

St James' Thought for the Day – Sunday 26 April - Third Sunday of Easter

On the road

- Revd John Marshall

Acts 2.14a.36-41 Luke 24.13-35 (1Peter 1.17-25 Ps 116.1-7)

I like to listen to conversations, while in coffee shops or cafes or supermarkets; sometimes on buses or in the street.

Sometimes you can't avoid hearing and there may be a temptation to join in. (our coffee mornings have been a delight.)

The walk to Emmaus is a fascinating story. The two disciples have left their friends in the upper room – they are on their way home, but talking or arguing about the events that have taken place in Jerusalem over the past few days. The stranger comes up and hears what they are saying. They are surprised he didn't know what was going on, but he teaches them from scripture, not always gently, but effectively.

Possibly Cleopas was another name for Clopas (according To Paula Gooder), whose wife Mary was at the foot of the cross. As they come home they invite the stranger to eat with them, after all hospitality was important. The he takes on the role of host and in that familiar action of breaking bread; they recognise him and he is gone.

But their response is faithful and sincere.

'They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the scriptures to us.'"

They go back to the disciples and share their joyful story.

In Jerusalem, on the day of Pentecost, Peter's words are hittig home. The response is amazing. They do repent and were baptised. Three thousand were added to their number. (A logistical problem.)

Peter writes in his letter; "Therefore prepare your minds for action, be self-controlled, set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed."

He goes on to urge his readers, "Just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do. For it is written, "Be holy for I am Holy." Peter goes on "Through

him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God.”

Ronald Gribbins wrote a meditation on the events on the road and at Emmaus, in “The stations of the Resurrection.”

Let us remember

- that our Lord Jesus, having died for us, came alive also for our sake;
- that there is no road we travel, but the living Christ is there beside us
- that there is no place we come to, but that the living Christ is there ahead.

Let us remember with joyful thanks

- that our Lord Jesus, being once dead, is alive for all time and for all people;
- that he is with us in all our certainties, so also he stays with us even when our doubtings would have him shut out,
- that being alive within us,
He is our peace
He is our joy
He is the assurance
that nothing in life
nothing in death
can ever end us
who share his victory.

In Psalm 116 we are told that “The Lord protects the simple hearted, when I (we) were in great need he saved me.”

Is this a message for our time?

Let us remember that Jesus is our peace and joy.

