

Where Are You Going?
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Our Savior's Way Lutheran Church

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Christ has Risen. He is Risen indeed Alleluia! Amen.

This morning, I want to share a story that began in November of 1975. That was when a bunch of prisoners started to dig a secret tunnel in order to break out of a prison located in Saltillo, Mexico. They worked long and hard on that tunnel. It took them five months to finish. And on April 18, 1976, they were able to make it through to the other side of the prison walls, where they found themselves in a room. Not just any room either. Outside of the prison walls and much to their surprise, they found themselves in the very courtroom where they had been sentenced. And the judge who had heard them digging through the floor promptly returned them to prison.

Do you know where you're going? From time to time, it might be a good question to ask ourselves. If the prisoners had answered beforehand, they might have said, "We are getting out of here." But after they dug themselves out and found themselves in that courtroom

where they had been sentenced, they might have answered, “Right back where we came from.”

All of us are going somewhere. And as believers, we know that there are really only two paths to take: one that walks in the way of the Lord and one that does not. How do we know this? Because Jesus shared it in the Sermon on the Mount. He said, “Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy, that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few” (Matthew 7:13-14).

Where are you going? In our Gospel reading, Jesus asks this question on the night that He was betrayed. He knew that His disciples were going to face difficulty and heartache—not just because He had let them know that one of them would betray Him, but because He knew that His departure was imminent. So, He encouraged them by saying, “Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me” (John 14:1). He wanted them to trust in God above all else. And He wanted them to trust Him. So, He went on to say, “In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place

for you? And If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am, you may be also” (v. 2-3).

You see, not only Jesus is preparing them for His crucifixion, but He is also preparing them for His absence when He goes ahead of them to prepare a place for them in Heaven after paying for their sins. While we are still celebrating that He rose again in this season of Easter, we also know that He would later go on to ascend to the Father in order to make the final preparations for all believers. And yet, He says to His disciples, “You know the way to the place where I am going” (v. 4). But Thomas said to Him, “Lord, we don’t know where you’re going. How can we know the way?” (v. 5). And because Jesus shared with them that He and the Father are One, Philip also said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us” (v. 8).

Today, people want God to show them the way. Dissatisfied with the church and religion, they look in all kinds of directions to find their way. And what do they find? They find a world full of all kinds of distractions. The world entices many people the lure of satisfaction and contentment in the way of wealth. And

it tempts those in want that the best way to fill their need is the way of prosperity. Each one is a distraction away from Jesus. And even though we can make great plans from time to time, when we chose worldly ways, His Spirit comes alongside us, as it does today, and asks, “Where are you going?” Because as believers, we should always seek the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness first—so that we might turn from our sinfulness, and like Philip, say to Him, “Lord, show us the way,” that we might not walk on the path that is broad and wide, that leads to destruction, but rather walk on the narrow way, that leads to life. Because our Lord calls us out of darkness and into His light that we might live with Him.

Jesus also says to us, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (v. 6). When He said that, He wanted His disciples to see Him as the Savior of the world. He wanted them to see with eyes of faith, that He is the very Son of God—“If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on you do know Him and have seen Him” (v. 7)—because it was hard for the disciples to understand.

Jesus had been their teacher who was like them. He walked, talked, dressed, and looked like them. And yet, Jesus replies to Philip, “Have I been with you so long, and you still don’t know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you, I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does His works. Believe me, that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves” (v. 9-11). Because by that point Jesus had fed the five thousand, walked on water, healed the lame, the blind, and the sick. He had even raised Lazarus from the dead. These are miracles that God does.

And yet, Jesus goes on to say, “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.” Because the disciples would do works that were greater—not necessarily more miraculous—but greater in the sense

that Jesus' public ministry was only about three years, and His disciples would continue His ministry for much longer than three years. And He reminded them that when they asked for anything in His name, in keeping with His will and teaching, He would bring it about for them.

Sometimes in life, we find ourselves going back to where we came from again. When that happens, we tend to believe that history has a way of repeating itself. And while we might try to accomplish that which we want for ourselves, our Lord says to us, "Look to Me. Walk in My way. Listen to My voice and walk in it." And as followers and believers of Jesus, we walk in the way of the Lord because we know that His way is always best. And believe me, it certainly is not always easy to walk on the narrow path that leads to eternal life.

But we do so, not just for ourselves, but also for those who might also see God in and through us—that through our words, our thoughts, and our actions, others might come to know Him as well. As the prophet Micah once shared, "He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly

and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God” (Micah 6:8).

While the world might tell us that you cannot get anywhere if you walk humbly, or that you cannot get ahead if you act justly and love mercy, as every true believer knows, many great and wonderful things are accomplished when we look to our Lord Jesus and see that He is the way, the truth, and the life. Because when we humbly walk with our God, we are blessed.

So, where are you going? While we might want to work things out our own way, we might also find ourselves right back to where we came from, just like those prisoners did on April 18, 1976. Today, our Lord wants us to look beyond ourselves to see that He and the Father are one, and He invites us to humbly walk along the narrow path that leads to eternal life. Because, He is the way, the truth, and the life, both now and always.

In Jesus’ Name, Amen.