

Coffee to Go | Third Sunday of Easter

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

witnesses, Jesus, doubt, disciples, resurrection, relationship, table, invite, fear

SPEAKERS

Karin Peter, Blake Smith

Karin Peter 00:26

Welcome to Coffee to Go, where we center ourselves in the Scriptures seasons and holy days of the Christian tradition. I'm Karin Peter, and I'm here with Blake Smith, and we welcome you on the journey. We're still journeying through the Easter season, Blake, we've got a few more weeks to go. Easter last from Easter day until the day of Pentecost, which this year is in May. So we're hanging out with Jesus. And last week, we heard from John, about what happened right after the kind of the scene of the empty tomb after the resurrection. And it was a really powerful kind of scene that takes place. Well, this week, we are visiting the same scene, but we are going to look at it from the perspective of the Gospel of Luke. So we're going to hear what Luke has to say about that particular moment, that episode, if you will, in the life ministry and resurrection of Jesus. So everybody flip the switch, because we're going over to Luke to hear from him the post-resurrection version of Jesus appearing to the disciples.

Blake Smith 01:42

All right, our passage comes from the Gospel of Luke, the 24th chapter, and it is the 36th, through the 48 verse. Pay close attention to the environment here and how it's spoken. We're going to talk about that a little bit.

While they were talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." They were startled and terrified and thought that they were seeing a ghost. He said to them, "Why are you frightened? And why do doubts arise in your hearts, look at my hands and my feet, see that it is I myself, touch me and see, for a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see that I have." And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. Yet for all their joy, they were still disbelieving and wandering. And he said to them, "have you anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate it in their presence. Then he said to them, "these are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about Me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms must be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. And he said to them, "thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things."

So, I want to talk about that context for just a minute. Because last week, we were in the Gospel of John, as you mentioned, Karin, and we found ourselves in a room behind locked doors, where the disciples are already fearful, it says, fearful of the Jews, so maybe how they would respond and react,

what they would say. Luke doesn't have us in a room, we can probably imagine that the disciples are just standing around, kind of wondering what they're gonna do. And now what do we do? Where do we go? They they just don't understand. As, it's the same with John, but it's different. And it's not until Jesus shows up, then they're frightened. They're frightened.

Karin Peter 04:13

Yeah, that's an interesting change here, isn't it? And the other one, they're already frightened. They're frightened, frightened of outside. perspective, and here, they're actually frightened of Jesus, and the appearance.

Blake Smith 04:28

Yeah. So, it begs the question to us, What are we afraid of when it comes to Jesus? Are we afraid that other people will say things about us that they might mock us for being Christians or for something we believe? Or are we actually afraid to be in relationship with the living Christ?

Karin Peter 04:50

Yeah, I'm not so happy about having these two passages back to back, Blake, because they really challenge, you really to just to think about that. You know, especially if we are the witnesses of these things. Because out of Matthew, I can say, well, it's hard for me to witness because I'm hiding out of fear of whatever, I can blame it on somebody else. But here, it's like, you are the witnesses. And it's like, oh, maybe that's what I'm afraid of.

Blake Smith 05:19

Exactly,

Karin Peter 05:20

Yeah. Yeah, that's ... it's a tougher, it's a tougher piece to look at when they're side by side like that.

Blake Smith 05:28

Absolutely. Well, another piece that comes out of this, and it was important in the Gospel of John, because as we talked about then, that often gets turned to a question of Thomas's doubt. But again, even here, we see that it's all the disciples that don't understand what resurrection means. And, but even in this case, Jesus still doesn't chastise them for their unbelief. He's simply...

Karin Peter 05:58

A boomer moment ... I'm not a boomer, So just, you know, in case they're listening, I'm not quite that old. However, when I read through this, and just that same point that everybody, everybody doubted ... what went through my mind, I think it's an Annie Lennox song with Everybody Hurts. And it's just yeah, it was like, Oh, everybody doubts and it was like, that whole thing just went through my mind, but instead of Everybody Hurts, it was everybody doubts. So sorry, that's where my brain, that's where my theologically trained brain went.

Blake Smith 06:32

To Annie Lennox, okay. To the great theologian, Annie Lennox.

Karin Peter 06:36

There we go.

Blake Smith 06:39

Well, you know what Jesus does here, instead of chastising, he continues what he's been doing with them, throughout his time with them. Even before the crucifixion. There's, there's four things that happen in this passage that are really important to help us understand what Christ does when Christ shows up. So first thing is that Jesus invites touch. Here are my hands and feet, come and touch them, Come and see the bones and the flesh that a ghost can't have. So he humanizes the embodiment of God. And this is, this is God with us. And so he humanizes embodiment. The second thing he does is he eats with them. And he's done this many times, of course, throughout their ministry, but he says, Do you have anything to eat, let me eat a fish and that, that gesture of eating together fosters relationship, it is at the table that we grow in relationship. So that's an important part of, of Jesus ministry. The next thing he does is that, this passage tells us that he opens scriptural understanding, He opens their mind. So he's preparing and teaching and encouraging even after the resurrection, he continues to be with us. And finally, and probably most importantly, and one of the things that may have been a source of fear for the disciples, is that he sends us as witnesses to go a new way, reconciled and rejuvenated and ready to spread the Gospel. And so when we ask, why does this matter? It is simply that. When we don't understand Jesus is there inviting, and eating and opening and sending? God is with us.

Karin Peter 08:37

I love that cycle of those four, those four things.

Blake Smith 08:43

Yeah. So some questions that we might ask for us thinking about those four things. First, is what are our touch points with Jesus? How is Jesus embodied for us? Second is, around what tables are we encountering Divine Presence? whether that's a physical or a physical table or just a figurative table? What are the tables where we are encountering Divine Presence? Another is how does my understanding of Scripture inform my willingness or unwillingness to follow Jesus? [Yeah.] And then finally, do I need to turn away from something to be sent in a new direction? Because, we are sent.

Karin Peter 09:41

Yeah, but the right before the You are witnesses, it's repentance and forgiveness is the proclamation. Right? They're supposed to be witness of and it's, that's a hard word, witness. I'm a Seventy, we're Seventy. We do that. That's part of who we are, which is why we serve in this office, but a lot of folks really shy away from that word witness. And so they hear, "you're witnesses of these things." So a softer word to help us understand it might be maybe storyteller, or story giver, or story bearer. Because that's what we're trying to do. We're trying to tell the story of what it means to encounter Jesus and then turn and go a new way with Jesus.

Blake Smith 10:26

I think that's a really helpful image. Because I agree, I think witness is a scary, and even divisive word. You know, we see people putting up walls who are trying to witness. I am immediately taken to the folks

who stand on these corners and scream the gospel, and I'm sure they're doing it for the right reasons. I don't know how effective it is. I figured that it's not really effective at all. But it's different than sitting at a table and sharing story.

Karin Peter 10:56

Yeah. So I've been thinking about that when I think about how we can experience the scripture this week. And so I'm wondering what it would look like for us to live that pattern, to invite, eat, open, and send what does that look like for us. So it would be to invite someone, touch some somebody else's life, through the invitation to be somehow in relationship, and to eat with someone to share a snack or a meal, or a cup of coffee with someone, and to read scripture in an open and responsible manner. And I think we've talked about that before. But we have a scripture statement in Community of Christ. If you're not familiar with it, I would encourage you to go on sea of christ.org and put in Scripture statement and pull that up. And it will help you read scripture in a responsible way. And, and also to not just send but to be sent this week, allow yourself to be sent to be in a relationship with the divine that causes you to turn and go a new way to be sent somewhere new. So practice that pattern this week, to invite to eat to open and to be sent. And see what happens. I don't know it's an experiment this week will be our experiment week to see if that's like a works in any way for us, as we grow as disciples.

Blake Smith 12:37

Right? Well, how about a blessing to close this out today?

Karin Peter 12:40

Let's have that.

Blake Smith 12:43

God, be with me in my doubt. When I doubt your existence, break into my senses in what I see and hear around me. When I doubt your capacity to forgive, stun me with your grace, when I doubt your invitation to a real relationship, will me with wonder and steadfastness rest with me and my questions. Turn my footsteps toward those in your service. Breathe peace in me. Amen. Amen.

So thanks for joining us for another episode here at coffee to go we invite you to join us next time for the next part of our journey through the liturgical seasons and holy days of the Christian tradition.