**“Called”**

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Acts 3:11-21

1 John 3:1-7

Luke 24:36-49

Easter 3

“**See** what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be **called** children of God; and **so we are**.”

Christ **is** risen! He is **risen, indeed!** Alleluia! Grace to you and peace from God, our Father, and from our Lord, and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Bridge – the Questions

The apostle Paul (in his resurrection text of 1st Corinthians, chapter 15) says that “if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.” Jesus **answers that question**. As a matter of fact, the entire Easter Season is all about remembering (and **remembering-well**) **that answer** …

… and humanity chooses to ask either of God nothing at all or we have an abundance of questions for Him, most beginning with the word “**why**”. “**Why**”, for instance, did **my spouse (or parent)** die? “**Why**” did **I** simply collapse during a routine jog? “**Why**” **do** bad things happen to even seemingly good people? And “Why”, God, do bad decisions that people make often **prosper** while faithful decisions go (seemingly) mostly unrewarded? “**Why**” God is this the case? … **“Why”? “Why”? “Why”? “Why”? “Why”?**

God asks “**why**” questions as well. He asked four in what’s accounted in today’s readings: “**Why** are **you** **troubled**?” and “**Why** do **doubts arise in your hearts**?” And then through Peter: “Why do **you** **wonder about what God is doing**, and **why** **do you look to mere people and their abilities** as though **by our own power or goodness WE can make miracles happen (as in healing and peace and salvation and all the eternal benefit of Jesus’ life brings to us)**?”

**Not asking God questions can be disastrous (not caring or concerning ourselves with Him, talking or listening can leave us totally out of the Easter story’s benefits)**. But Jesus (in the Luke account) is met with “disbelief **for joy and marveling**”, which is a different thing. But outside of that, there’s factions of people **not asking of Him anything**, **unconcerned to deal with Him** and just **plain-ole disbelieving**. If, though, you **believe on Jesus and what He’s done and why and have faith in that for you, connected to Him and all of it through baptism)** then you will be saved to be (one day) raised to be like Jesus is risen, with blessing by Promise for “now”, practicing righteousness rather than the other and aimed **toward Paradise once our time here is done**.

For people who are **asking God questions and listening**, **He answers … and the answers are always in Him and from Him)**. Easter is the main **answer time**. You’re “**practicing righteousness**” when you’re asking of God questions and (for one thing) in His House listening closely for His answers … **enJOYing them then** **for**, in unbelieving (too amazing to totally grasp), but for “**joy and marveling**”.

Text – the Answer

Jesus stepped into a locked room on the evening of His resurrection **and answered there** every **inquisitive soul** who would ever inhabit this globe. Either in person or through the witness that the witness would provide, Jesus let **inquirers** know that **that He who had been dead rose and now lives … called, also, the “firstfruit” of any who follow Him**. The witness of the disciples was of this: “Startled and frightened and thinking they were seeing a ghost, Jesus said: “’**See** My hands and My feet, that **IT IS I Myself**. **Touch Me, and see**. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones (“**flesh and bones**” … did you get that?) as **you see that I have’**. And He **SHOWED THEM His hands and His feet**. And while they still disbelieved (but **for joy and marveling**), He said to them, ‘Have you anything here to eat?’ They gave Him a piece of broiled fish, and He **TOOK IT AND ATE BEFORE THEM**.” So Christ **is risen!** He is **risen indeed! Alleluia! He is risen as “flesh and bones” and He can eat after He’d been dead!** **Rejoice then and be glad (Alleluia!) … and then “believe” (do not “disbelieve”) and “practice (just like 1st John moves this gift into an action for us of holy living) … “PRACTICE righteousness” (not “lawlessness” or “sinning”) but “PRACTICE righteousness” … with, again, “joy and marveling”!**

Application – Love Seen

“Flesh and bones, as you see that I have” Jesus said. C. S. Lewis suggests that the Lord’s body having raised from the dead would have “cast a shadow in the sun”. Lewis wrote that it would “make noise as He walked across floorboards”. What will believers be like one day in the resurrection? Well, “Like Him” is the **answer** as 1st John tells us. Then we will, also, “**see Him as He is**” … **with eyes** to see and flesh and bones that are raised from the dead to “cast shadows and make noise across floorboards as we walk”, “eating” then and so, presumably, swallowing and digesting and able to do so much the more than that, but those things, apparently, too.

And the “flesh and bones” of God in Jesus Christ are **alive and well right now**. He **does things that way** … and **all the more, He said, through the Spirit who He’d also puts into play**.

“Why do **you** **wonder about what God is doing now in this world**, and **why** **do you look to mere people and their abilities** as though **by our own power or goodness WE can make miracles happen (as in healing and peace and salvation and all the eternal benefit of Jesus’ life brings to us)**?”

We have a God whose Son died for us and then was raised from that death to **show Himself alive / touched raised in “flesh and bones”** and says that **none of this should have surprised us since He’d always said this was going to be the fact of the matter**. The “wages of sin” were death and **He took it** **offering His RESURRECTED LIFE to our union with Him by baptism**. **CALLS US HE DOES (baptized and believing), we’re “children of the Father” now**.

And, for that, you’ll have to **take God’s Word for it … it’s part of the reason why He successfully proved His resurrection: “so you know His Word is true”**. See, He’s (as He’d said) spoken about what He was going to do always, then DID it. It was spoken of since the beginning of time: “everything that had been written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms **had to be** fulfilled”, Jesus said. The **Promises about Him** made over all the centuries, He **FULFILLED**. “**See His hands and His feet to be touched**. “Flesh and bones” are raised from the dead, as witness were given to see and touch. ….

So, “**why** are **you** **troubled**?” and “**why** do **doubts arise** **in your hearts**?” And “why would **you** **ever** **wonder about what God is doing**, and **why stare at mere mortals with abilities that are only human**. The “Author of Life, Whom the Father raised from the dead, **HE LIVES,** and **healing and peace and salvation comes from Him**.

“Why?” “Why?” “Why?” “Why?” “Why?” I love the way it’s **answered** in verse 2 of the Epistle lesson: “Beloved, we **are God’s children now**, and **what we will be has not yet appeared (to us fully, our eyes and ears, fingers and hands)**; but we **know that when He (Jesus) appears again we shall be like Him, because we shall then see Him as He is**.” See, Jesus is anxious for us to **see ourselves in resurrected flesh and bones**. He calls “what we will be” a **“Paradise” situation**, and He notes our questions about what our eyes see now, but **wants so badly (in spite of that) for** **us to know the other that’s coming**.

Christ **is risen!** He **IS** **risen, indeed! Alleluia!** In His name, +Jesus, **Amen**.