

The Power of the Resurrection Doesn't Remove Life's Troubles, But Renews Those Who Are Being Tested

We have "reason for great joy, because God has raised Jesus from the dead," the Rev. Dr. Brook Thelander said in his sermon Sunday, which means that we, too, "have the privilege of being spiritually reborn and experiencing new life and a new start.

"There is joy, because not only does life change for the better *here and now*, but also because God is reserving something special for the *then and there*, an 'inheritance' Peter calls it, for when this life has run its course."

"It might be easy for these believers" whom Peter was addressing in 1 Peter 1:3-9 "to conclude that because Christ has been raised, all of their problems are over;" Pastor Thelander continued, and "to think that because the resurrection changes everything—which it does—that now they will be raised up somehow and made exempt from the trials and tests that are part and parcel of living life."

"Imagine their surprise, then, when they experience sickness and disease. Imagine their surprise when they experience financial hardship. Imagine their shock when their children rebel and become prodigals. Imagine their surprise when they lose their jobs. Imagine their shock when someone they know and love commits suicide. Imagine their anxiety when their life falls down around them, and all they have is their belief in One whom they cannot see.

"It's almost as if these believers had communicated with Peter in some way before he wrote this letter, saying to him, 'Hey, Peter, if Christ has been raised, why is life trying to knock us to the canvas and put us down for the count? Where's the joy in that?'"

"I can imagine Peter's response in v. 6: 'Be glad. Don't lose your joy. This all leads somewhere, even though right now things are tough for you.'"

The power of the resurrection "is not a power that exempts us from life or lifts us up above the troubles of life. The power of the resurrection is a power that works through our trials and uses them to *refine* us, even as fire purifies gold. The power of the resurrection is a (p. 2→)

"Rest in the Lord" (Ps. 37:7)

Ronald Blythe's thoughts when leading an Anglican worship service in a country church one day:

"I 'do' the minimum, and hope that my stillness will activate prayer.

"I love the singing stillness, the day-dreams during lessons, the observed order, the faces of the country people, the outside cry, the clunking clock, the resting neighbours below the windy trees, the sacred vitality and both the brevity and the everlastingness of everything."



"Christ at Emmaus", a forgery sold in 1937 by van Meegeren, for a large sum of money, as a Vermeer. When van Meegeren confessed, at first no one believed him, but while in prison he demonstrated that he was quite capable of painting the work. Sunday's Gospel lesson will recount how two dejected disciples recognized that the one who broke bread for them at Emmaus was the true risen Jesus.

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Sundays

10:00 a.m.: Word & Table service

11:30 a.m.: Refreshments, conversation

11:45 a.m.: Post-service discussion

6:00 p.m.: (First Sundays only) Evensong, then tea & refreshments

Readings, 4/6, 10 a.m.: Acts 2:36-47; Ps. 116:10-17; 1 Peter 1:17-23; Luke 24:13-34. **4/6, 6 p.m.:** Ps. 114 (sung); Ex. 18:1-12; 1 John 2:7-17. **4/13:** Acts 6:1-9; Ps. 23; 1 Peter 2:19-25; John 10:1-10.

Prayer Emphases: Nepal; North American Baptist Churches; Wesleyan Church, Spencer, NE, and the Rev. Grant Graff; Monastery of the Ascension, Jerome, ID; parishioners on Esquire Drive.

For the poor: Meat; fresh produce; canned fruits and vegetables; dairy products; peanut butter; cooking oil; pancake mix; syrup; spices; diapers; baby wipes; bathroom tissue; for personal care: soap, shampoo, conditioner, razors, shaving cream; new underwear (adults and children); cleaning supplies; bleach.

Sermon, cont'd.: power that does not *remove* life's tests and trials, but *renews those who are being tested*, and brings them through on the other side with greater strength and courage. . . . Peter (says), 'It is necessary for you to endure many trials for a while.' . . . The power of the resurrection . . . is a power that strengthens you, that fortifies you, that refines you, that burns away all of the dross until all that's left is a faith which is pure gold. . . . And here is some really good news . . . : the tests and trials we endure in life are temporary, but the inheritance that awaits us is not. It is forever. It is eternal."