

Thoughts on the Readings of April 18, 2021

The Common Thread Trust in piety and magic have no place in the Christian faith. We dare not trust anything but the name of Jesus. As the old hymn says, our “hope is built on nothing less” (Edward Mote). Christ alone is our righteousness. We are “clothed in his righteousness alone,” not in a righteousness of our own power or piety. We cannot effect our own righteousness, as God *is* our righteousness. This is how we are made into God’s children: through faith in the Name. This is how we will boldly face him on that Day: at peace in his righteousness.

First Reading - [Acts 3:11-21](#) We become either skeptical or excited when someone testifies to a miracle happening in his life. If we believe the assertion, we may say, “Praise the Lord,” but our focus usually remains on the miracle instead of on the God behind the event. All miracles point to the great miracle of the resurrection. They are opportunities to declare the excellencies of God and call people to God, that they should turn back to him and have their sins blotted out. This is the true miracle of God: the resurrected Christ who forgives the sins of the world.

Psalm - [Psalm 4:1-8](#) The psalmist is annoyed by those who insist on troubling him. He urges them to change their ways, then wonders if they will ever act decently. By the end of the song, he leaves it to God, who has put joy in his heart when he might have only felt shame. He is able to sleep well, instead of laying awake troubled by his concerns.

Luther teaches little children to bless themselves each evening with the sign of the cross, kneel in prayer, and entrust themselves to God. He adds this comforting exhortation: “Then quickly lie down and sleep in peace.” No less should be expected of adults. Entrust yourself and all your cares to God, then go to sleep in peace.

Second Reading - [1 John 3:1-7](#) Practicing righteousness is nothing more than making it a point to keep turning back to the one from whom righteousness is given. It is not a religious ritual. It is an admission of being altogether unrighteous

unless Jesus cleanses and justifies a life. We are not like Jesus yet; we are not without fault. That is why we must practice righteousness by continually asking his forgiveness. But when we see him on that last day, we shall become just like him, fit for heaven. What has taken a lifetime and not been realized will be done by God in an instant. "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed" ([1 Cor.15:52](#)).

Gospel - [Luke 24:36-49](#) We see two things foreshadowed in this reading. First, Jesus simply appears among the disciples in the same manner as he had disappeared in verse 31. He did not walk through a door; he simply was where he had not been the moment before. This is an example of the human body having been glorified. One day, when days are no more, "we shall all be changed," and the earthly existence may seem like an effortless dream as we live forever in glory.

Second, Jesus, who was just crucified and buried for our sins and the sins of his own disciples, says to them, "Peace to you." He is not angry. Nor is this a 1960s way of greeting his followers. Instead, he shows us by coming among them again and by his word "peace" that through his death and resurrection, concord has been restored between God and man.