

A Presence of Peace

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. (John 20:19-20 NIV)

Jesus died on Good Friday. He was placed in a tomb. It appeared that the presence of Christ had been taken away from the world.

Then came Easter Sunday. There was an empty tomb. Later that evening Jesus appears to His disciples. The presence of Christ had not been taken away from the world. Rather, Christ came to the disciples and said, "Peace be with you!" The presence of Jesus is there for the disciples.

The gift of peace is given to the disciples. God's plan is fulfilled. Peace is given to the disciples. What was the response? When a gift of peace is given there is joy. The joy experienced by the disciples must have been exceedingly great. They were given the gift of peace from Jesus who is present with them on the evening of the first day of the week.

There are many people who long for peace. They search for peace throughout their lives. They search for peace in solitude. They search for peace in being entertained. They search for peace by taking trips. They search for peace by trying to conform other people to their way of thinking. And yet, for many people peace seems elusive.

We need to come to the source of peace. The peace from this source surpasses all human understanding. The source of peace is seen in an empty tomb. It is a peace given from God to all people through Jesus Christ. But that is not the end of it. We don't just think about an empty tomb for peace.

Jesus has given us, His disciples today, the peace of His presence. It is a peace present with us daily because Jesus claimed us as His own through Baptism. It is a peace present with us as the Lord meets us in His Word. It is a peace present with us when the Lord gives us His body and blood to eat and drink for the forgiveness of sins.

The peace of His presence is with us today! It is with us as He tells us "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." It is with us as Jesus sends us into the world as His disciples of peace to share His presence of peace!

Pastor Wilkens