

Theme: Sorrow to Joy



What a strange Easter it is this year. Have we ever experienced another like it? Whilst we have peace and quiet forced upon us today, the two Mary's identified as heading for Jesus' tomb are going there to find peace and quiet. They too were forced to stay at home (on the Sabbath); now they are mourners, just wanting to be there, near Jesus, to pour out their sorrow in as much peace and quiet as possible. Matthew paints the most vivid picture of all the gospels of how their peace was dramatically shattered. From sorrow to joy! Afraid yes, not knowing what the future held, but 'Go quickly and tell the disciples He has risen from the dead'. This morning was one they would never forget.

Readings Matthew 28: 1-10 & Acts 10: 34-43

Read Matthew 28: 1-10

There was, and there remains, no more dramatic news than 'he is risen'. The news and its impact is the same for us today as it was for the two Marys and disciples back then. Once again the earth shook, as Matthew had reported at the point of Jesus' death. Nothing was ever the same again for them, or for us when we first heard and absorbed it. Allow the 'good news' to once again be absorbed.

The two Marys fell at his feet and worshipped him. It is at Jesus' feet, and looking at him from that position, that we have the best view of Easter. On Good Friday, the best view of him was from the foot of the cross, but today, looking up, we can understand what we saw on Good Friday. The resurrection is the victory. Evil has been defeated. The risen Jesus is Lord of all; and we too should fall in worship.

Read Acts 10: 34-43

The resurrection changed everything. The promised coming of the Kingdom of God had been initiated. All are invited into the kingdom 'from every nation who fear him and do what is right' (respond to the cross and resurrection). No wonder everything changed. For Cornelius and family (here representing all of humanity) the way is opened for the Spirit of the risen Lord Jesus to live within them. (verses 44-48). The possibilities of 'new life' for all of humanity.

As we remain at home over the coming weeks, in our 'peace and quiet' let us try and keep the drama of the first Easter morning fresh in our minds. How sad yet suddenly joyful were the two Marys? How excited was Peter in Cornelius' house, when he understood God had opened a completely new chapter in relationship with him through the risen Christ? That relationship is, of course, for you and me. Is there any better news?