

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
Quincy, IL
Rev. Martin Eden

Easter 3
Saturday, April 22, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.
Sunday, April 23, 2023, at 9:00 a.m.

“Breaking Bread”

Luke 24:13-35

Christ is Risen! He is Risen indeed! Alleluia

The meal at Emmaus is the climax of Luke’s Gospel, and it is the pivotal hinge connecting his Gospel to his account of the Acts of the Apostles. Luke’s Gospel is addressed to a man named Theophilus. It is Luke’s intention to reveal Christ to him through the written Word. The Book of Acts also begins with an address to Theophilus specifically stating that Christ’s work in the world is on-going. He continues to be revealed. He continues to act and to teach.

The ministry of Christ’s Church, the Church of the Apostles, the One Holy Apostolic Church, is an extension of His earthly ministry. And as you read the entirety of the Gospel of Luke and of the Acts of the Apostles, it becomes more and more clear that our Lord is not only revealed in the written Word, but Christ is revealed in the breaking of bread.

All of human history, as it pertains to our relationship with God, is framed within the context of meals. Adam and Eve brought about the Fall of mankind by eating of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. When the Israelites

are freed from Egypt, their protection is through the blood of the lamb painted on their doors, but God instructs them to have a meal as the angel of death passes over their homes.

When God meets with Moses and the 70 elders of Israel on Mt. Sinai to establish the first covenant, Moses records, “They saw God and they ate and they drank” [Ex. 24:11].

When Christ establishes His new and better covenant, it is at the celebration of the Passover meal. He brings a new reality to the unleavened bread and cups of wine which were passed around the table. “This is My body . . . This is My blood.” He brings a new reality to the blood of the Lamb rescuing His people from the angel of death.

And Jesus’ words spoken earlier to His disciples are now given context. Our Lord said, “I am the Bread of Life . . . If anyone eats of this bread, He will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh. . . Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. For my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him” [Jn. 6:55-56].

And Jesus didn’t stop there. He goes on and says more of the same, but I think you get the point. He could not have been more emphatic. And, of

course, this message was offensive to many of His followers – just as it is offensive to the world today. But the reality is, “This is My body . . . This is My blood given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.” And as I said last week, the forgiveness of sins is what Easter is all about. If our sins are forgiven, death has no power over us. We will rise in our bodies, just like Jesus did.

And after the resurrection, Jesus appears to His disciples on a number of occasions and eats with them – further proving He has been raised in His body.

But on that first Easter Sunday, on the first day of the new week, Creation has been restored and Christ is made known in the breaking of the bread. We gather here this day and see and hear and taste the ministry of Christ which is on-going. He is revealed to us in His Word, and He is made known to us in the breaking of the bread.

The disciples at Emmaus marveled at how their hearts burned within them as Jesus spoke of Moses and the Prophets and interpreted what they said about the Messiah – the Christ. The Word of God is powerful in and of itself. As Scripture says, “It is a refiner’s fire.” It changes us. It fills us. Peter says in our Epistle reading that God’s Word is imperishable, living, and abiding. “The word of the Lord remains forever.” And God has revealed Himself and He speaks to us through that living and abiding Word.

As is said so eloquently in the letter to the Hebrews, “In many and various ways God spoke to the people of old through the prophets”, but when He really

wanted to get their attention, or when He really had a fundamental change in store for His people, there was a meal.

Hebrews goes on to say, “But now in these last days, He has spoken to us by His Son.” It is still true that when God really wants to get our attention, or when He really has a fundamental change in store for His people, there is a meal. We gather for a meal each week because a fundamental change has taken place in our lives. Christ has established a new covenant in His blood which was shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. But this is not a one-time event. The Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of Heaven is often referred to as “The On-going Feast.”

Here at the Lord’s Table, we get a fore-taste of that Feast to come. We get a little glimpse of heaven on earth. We enter into this sacramental union with Christ our Lord, and He physically enters our bodies just as spiritually He is always with us.

The joy of Easter and the reality of eternity has begun for us and comes to us as our crucified and risen Lord, the Word made flesh who still dwells among us, is made known in the breaking of the bread. 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.