

LIVING THE WORD for the Week of April 26th

Dear STRONG "Little Flock",

Christ is Risen -- He is Risen Indeed!

As we continue through these really difficult items I continue to be impressed with the strength of our little church. We are weathering the storm and taking care of each other in as many ways as the rules permit.

Here's some notes to help you "Live the Word" we heard yesterday (Sunday):

1. Please prayerfully reread Luke 24:13-35. As you read, put yourself in the shoes of Cleopas and his partner. *How do you think you would have reacted in that same situation?*

2. Sometimes one of the best ways for us to get in touch with someone and what's going on with them is to walk and talk together, right? So it is in our text. Jesus could have just revealed Himself in all His risen glory (and probably blown them away:) but instead He wants to hear what's going on inside of them. He seeks to know where He will need to bolster their faith. And so He does with us. **He wants to listen to you, even your doubts and "sadnesses" or confusion.** This means we have to be in constant communication with Him.

3. **Note the pivotal verse 32.** Have you ever experienced the presence of the Lord so strongly that your "**heart burned within you**"? If not, why not? Why not ask God to come crashing back into your busy world and turn it all upside down, as necessary, so that your world will revolve around Him and Him alone, Then get ready for your heart to *burn with His presence*. He can't be present in that powerful way if He is crowded out with your other appetites and priorities.

4. As you read the last portion of the text note the beautiful references to the Sacrament and how Jesus REVEALS Himself in the "breaking and blessing of the bread" and becomes REALLY present among us and in us! This is why understanding the Biblical teaching of the **Real Presence of Christ** in the Sacrament is so VERY important for a majority of the world's Christians who have come to depend on that Presence as though our lives depended on it -- *because we do!!*

5. Your assignment this week is to **go for a walk with Jesus --REALLY.** It can be down your street, in a park, or up in the Hualapais, wherever you and He can be alone and then just TALK to Him --*out loud!* Tell Him all about your doubts/fears/anxieties during these times, spend some time praising Him and thank Him for as many things as you can think of. Pause now and then and just be in His presence, see if through thoughts or feelings He may actually give you a measure of peace of mind and heart, maybe even a direction (those inner "nudges") or two!

Be sure to continue to be faithful in your worship, giving, and sharing. This is a great time to remind your friends/family/neighbors that they can "come to your church" online!

*We'll be worshipping together again SOON!*

*May the Lord bless, keep, and protect all of you and all your loved ones. Call me if you need prayer or conversation or the sacrament delivered to your door!*

Peace,

Rev. Michael W. Birnbaum