**Pastor Tim’s Message Notes from 4-4-2021 (Easter)
What’s For Dinner?**

Well here we are. Today is Resurrection Sunday or Easter. This is truly a day to celebrate like no other. The LORD, our LORD, is alive and well.

And one thing that goes hand in hand with celebration is eating and enjoying meals with others. Perhaps you have had or will have a special Easter meal this year. You probably have memories of past Easter meals shared with loved ones.

Over the weeks of Lent we have taken a closer look at some of the meals that Jesus shared with various people. In each of these meals, Jesus instructs us in some way. Today is no exception.

But as Jesus enters the scene His disciples are in no mood to eat. They probably had eaten little if anything following the events that had taken place over the last few days. Jesus had shared the Passover meal with them, but later that evening he was betrayed and arrested and the following day He was beaten and crucified. Their master, their King, their Messiah, was dead.

The disciples had been hiding in fear for their own safety, locking the doors in hopes to stay protected. And then came Sunday.

First, there was the women. They came to them with the announcement that they went to anoint Jesus’ body for burial and found that He was not there. They spoke of two angels telling them that Jesus had risen and that they were to go and tell the disciples this good news.

Then, came the two followers that were on the road to Emmaus. Like the women that went to the tomb, these two followers of Christ were dejected and disillusioned by all that had taken place. But then, something amazing happened. And these two individuals had come to the disciples with an amazing story. They said that this man began to walk with them on the road and He began to explain through the Scriptures that Jesus had to suffer and rise from the dead. They said that as they began to eat with this stranger, they realized that this stranger was Jesus Himself. And then He suddenly was gone.

So here the 10 were. Judas had taken his own life and Thomas was likely hiding somewhere else. The doors were locked and the men were likely too confused to even think about food. They were just talking amongst themselves about everything that had taken place.

*When suddenly, the most significant moment of their lives was upon them*. Despite the locked doors, there Jesus was. And he was basically like, “**so what’s for dinner**?” But we are getting a bit ahead of ourselves.

Let us turn to our Scripture reading now. It is Luke 24:36-49

**While they were still talking about this, Jesus Himself stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.”**

**They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. He said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have.”**

**When He had said this, He showed them His hands and feet. And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, He asked them, “Do you have anything here to eat?” They gave Him a piece of broiled fish, and He took it and ate it in their presence.**

**He said to them, “This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.”**

**Then He opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, “This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in His Name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”**

Wow! What a powerful scene.

Jesus’ first words to his disciples were words of comfort. He knew that despite the women’s testimony and despite the testimony of the 2 that were on their way to Emmaus, these disciples were confused and fearful.

The Lord states “**Peace be with you**.” He would have said “Shalom.”

While “Shalom” was a typical statement of greeting, Jesus knew that this “Sholom” was far more than a “hello.” His very words released a measure of peace into the atmosphere.

But still the disciples were not fully receiving this peace. They were frightened. They knew that this man looked like Jesus, but could it be a ghost? Could it be an angel that resembles Jesus?

I’m sure they were thinking, didn’t we have the doors locked?

Jesus sensed their fear and so He begins to give them evidence that it was Him. He wasn’t a ghost; He wasn’t an angel. This was Him, in the flesh.

He shows them His wound marks in His hands and feet and invites them to touch those wounds themselves.

And they were stunned, thinking that this was too good to be true. So Jesus gives them another sign. He asks “what’s for dinner?” Or more accurately, “Do you have anything here to eat?”

And they grab a piece of boiled fish and give it to Him. And Jesus takes the fish and eats it in their presence.

It was then that the 10 finally begin to celebrate that this is their Jesus, this is their Lord and Savior. He was alive. Resurrected from death. It was the same Jesus that was on the cross.

And here Jesus begins to connect the dots of Scripture for them.

How many of you like doing connect the dots? It is something how sometimes a page looks like a random scattered of dots on a page, but as the dots are connected a shape begins to take form. A picture emerges.

This is basically what Jesus is doing for them. **He explains to them how the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalm all spoke of Him. *And the Lord opens their minds to understand the Scriptures*.** What a beautiful verse. May this be a constant prayer for ourselves and for others, that He would continue to do this in us and through us to others.

Perhaps as Jesus dined on the fish, this became a meal for everyone. Whether it was other broiled fish that were around, or perhaps bread or maybe even cereal, although it is difficult for me to picture them eating Cheerios together.

But no matter what they may have eaten together, it was a meal of great celebration! The new covenant meal that Jesus established a few days earlier was solemn. This meal was overflowing with joy.

\*And this meal of celebration was just the beginning. Jesus tells them that the good news He brings would spread from there in Jerusalem to all the nations of the world. And soon, Jesus would send them power from on high, to spread the good news of Jesus. And we see that begin to happen on the Day of Pentecost, as the Holy Spirit comes upon these disciples.

Friends, here we are today, nearly 20 centuries later. The good news of Jesus has spread to nearly all the world. And the Lord has us here to help finish the job. To be His witnesses. Amen!

In light of this celebration meal of Jesus on the evening of that first Easter, I would like to leave us with three big takeaways.

**First, the Lord is the One who connects the dots of Scripture.**

I cannot overstate the importance of this. It is the Lord who opens our minds to the truth of Scripture to how the Bible makes sense and fits together and points to Jesus.

It is as we grow in this understanding that our faith is strengthened and our walk with Jesus grows stronger.

Let us ask the Lord to open our minds to see how the dots of Scripture fit together. All of the Bible points to Jesus in some way. And the Lord desires to help us to see this.

The more that we understand His Word, the more easily we can share His Word with others.

**Second, this celebration meal reminds us of the importance of repentance**. Repentance is simply changing one’s hearts and minds in a way that leads to change in one’s actions. The proper response to Jesus is repentance and submission. In other words, it is a turning from sin and a turning to Him. And choosing to daily submit to Him.

Jesus said that “Repentance will be preached in His Name to all nations.”

On this resurrection Sunday, I would like to remind you that repentance is more than a one-time experience for when we first believe in Jesus. Yes, this is essential.

But the more that we come to know Christ and the more light that He sheds on us, we are called to continue to repent or to realign our thinking with God’s heart and mind.

**And the third and final application that I would like to leave with us is** **that, like the first disciples, we are also called to be Jesus’ witnesses in the world**. And like the first disciples, we need the power of the Holy Spirit to do this.

Let us ask Jesus to fill us and re-fill us with power from on high to be bold in sharing Him with others.

While the gospels conclude with the resurrection of Jesus Christ, Jesus’ work in this world has not ended. It is far from over. We are part of God’s plan to continue Jesus’ work. He desires to work, to minister, through each of us. So on this Easter Sunday, let us not only thank God for the death and resurrection of Jesus for us, but let us offer ourselves as God’s vessels. With God’s Spirit empowering and directing us, we can and will impact this world greatly for Jesus Christ.

And this, friends, is truly a privilege worth celebrating.

Let us pray…