Praise be to God and Alleluia. Amen.

The peace of God which passes all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.