**“Here”**

Psalm 99

Deuteronomy 34:1-12

Hebrews 3:1-6

Luke 9:28-36

 Transfiguration, Feb. 26/27, 2022

“Peter said to Jesus, ‘Master, it is good that we are here.’”

Grace to you and peace from God, our Father, and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

**Bridge**

**“Here”** is one of those words **loaded with meaning: location and circumstance … “here”**. I remember (as a kid) getting called in school roll-call and responding with the word “here”. I was “**present** and, so, **accounted for**” and (the joke was) “present” **didn’t always mean “conscious and ready for everything school day had planned”**. On test days, “here” might have meant just in **body** yet not enough in **preparation**.

When we answer the phone, we say “Hello” which is, basically, a **nicer form of “I’m here, so up for your phone call”**). “Here”, then, isn’t necessary always “Here” **qualitative, but can be**: when asking someone **how they’re doing**, we’d like to know, for them, **what “here” means in their the context (situation and mood and health and attitude: how are we catching them”, and we hope that all is well)**. I say **“swell”** most oftento define my “hereness”. And I know that’s not very **revealing**, but use it to say that **whatever context and situation I’m in / my mood and health, I’m OK with it. I’m able to cope and appreciate at least a “levelness” regarding whatever it all is)**. I remember Vern Listol’s answer to “How are you doing?” (him a longtime member of our congregation but now in Florida … and really “spry” though up their in age): he’d say that, in the morning he’d read the obituaries and, if he didn’t see his name in it then it would be a good day, but if he saw his name, he says, well, that’ll be a better day. “**Here**” is a **context and situation and mood and locational word loaded in meaning**. Being **“here”** **(in any moment, in light of all moments)** can be pleasant or not-so / exhilarating or depressing, level and, even, joyful though no matter where “here” is.

**Text**

The disciples (with Jesus) had been involved in a **really long journey**. For the previous several weeks, they’d been up in northern Israel (what’s now called the Golan Heights) **dealing with tough issues and probably people**. The topics had been **evil and misunderstanding, pain and suffering, and life not pleasant or even taken away**, and Peter had gone from the Lord’s “glory boy” in that (with correct answers) to a representative of “satanic” to Jesus (as He called his words to Him at one point), arguing and avoiding facts. Taking him and James and John with Him, Jesus asked these three to join Him on a mountain.

His goal was **prayer**, but they **slept**, which seemed almost always the way as disciples were shown regularly **yawning or sleeping through some most significant things**. I picture Jesus almost **roll-calling** the three disciples during **this episode** or others, and **“Here” they would say, but “Present” or almost unconscious might be more accurate**.

**This time** what they almost missed (and did miss the **front end of it**)was **a glorious spectacle**. To our benefit, they **woke to the closing moments of it** but there’s sin in “**sleeping through** the front end of it. **Sleeping through divine revelation** is (I think) the gravest sin of even disciples (**what I confess most in myself**). Which brings me to “Revelation” as a book of the Bible. We’re beginning a walk-through of it and we’re at the tail-end of this years’ walk-through of the Epiphany Season. Both revelation and epiphany are **“wake-up” episodes** promising exciting discoveries and broadening perspectives, with “light-bulb-turning-on” experiences to be had. Yet, often our “hereness” is occupied otherwise in “circumstance” and “situation”, “context” and “place” not divinely oriented, so “here’s” not **entirely “here”** so missing much of “what’s available” and “encouraging”, “joyous” and even “mystically marvelous” yet “real”. Kids have school and sports to distract from such things. Parents, parenting and work yet God’s got things to show all of any age … such as this: …

… when “Peter and those who were with him **awoke** **fully from their “heavy sleep**, **they SAW Jesus’ glory and the two men (also in glory) who stood with Him speaking (all three of them) of His departure which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem”**. **What, then, would you say that the heavenly hosts talk-of? Probably (and primarily) of the accomplishment of the goal of John 3:16 / Jesus incarnate and dying (Him, first, having been baptized / joined to human sin) and then rising after His divine yet dead body had been buried showing He’d defeated damnation by paying the price for confessed sins and using His own blood to do it**. **Disciples (when they were awake) SAW the Gospel glow and then GET ENACTED as Jesus went back down the mountain to (after this epiphany) “set His face resolutely upon Jerusalem” with the suffering of His Passion and Exodus**.

## Application

The **first sin** was **“sleeping” though revelation and epiphany were available and being shown**. The **second** would be (and for anyone) missing **why the “Passion of God’s Christ” was necessary and is to this very day so heavenly talked-about** …

… “**For us men and for our salvation He (God’s own Son)** came down from Heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into Heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And **He will** come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.”

“Peter, and those who were with him, awakened and saw Jesus’ glory and the two men who stood with Him. And as the men were parting from Him, Peter said to Jesus, ‘Master, **it is good that we are here**’” and “Here” is always Good where Jesus is. It’s **what disciples recognize**. And, even, where the obvious glow of glory leaves the capability of mortal eyes to see it, there is still “**Jesus found alone” for them to follow**. And **He had more to show them**.

My **“wake up” moment (most obvious revelation and epiphany)** was in my mid 30s told of the “Presence of God”. I’d been **prepared for it since birth though** (already a disciple baptized and regularly taught, in church and Sunday School by parents and, then, a college of our church-body, but “here” in my 30s I was **TAUGHT and PAID ATTENTION / AWAKE and CONSIDERING OF WHAT I WAS TAUGHT** so **MYSELF** **seeing** **clearer** **a reality: that Jesus is, of course, everywhere yet not everywhere the SAME**. **Where He’s most “for me” by promise, that’s the** **“HERE” that’s** **always GOOD FOR ME TO BE AT AND IN … no matter what my other situations and circumstances are.**

**If that sounds like something you’d like to maybe SEE MORE CLEARLY FOR YOURSELF, then that’s how the Book of Revelation unpacks itself for instance … and it’s very topic of our, now, Sunday morning Bible class. “Here (Revelation says most clearly)” is a matter, always, of logistics to Christ and our benefit in that**.

So, matter what else “**here**” ever is for you in context and circumstance, location and mood or temperament, **it is (and will always remain to be for disciples) “Good” WHERE and HOW Christ promises to be for you, and that is indwelt in you by baptism and wherever His Word and Sacraments are proclaimed and offered for your receipt**. **In +Jesus’ name**. Amen.