

Sunday, April 11, 2021 - Second Sunday after Easter

Psalm 133

- ¹How good and how pleasant it is,
when kindred live together in unity!
²It is like fine oil upon the head, flowing down upon the beard,
upon the beard of Aaron, flowing down upon the collar of his robe.
³It is like the dew of Hermon flowing down upon the hills of Zion.
For there the LORD has commanded the blessing: life for evermore.

Unity within the body of Christ brings -

Anointing – verse 2 – oil flowing down upon the head, beard, and robe of Aaron

Blessing – verse 3 – water from Mount Hermon – cf. how a major, winter blizzard in Colorado means that southern California will have water the following summer

Life for evermore – verse 3

Acts 4:32-35 - The Believers Common Life

³²Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. ³³With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. ³⁴There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. ³⁵They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

How have you seen unity within the church, the body of Christ, give power to its life and witness?

When especially have you experienced unity within the church? What was it like?

When especially have you experienced disunity? What was it like?

Cf. canoes in Voyageurs National Park in Minnesota

John 20:19-31 Beholding the Wounds of the Risen Christ

¹⁹When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews

Like we have been, the disciples were under self-quarantine

In that kind of situation what did Jesus do for them?

Verse 19 – He gave them His presence – He came and stood among them

Verses 19 and 21 – He gave them His peace - “Peace be with you”

Verse 20 – He gave them unmistakable evidence of the resurrection – He showed them His hands and His side

Verse 21 – He gave them a renewed sense of purpose and a calling – “As the Father has sent me, so I send you”

Verse 22 - He breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit”

Verse 23 – He gave them authority – “If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained”

²⁴But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.”

*I believe we have given Thomas (so called Doubting Thomas) a bum wrap
John 11: 16 – “Let us go also, that we may die with Him”*

²⁶A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.”

This time it does not say that the doors were locked

²⁷Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.” ²⁸Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!”

Thomas is the first disciple recorded as calling Jesus God

1 John 1:1--2:2 Walking in the Light

¹We declare to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life.

*From the beginning – Cf. John 1: 1 – In the beginning
We have heard, seen, looked at, and touched*

²This life was revealed, and we have seen it and testify to it, and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us.

We have seen it – we declare to you the eternal life

³We declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have fellowship with us.

Seen and heard

⁴We are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.

*Think of the joy the disciples felt when they saw the risen Lord.
John wanted his readers to experience the same joy.*

⁵This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. ⁶If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true; ⁷but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

⁸If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.