

We are Witnesses: To The Resurrection

April 8, 2007

Acts 10:34-43; Luke 24:1-12

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The game had just ended

- and we were walking back to the car

- when Parker announced -

- "I've got to tell Pops

- that I got my first hit."

- Parker was so eager to tell the story

- that he could barely wait for Kris to dial her parent's number.

- Once Russ was on the phone, - -

- she handed it to Parker

- who quickly announced

"Pops, you won't believe it!

- I got my first hit."

- He went on to describe the event

- in great detail

- barely taking a breath during the whole story.

- He was excited!

- He was thrilled!

- He had news that he just had to share with someone he loved

- and so, - -

- that's exactly what Parker did. - - -
- He got on the phone and described
 - this amazing event in his life.
- When we have something wonderful, -
 - something amazing happen to us, -
 - the first thing most of us want to do
 - is tell someone the news.
 - Whether it is a promotion at work
 - or an "A" on a paper
 - or something like our
 - first hit in a baseball game,
 - most of us find someone we know,
 - someone we love,
 - or just someone standing close by
 - to share the good news with.
 - So it's not surprising
 - that Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James and the other women
 - who went to the tomb
 - that first Easter morning
 - returned to the place that the 11 Disciples
 - and the rest of Jesus' followers had gathered
 - to share the news
 - that Jesus has risen.

- These women, after all,
- were the first witnesses to the resurrection
- and this story, - -
- as amazing and unbelievable as it was
- had to be told.

- This story,
- which fulfilled the ancient prophecies
- and Jesus' own teachings,
- had to be told.

- This story,
- that Jesus had conquered death,
- had to be told

- and nothing has changed in the 2000 years
- since that first Easter morning.

- Oh - you and I may not have stood at the actual empty tomb this morning,
- but like Mary Magdalene and the other women

- We are witnesses to the resurrection.

- We are witnesses to the good news
- that God loved us so much
- that God sent Jesus to live,
- to die and to rise

- that we might have the promise of eternal life with God.

- and We are the ones,

- who have the opportunity,
 - who have the tools,
 - who have the motivation
 - to share this good news with others.
- Now I'm not saying that you need to head out of worship this morning
 - and go knock on 5 random doors
 - or call 5 random phone numbers
 - and launch into the story of Jesus,
- but I do think that
 - the example we see before us this morning
 - calls us to share this wonderful good news
 - using the gifts, talents and opportunities
 - which God has placed before us.
- For Mary and the other women,
 - that meant
 - going back to the community of believers
 - to tell them what they had seen.
- for Peter, in our reading from Acts this morning,
 - that meant
 - standing up in front of a crowd of relative strangers
 - and sharing his experience
 - of Jesus
 - in a very public way.

- For you and for me,
 - that might mean -
 - praying the Lord's Prayer with our children and
 - explaining what the words of that prayer mean to us.
- It might mean -
 - taking a stand at work or in society
 - against something that you know is absolutely wrong.
- It might mean -
 - sharing your time
 - to help a group of people who are homeless
 - to have something to eat.
- It might mean -
 - inviting a friend who's struggling in life
 - to come to worship,
 - so that they might experience the help and hope
 - that you know from your relationship with God.
- It might mean -
 - telling a group of close friends
 - or relative strangers
 - about how God surrounded you with love
 - in your time of need.
- It might mean -
 - witnessing to God's presence in your life

- through the words you use
 - and the choices you make.
- or It might mean
 - picking up the phone
 - and calling someone
 - to tell them about this amazing,
 - wonderful good news -
 - that Christ is risen for you.
- The way you answer this call to share the good news
 - will depend on the gifts God has given you
 - and the opportunities God has placed before you.
- but one thing this morning is clear - -
 - We are all witnesses.
 - Witness to the care and compassion
 - that God showed to people
 - during his life among us.
- Witnesses
 - to the amazing deeds of power
 - which Jesus did during his lifetime in God's name
 - like raising Lazarus and healing the lepers.
- Witnesses to the life lessons
 - and wisdom
 - that Jesus shared with us during his ministry.

- Witnesses

- to the community of believers

- that Jesus assembled

- to live as God's hands and feet in the world.

- Witnesses

- to the joy of that first Easter morning

- and witnesses to

- the empty tomb, - -

- the risen Lord!, - -

- and the promise of eternal life with God.

- For just like Parker,

- who was so excited that

- he just had to tell his Pops about his first hit,

- the Good News we hear this morning

- that Christ is Risen!

- He is Risen Indeed!

- is so exciting

- so wonderful

- that we simply have to share it

- both with those we love

- and indeed with the whole world.