

**Sermon Notes – April 14, 2024**  
**The Holy Gospel of St. Luke 24: 36-48**  
**Peace Lutheran Church**  
**“The Battle is Joined”**

The Resurrected Jesus proves He is flesh by eating fish; in doing so He makes a new realm of living available to all of us: life without fear of death. Notice that I didn't say life without pain or suffering. Too often, when we experience pain or suffering, especially in relationships, we respond by running the other way. We would rather avoid conflict and cut off relationships than deal with conflict, challenge, or pain. But here in Luke, Jesus greets His friends by offering them peace, sharing His woundedness, and asking for something to eat. In effect, He is sharing what He has and likewise asking them to share what they have.

During the Easter season, the miracles of the resurrection invite us to live into the miracle of resurrected life everywhere in our experience, not just in our literal flesh and bones. The miracle of the resurrection can live in our relationships, in our work, in our neighborhoods, and even in our relationship with ourselves. By eating fish with His friends, Jesus also demonstrates the pathway forward; we move into the realm of resurrection every time we eat together. And although resurrected life is always possible when we eat together, it only materializes when we get real with each other. It materializes when we share our wounds.

Too often people live a privatized transitional religion, offering prayers and devotions in the hope that God will exchange them for resurrected life. But Christianity is much more than that. Christianity is living a communal life of shared pain, sorrow, and hope, where breaking bread together transforms everything, and we experience resurrected life while we still live, where calling upon the name of Jesus in our midst brings healing and new life amid what formerly was only death, despair, and isolation.

What hearers need from preachers is a faith-filled authentic witness who is living a real-world life and has real-world experiences of the resurrected Christ. An authentic witness does more than point to Jesus as the source of hope and power. An authentic witness offers real-world proof that God's love manifests in our world and our very lives. An authentic witness offers a real-world example of how God transforms life. If God's resurrected power is available to the preacher, as a broken human being in need of grace, then that same power is certainly available to hearers of the Word.

Therefore, preachers everywhere might begin a sermon by getting real with themselves. Where has the power of the resurrected Christ brought resurrection and healing to our own broken-ness or to the broken-ness of our community? Where can we all give witness to resurrected power through our own pain and suffering, personal or collective? Where has resurrected power transformed our own relationships? And more specifically, to these texts where Christ is sitting down with people to share food and drink, and then opens a doorway to new possibility, new life and resurrected power?