

The title for today's message is: **The Real Jesus Gives Us Real Confidence**

Jesus said: **Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts?**

Grace and peace to you from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Dear friends who celebrate our risen Savior, A few years back the rage on TV was the so called reality shows.

Survivor was the first one that made it big. The selling point was that instead of actors, these were real, every-day people.

The outcome was not scripted, and no one knew who would come out the number one survivor at the end.

Since then many other kinds of reality shows have been tried. But if you think about it, there isn't too much reality in reality shows.

True they have ordinary people, and no script, but how real is it to be confined on a desert island, helping, competing against, and betraying the other people with you?

And how can anyone really condense reality to one hour of flickering pictures, and sounds interrupted with commercials?

Even the reality of a real war can't be properly conveyed over television, so how can TV claim to show reality with these artificial realities like Survivor?

Unlike TV reality shows, God's Word assures you, me and all believers of what is really real.

God's Word shows us the reality behind the flickering scenes of our daily life and the changeable appearance of our feelings.

The portion of God's Word before us today, shows us the real Jesus who gives us real confidence. For you see, Jesus is what reality is all about.

May the Holy Spirit strengthen our faith as He assures us through His Word, that the real Jesus, gives us real confidence.

That's the theme for this morning: "The real Jesus gives us real confidence." He gives us confidence that His resurrection was real, that His promises are real, and that His forgiveness is real.

Here, Jesus wanted to give His disciples real confidence, that He indeed had risen from the dead.

But the reality of it all is that His disciples saw Him bleed, and die. They saw His cold, stiff body laid in a tomb. And as far as they were concerned, death was final.

So how could He be alive? Yet, the women, and Peter, said they had seen the risen Lord.

Then, two of the disciples, who had been on their way to Emmaus, returned saying that Jesus had walked with them, and spoke Scriptures to them.

Then Jesus appears. Yes, the same Jesus who had died. Now, He really and truly appeared to them.

Jesus has given proof, after proof, that He indeed was risen from the dead. Showing that He wasn't a ghost, or a figment of their imagination.

He then speaks to them in His own voice: "Peace be with you." He then invites them to look at His hands and feet. To see the wounds of His crucifixion

Yes Jesus was really there, and alive! He even eats some food in front of them, proving to them, that He has, bodily risen from the dead.

Jesus did this, not only to give His disciples real confidence that He had really and truly risen from the dead.

But, He did it to give you, and me here today, real confidence as well. Look, all too often we become distracted from the reality of our risen Lord.

We think life is about getting the most out of life. We focus on what thrills us for the moment, and think that life should simply make us feel good.

That reality is only a phantom, a mirage if you will, that leaves us thirsting for something more.

Therefore, we must not build our confidence on trying to feel good, or happy. Rather we must focus on our risen Lord.

He is the true foundation for real confidence. My friends, this truth, this reality, is the foundation of our faith.

Look, if Jesus had not truly risen from the dead, you and I, and all believers, will die, and go to hell forever, all because of our sins.

But Jesus gives us real confidence that His resurrection is real. He has truly, bodily risen from the grave.

Jesus is the source for real life, and true happiness. And because of that, we have the confidence that His promises to us, are real as well.

His promises are true, and trustworthy. Never failing, making the connection for His disciples, between He, and the fact of His death and resurrection.

“He said to them: **“These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”**”

Now, the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms, refer to the Old Testament.

And Jesus had clearly taught, that everything written in the scriptures would truly happen, or had already happened exactly as God planned.

Here were told that Jesus opens their minds so to understand what was written. Jesus said: **Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead,**

This was God’s promise going back to Adam and Eve, when He promised that the offspring of woman, would crush Satan’s head.

And it was the promise to Abraham, that one of his offspring would be a blessing for all nations.

It was also the promise, pictured in the Passover, and in the sacrifices God commanded at Mt. Sinai.

It was the promise to King David, that he would have a Son who would reign forever.

And finally, it was the promise spoken through the prophets, like Isaiah who told of the suffering of the Savior, and His glory.

Yet, you and I all too often, fall into the trap of looking at our present pain, or suffering, as what is actually reality.

We feel our sadness, and our loneliness, and think that we truly are abandoned. But Jesus' promises are just as real today as they were yesterday.

Look, dig into His word. Mine the precious gems of His promises to us. God said in Hebrews chapter 13: **“I will never leave you nor forsake you.”**

And Paul said in Romans chapter 8: **And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.**

Finally, Jesus said in Matthew chapter 28: **And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”**

Your risen Jesus makes these promises, and many more. His promises are greater than any suffering we could possibly go through.

Jesus gives us real confidence in His promises. The greatest promise Jesus made to you and I, is the promise of forgiveness.

My friends, rest assured, our Lord's forgiveness is real. And the purpose of His death, truly was to take away the sins of the world.

Just as the purpose of His resurrection, is to proclaim full, and free forgiveness.

Jesus also tells His disciples, that God's Word had not only said that the Christ would die, and rise, but also that: **repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations,...**

They were witnesses of this truth, and the Father gave them the Holy Spirit, so that their witness would be with power, and authority.

Through their witness the Good News has come to you, and to me today. Is the forgiveness of sins, preached in Jesus' name? Yes, it is.

And it isn't a cheap forgiveness, that says that sin isn't all that bad. It isn't a forgiveness that pictures Jesus as our buddy who overlooks our mistakes.

And it isn't a forgiveness that says you can choose what's right, or wrong for yourself.

Rather, it is a real forgiveness based on what the real Jesus did for you, and for me.

You see, real forgiveness takes sin seriously, so seriously that God the Father punished His own Son in our place, all because of our sins.

God's Word brought us a real Savior, not a buddy, but a real Savior, One who bleed, and died for us, and was risen from the dead.

Real forgiveness brings about a real change in us, so that we no longer ask, "What do I want." But we ask, "What does Jesus want me to do."

This real forgiveness is for all of us, because we were all sinners, yet, Jesus says to us, "Peace be with you."

Its true, Jesus has taken away our sins, sins that warred against God. Therefore reconciling us to God, through His death, and resurrection.

This true, and real forgiveness, is what Jesus gives to us, in His holy Supper today, and every time we receive it.

Think about that, if you will, as you receive the real body, and real blood of the Lord, in the Lords' Supper today.

Be confident that you have peace with God because on the cross, Jesus sacrificed His body, and poured out His blood, for all mankind.

Be confident that as our risen Savior makes His body and blood, truly present for us to eat, and drink, wherein we find forgiveness.

The real Jesus gives you the real confidence that you have peace with God through the forgiveness of sins.

You know, there are many things that claim to be reality, yet there nothing more than, shifting sands that change over time

And any confidence built on them, will prove false, and collapse like a house built on sand. But the reality of Jesus, is like a rock.

When our confidence is built on Him, then no matter what storms of life we go through, Jesus will not fail us.

Through faith we will overcome, and He will raise us on the last day to be with Him and His Father forever. For our Lord is the risen Jesus, that is, the real Jesus.

Amen

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all. Amen.