

WE CONFESS OUR NEED

All: Lord Jesus, we are flawed in ways that are impossible for anyone but you to repair and heal. We are so like the disciples: impatient, selfish, and fearful. We want to do what's right -- what pleases you -- and yet even our best intentions so often fall far short of your perfect will. But you have promised grace and forgiveness to us, and so we call upon your mercy now. Give us patience so that we will wait for you to act in us. Empower us in ways that give glory and praise to you alone. And make us bold! Bold to live and bear witness to your grace in our lives. We ask this in the powerful name of Jesus. Amen.

Scripture Readings April 13, 2008

Acts 1:1-11

In my former book, *Theophilus*, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." So when they met together, they asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God!

2 Corinthians 5:16-21

So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God!

Luke 24:38-49

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 Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and 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."

Leader: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God!

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

Sermon Outline - April 13, 2008
"An Easter People" • "A Witness from the Congregation!"
Acts 1:1-11

Introduction: Reluctant witnesses...

1. Wait for it...

"Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about." v.4

- What we need _____ !

2. Are we there yet?

So when they met together, they asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"

v.6

- In God's _____ and in God's _____.

3. We get power?

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you..." v.8

- Power to _____ to the Risen Christ.

4. Can I get a witness..?

"...and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." v.8

- _____ .

5. A season for everything.

"Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky?" v.11

- Time to be _____

Answers - is on the way; time; way; bear witness; one way or another; His Church

BENEDICTION

Leader: The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you.

The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.

People: And the people took the blessing and held it in their hearts.

Leader: Go in peace, serve the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God!