

27th March 2005. Easter

Rob Lamerton

Readings:

Acts 10:34-43

for the psalm Hymn to the Risen Christ - page 6

Colossians 3: 1-4

Matthew 28: 1-10

These are the notes that Rob used for two sermons on Easter morning. The sermons were slightly different, but these notes are a reminder, or a way to catch the flavour of the sermon.

There is a line in Jesus Christ Superstar:

"To Conquer Death, you only have to die."

To know resurrection you first must die.

Yes, the prerequisite for Resurrection is DEATH!

If we are not prepared to make the sacrifice we cannot experience the benefit.

Our dear son, Gareth, has a love affair with MacDonalds.

He cannot recognize that sacrificing one McDonald's hamburger and a walk around the block will help his struggle with weight...

There are many different levels of self-denial, better self discipline, of sacrifice, of DYING to the things we want, in order that we might discover the things we truly need: those inner things... peace, joy, hope etc.

The Resurrection we talk about today was not just about self improvement, but about God's life breaking forth in Jesus and instead of being halted by Jesus' death and all the injustice etc. God's life was liberated all the more.

We believe it is about what happens in our own death — that somehow we discover the depths of God's life and love.

Lent —40 days— offers the opportunity to do something about our walk with God; to make some sacrifices; some changes.

BUT mostly we take little notice of Lent and wonder why the new life of God seems to pass us by!

However, this Lent I was pleased to hear addresses from:

Chris Cheah

Sarah Gowty

Stephen Billett

Linda Anshell

which reminded me that every little step of faith, every experience of healing and growth — and each story

had them — each is a small share in a much greater resurrection.

Chris' "Desert Walking" in meditation finding peace and stillness in the presence of Christ...

Sarah's renewing of faith and awareness of her calling

Stephen's turning to Christ as a place of rest and healing from turmoil

Linda's finding acceptance

all are "healings" — part of the total healing of the human situation exhibited by Jesus' resurrection; the restoration, the reassurance that even death cannot prevent God from bringing, giving and restoring life.

It's a challenge then to look for the glimpses of light and life in the midst of darkness and death — to discover that wherever we are God dares to enlighten and enliven.

In the gospel, Mary Magdalen and the other Mary had witnessed Jesus' death and had sat opposite the tomb on the evening of his death and now they are the ones to go to the tomb. They are told:

Don't be afraid

Believe that he has risen.

Share the news with the disciples.

Rejoice — the same word used of the Magi.

Worship — this too is how the Magi responded.

I don't think they are told they will **UNDERSTAND!!**

Because the resurrection appearances have a personal touch for each and they are shrouded in wonder and mystery.

I heard two men who have been Christians for many years saying they could not go to Church at Easter — probably because of some simplistic treatment of this profound story. Instead we should all ask what does it mean for us? How can I enter the new life of Christ OR more importantly, how can Christ come into my life?

Don't be afraid

Believe

Share

Rejoice

Worship