

“The Resurrection – God’s Plan For You”

Matthew 28:1-10

Christ is risen!! He is risen indeed!! Alleluia

This morning, we witness new life. We hear the words of faithful witnesses who told of that wonderful and amazing morning, but it didn’t start that way. Throughout Scripture, starting with God telling Adam and Eve that He would send the Seed of the woman to crush the head of Satan, God’s plan has been revealed. We see how Jesus repeatedly told His disciples that the Son of Man would be betrayed, mocked, beaten, and lifted up on the cross. Why? Because that was God’s plan.

But they didn’t believe God’s plan. The Eleven were not there; Judas was dead; the women came to the tomb, but only to finish the burial ritual. They didn’t expect the joy of the resurrection. But God had a plan.

Do you expect the joy of the resurrection? We hear the words from the Old and New Testament, but do you really expect that joy for you? The day of Easter is about Christ, but it is also a reminder that God has a plan for you. Just as we have, in regard to Christ, this past week, we have been

faced in our lives with the reality of death. I preached at two funerals this week. Easter morning reminds us that, in Christ, we have the reality of life.

New life has already begun in you. In Baptism, God literally raised you from the deadness of your sin. Easter is a very good time to discuss Baptism. Easter and Baptism go together so well. They are both about new life. Just as the light of Easter morning dawned on the empty tomb of Christ our Lord and the world became a different place – God’s plan of salvation was complete. So also, in Baptism, the light of Christ shined into the darkness of your life and changed you forever – God’s plan of salvation is complete, although we have yet to experience the fullness of the inheritance of the Kingdom of God in the resurrection.

In Christ’s death and resurrection, our Lord came to fix the brokenness which Adam brought into the world; however, problems still remain. There are still wars, famine, disease, natural disasters; people still suffer injury and many generations have been called out of this life. Christ’s death on the cross did not turn the sinful world back into the Garden of Eden. Sin remained and will remain until the last day when all things come to an end and Satan and all those in league with him are finally and forever banished.

The sacrifice made on the cross and the subsequent resurrection on

Easter morning frees us from the guilt of our sin and ensures us that when we are called out of this life, that the grave will not hold us either, but we will be joined with our Lord for all eternity. That has been and remains God's plan.

Your Baptism is a big part of God's plan. It certainly washes away all sin. However, it doesn't mean that all of your troubles are over. Satan will try all the harder to stand between you and your Lord. And there will be illness, and injury, and problems, and unless the Lord returns within our lifetime, even the youngest among us will grow older and eventually die.

Baptism and Easter are not events that guarantee long life on earth, they are gifts from our Lord guaranteeing His faithful children eternal life in the resurrection of the body. We hear of the glory of Jesus and the glory of heaven – the angel who was sitting on the stone which had been rolled away: "His appearance was like lightning, and His clothing white as snow [Mt. 28:3], and he says, "He is not here, for He has risen, as He said" [Mt. 28:6]. Jesus had told them His plan.

The great connection between Easter and Baptism is that God's baptized faithful – you are dressed in that same glory and righteousness in the eyes of our Father in heaven. The risen Christ rolls back the stone and

He is arrayed in the glory of heaven – His righteousness shines forth for all to see.

Just like I told you last week, as we celebrated confirmation, you can't see it this morning with your eyes. But that is how God sees you right now. You are beaming with the righteousness of the risen Christ. Last week we gave the three confirmands the white garment to symbolize Christ's righteousness upon them. They were not the only ones beaming with the righteousness of Baptism.

This Easter morning, like every morning since the day of your Baptism, you arose dressed in the glory and righteousness of Christ. Everything that God has done leading you to where you are today has all been a part of God's plan. Your Baptism, your life in the church, your entrance into the Church Triumphant, the resurrection of your body on the Last Day is God's plan for you. Amen.

Christ is Risen! He is Risen indeed! Alleluia

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