

18th April 2021 6 pm Evening Prayer: See My Hands and Feet

Led by Val Whiteman, Talk by Sam Whiteside, Readings by Geoff Whiteman & Rosie Lee

This transcript is only of the readings and the talk

1st Reading: 1 John 3:1-7

1 See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. **2** Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. **3** All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

4 Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness. **5** But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin. **6** No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him.

7 Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. The one who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous.

This is the Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

2nd Reading: Luke 24:36-48: Jesus Appears to the Disciples

36 While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."

37 They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. **38** He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? **39** 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."

40 When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. **41** And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" **42** They gave him a piece of broiled fish, **43** and he took it and ate it in their presence.

44 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."

45 Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. **46** He told them, "This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, **47** and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. **48** You are witnesses of these things.

This is the Word of our Lord

Thanks be to God

Talk

[Rosie Lee:]

I'd like to introduce Sam now, who's going to do our sermon for this evening.
Hi Sam.

[Sam Whiteside:] Hello.

[Rosie:]

Before Sam does his sermon. I'm just going to pray for Sam.

Dear Father God, we thank You for the gift of Your Word this evening. And as Sam comes to talk to us about Your Word, help us to think about these

things. Open our hearts to the Lord, and our minds, to hear You. Bless Sam, we pray, in Jesus' name. Amen.

[Sam:]
Amen.

Thank you Rosie. Thank you. Our subject tonight is 'Look at My Hands and My Feet'. These are the words of Jesus.

I wonder, have you ever thought about some of the stories that go on? One of the stories that was told recently was of a man who went along to his doctors, because he had burnt his ears. And the doctor said, "How did you do that?" and he said, "Well I was ironing, and somebody phoned me - the phone rang. And I put the iron up, of course, and burnt my ears." He said, "But how did you burn the other ear?" He said, "He rang back!" And, you know, when we think about what Jesus is saying to us tonight, we can think about that saying too, about, "someone was talking about you and your ears were burning!"

"Look at My hands and feet," Jesus said. Is He talking about you tonight? Is He talking to you? And I want to begin by sharing with you about the appearances of Jesus after His resurrection. First was Mary Magdalene. Then there was Mary the mother of James and Salome. There was Peter. There was the two going to Emmaus. There were the gathered disciples recorded in Mark 16 and John 20, and in our reading tonight, in Luke 24. There were, of course, others, including the disciples, again a week later. The disciples at the Sea of Tiberias: how could we forget that! The 500 brothers, the 11+ and others on the mountain. James of course, referred to in 1 Corinthians 15 and verse 7, and the disciples before Jesus' ascension; and you could add Paul on the Damascus Road. But that probably wasn't a bodily experience - well it certainly wasn't, it was a light.

And for our thoughts tonight, I'm going to concentrate on Jesus' appearance about midway through that list. It starts, or we start, tonight at Luke 24 and verse 36.

While they were still talking about this

God's Word says. What was it that they were talking about? They were talking about, "How is it true that the Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon," and of course, the story of the two disciples on the way to Emmaus. And then, when Jesus broke the bread. But why were they talking about these things? Some were excited. But some had doubts. We know they had doubts, because Jesus said,

"why do doubts rise in your minds?"

Luke 24:38. And the other thought is that Jesus stood *with* them. That's very important. Jesus stood among them, or He stood with them, and His greeting was also important:

"Peace be with you."

He said. Notice that He didn't admonish them for running away, or even Peter for denying Him. He ministered them with a blessing. "Peace be with you," He said. He didn't admonish them, He didn't criticise them, He ministered to them with a blessing, "Peace be with you." Notice also that Luke records in Acts 10 and verse 41,

He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen

It was important that people who witnessed were those who were there during Jesus' ministry, first-hand witnesses.

You know, doubts can really lead, actually, to new levels of faith. Their leader had been killed. The bottom had dropped out of their world. "Was it really Him?!" And then Jesus gave them a real visual aid: "Look at My hands and feet. They're real!" The time of doubt had become the opportunity for learning. "Look,

touch, see: it is I Myself!" He said. He showed them the eyes of faith. He showed them the eyes of faith. "Look at My hands and feet."

Now as Jesus stood among them with them, He showed them. When we have doubts, they can lead us into a deeper relationship with Jesus. He shows us that He is with us. It said in our reading, they were startled and frightened. It doesn't say they were all frightened and startled. But as Jesus addressed them all, it's implied isn't it? Even those who had met Him already, after His resurrection. Even Peter: was he afraid and startled? Was he frightened?

And even the Emmaus Road disciples, and they'd dashed all the way back from Emmaus. "How did He come to be in our assembled group?" they might have thought. "How did He get there?" Or an even bigger question was, "Why was He there?" Why was He there. I think there might be two answers that I can suggest to you this evening. Number one was that He told them from the Scriptures. He told them that the Scriptures were fulfilled. They were fulfilled so much that He shared them again with them.

- Maybe He referred that He was born in Bethlehem, as prophesied by Micah.
- Maybe He talked about the virgin birth from Isaiah,
- or His resurrection,
- or others who had told Him that He would perform miracles,
- speak in parables,
- be rejected,
- be a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief,
- enter Jerusalem on a donkey,
- be betrayed by 30 pieces of silver,
- that He would be in the grave, or the tomb, three days,
- and that He would rise from the dead.
- It was also told in advance by David, Daniel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, that there would be a new covenant.
- His kingdom would last forever.

And the second answer I might suggest is, He was there to show them, "You are blessed when you believe in spite of your doubts; that blessings come even when you doubt!" Even when you bring them honestly and faithfully to Jesus, because that's what you have to do with your doubts. The blessings come: face them! Face the doubts honestly, and bring them to Jesus and say, "This is difficult to understand. I have a doubt here."

He says, "Look at My hands and feet. Touch! Handle Me if you like. See! Don't just look but see! Learn, and as a result you will grow spiritually!" They were after all learners. They were disciples, that's what it means. You will grow more like Him.

The application applies to us as His disciples today. We become His hands and His feet: His hands and His feet in His service, in the power of the Holy Spirit, the promised Holy Spirit, the power enabling, in the case of those disciples, to continue, to carry on being disciples, but also in our case in 2021, as children of God, which was in our first reading tonight. Listen to this [Luke 24:49]: "And I, Jesus," He said, "am going to send you what My Father has promised. But wait until you have been clothed with the power from on high." So in these days in 2021, what are you, and I, going to do with this power that we are clothed with from on high? What are we going to do with it? Number one, we're going to witness: we're going to tell others about the Good News. How do we do it? Simply by having a relationship which is true and strong and personal with Jesus Christ.

You know there was once a competition, reciting something from the Bible, and the passage that was given was well known. Probably because everybody could recite it: Psalm 23. And in the final, one guy came and he recited, "The Lord is my shepherd." He put all the accent on the right words. He was sensitive about

it. He did it so well that they applauded at the end, and brought him back for an encore, to recite it again. It was tremendous. It was lovely. It was wonderful. The other person in the final, he got up and he recited the 23rd Psalm also. And at the end, it was so emotional, the way he recited it, that there was a stunned silence. No one applauded. No one called him back for an encore. And then the other contestant got to his feet and he said this, "I know the psalm, but he knows the shepherd." He knows the shepherd, Jesus. And that's what we have to do, and make sure when we're clothed with this power from on high, we're filled with the Holy Spirit, we're promised that we'll be filled with the Holy Spirit, to be effective, to be good witnesses, to tell others the Good News. When we come to know the Lord Jesus as our Saviour, the Holy Spirit comes, and we are empowered to tell others, by the way we live as well as what we say.

Now I'm going to give you a challenge tonight. Are you willing to be encouraged this week with a daily dose of Jesus' love? We in recent days had jabs. A love jab, I suggest, for each day of the week. Try it:

First of all, jab number one, probably today, probably this evening, receive the gift of peace. We had that in our reading and in our thoughts: Luke 24:36: "Peace be with you," said Jesus. Have you received it? Have you received the jab? Have you received Peace?

Secondly, day number 2, joy, the joy that only Jesus brings. We had that also tonight, Luke 24:41: 'Joy and amazement'. The disciples, they might have doubted but when they realise who He was, they were filled with joy and amazement.

Thirdly, abiding in Jesus, just simply being a disciple, a learner. "Look, touch, see, learn."

And then accept the resources, number 4: jab number 4, resources that are available in Jesus' name. You know, you need to ask. "Ask and it shall be given unto you, seek and you shall find," the Word says. Resources! Unbelievable!

And fifthly, achievements, because of the power of the Most High. "I'm going to send you Him," Luke records in verse 48 of that chapter 24.

And sixthly the companionship and empowering of the promised Holy Spirit, again, in Luke 24:48.

And lastly, and this is a wonderful jab of Jesus' love: the certainty of a heavenly home in the future as children of God: that was in our reading from John, 1 John 3 verse 1. Listen to what he said: "How great is the love the Father has lavished upon us." What a jab! How great is the love Father has lavished upon us. John says that in his epistle, 1 John 3 and verse 1; and then still in that passage, 1 John 3 and verse 2, it says, "Dear friends, now we are," (not maybe) "Now we are children of God. And what we will be has not yet been made known." (That's faith isn't it?!) "But we know that when He appears, we shall be like Him." (I'd like to add there, 'without doubt') "We shall see Him as He is."

When they looked at His hands and feet in that disciples' assembly, they no doubt saw the marks of the nails in the hands and the feet. "Look at My hands and feet," said Jesus, "touch Me, handle Me," but the real reason was, "It's I myself," Jesus said, "I'm real! I'm real!" And we will know it's Him. I'm sure on that great day, we shall look at Jesus' face. We might look at His hands and feet, but we will look at His face. And the words of a well-known hymn¹ come to mind,

1 We Shall See His Lovely Face – by Norman J. Clayton 1903-1992(?) (published 1946 or earlier)

We shall see His lovely face, some bright golden morning.
When the clouds have lifted {not rifted, lifted!} and the shades have flown;
Sorrow will be turned to joy, heartaches gone forever;
No more nights, only light, when we see His face.

A prayer.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the Lord Jesus.

We pray that during this week, we may receive your gift of peace. "Peace be with you," Jesus said, Your dear Son said, help us to receive it.

Lord, help us also to remember the joy and experience the joy that Jesus brings: joy and amazement of what You can do.

Help us to abide in Jesus by being a disciple, a learner.

Help us to accept the resources with a gratitude that are available to us in Jesus' name and help us, if we're doubting, to ask for them.

Help us with the achievements that can only be achieved by the power of the Most High, that You have sent to each Christian.

Help us also to have joy in the companionship and empowering of the promised Holy Spirit,

and to certainly know the certainty of a Heavenly home reserved for us in the future as children of God.

And go out into this week, knowing that, how great is the love You have for us and want to lavish upon us as children of Yours. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

[Val:]

Thank you Sam. That was so good. Can we have a moment or two where we simply think about this first job that Sam was talking about, the gift of peace. So as we sit in the quiet of a Sunday evening, and if you haven't received it, ask your Heavenly Father for the gift of peace for this coming week, just for a moment or two.

Thank You, Lord, that You say that if we ask, You will give us what we need, and so therefore we thank You for the gift of peace, going into this coming week. Amen.

[Transcribed by Hamish Blair with help from <https://otter.ai>]

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