

April 12, 2020
The Risen Christ Brings Peace
Easter Communion

Scripture reading: Luke 24:36-49

Text: “While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, ‘Peace be with you’” (Luke 24:36 NIV)

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Almost a month has passed since we met here in the House of God. Many of us are saddened, and a little bit disappointed for not being able to participate at this Easter Communion Service, not praising the Lord through the hymns, and not partaking in the Holy Communion at the Lord’s Table. There are questions in us and we do not know when we can continue our regular church life. Additionally, in the past couple of weeks we have heard and read about the happenings in this world, and we cannot say confidently that we have peace around us. Moreover this pandemic created fear and anxiety for many people.

“Peace be with you”, says the Risen Lord even today, this Easter. Many are longing for peace, especially nowadays. *How could we get true peace that we are longing for?* you may ask. The Hebrew expression “Shalom”, that is translated “peace”, that Jesus used to greet His disciples after His resurrection when He appeared to them, means so much more than we would think. “Shalom” is a term that includes the spiritual, mental, and physical well-being, the internal harmony, the security in spite of worries, the trustworthiness, the faithful relationships, the welfare, the agreement with those who are important to us, the unity in our families, the success in our work, all the blessings that we experience in the different areas of life, and there would be more to list if we wanted to determine what this word **peace**, “Shalom” includes. This is what each human heart longs for and needs especially now.

This is how it was with the disciples 2000 years ago in Jerusalem. The followers of Christ were together, with the doors locked, in an upper room. Most of them were disappointed, sad, and hopeless. They lost their Master whom they thought would redeem the people of Israel as King and Messiah. However, it was the third day that He was crucified and His body was in the tomb. They still did not understand what Jesus meant when He told them three times about Him being killed, but on the third day be raised to life.

However, exactly in such a situation, in this time of hopelessness, disappointment, and doubtfulness appears the One who can bring hope, love, healing, and deliverance, and greets them: “Peace be with you” (v.36). The downhearted, sad, and disappointed disciples needed Christ’s presence that brought them peace, because the true peace comes only from His presence and from the living relationship with Him.

We may feel this joy, relief, and freedom when we realize what He has done for us and we begin to walk with Him. I am persuaded that we all need, even now, Christ's presence that brings peace.

Let me share a story about how someone found the meaning of true peace:

Long ago a man sought the perfect picture of peace. Not finding one that satisfied, he announced a contest to produce this masterpiece. The challenge stirred the imagination of artists everywhere, and paintings arrived from far and wide. Finally the great day of revelation arrived. The judges uncovered one peaceful scene after another, while the viewers clapped and cheered.

The tensions grew. Only two pictures remained veiled. As a judge pulled the cover from one, a hush fell over the crowd. A mirror-smooth lake reflected lacy, green birches under the soft blush of the evening sky. Along the grassy shore, a flock of sheep grazed undisturbed. Surely this was the winner. The man with the vision uncovered the second painting himself, and the crowd gasped in surprise. Could this be peace?

A tumultuous waterfall cascaded down a rocky precipice; the crowd could almost feel its cold, penetrating spray. Stormy-gray clouds threatened to explode with lightning, wind and rain. In the midst of the thundering noises and bitter chill, a spindly tree clung to the rocks at the edge of the falls. One of its branches reached out in front of the torrential waters as if foolishly seeking to experience its full power.

A little bird had built a nest in the elbow of that branch. Content and undisturbed in her stormy surroundings, she rested on her eggs. With her eyes closed and her wings ready to cover her little ones, she manifested peace that transcends all earthly turmoil.¹

This is a wonderful divine peace that this bird symbolizes in the stormy circumstances. The world can be troubled, but we may have God's peace in our hearts. He puts all our worries upon His shoulders and makes us free and peaceful. His peace is perfect, free of all fear. He gives us this peace, and He only asks us to **obey**.

Jesus Christ is the source of peace who brought us full life, healing, and redemption. He conquered death by His resurrection and brought forgiveness and life. You and I are partakers this grace of Christ by the mysterious and marvelous work of the Holy Spirit. On this special day I invite and encourage you to enter into the peaceful presence of Jesus Christ where we may receive healing, deliverance, and full life. Amen.

Yours in the Risen Christ,
Rt. Rev. Dr. Csaba Krasznai
Pastor

Source:

¹ Berit Kjos, *A Wardrobe from the King*, Victor Books, 1988, pp.45-46
<http://www.sermonillustrations.com/a-z/p/peace.htm>