

Sermon for April 8, 2018
“It Happened on a Sunday”

John 20:19-31

It happened on a Sunday. The disciples were gathered together in the upper room. Probably the same place that they had shared the last supper with Jesus only days before. Three days ago they had all watched from a distance as Jesus was nailed to a cross and slowly drowned as his lungs filled with fluid. Peter had watched as the sound of his own denial of Jesus still rung in his ears.

Then Sunday came. The Sabbath was over. The women seemed to have lost it as they came back from the tomb and at first said his body was stolen and then that they had seen him alive. But the men had dismissed it as an old wives tale, the hysterical imaginings of women.

Then Jesus appeared in their midst. The room was sealed because they were hiding from the angry mobs and Romans yet there he was. They had not believed the women, and they probably could not believe their eyes either, but Jesus showed them his hands and feet and side and they believed. And in case they were afraid he told them to be at peace. Then Jesus commissioned them to be his witnesses and gave them the responsibility to proclaim forgiveness of sins.

That happened on a Sunday. All the disciples believed that Jesus was alive; except one. Thomas had not been there when Jesus appeared. So he doubted and said that until he had seen for himself he would not believe. And so people call him Doubting Thomas.

But let's not be so hard on Thomas. After all the other disciples had doubted before they saw Jesus. And a little doubt is a good thing. A little healthy skepticism keeps you from believing all the falsehoods out there.

You ever heard is said “Don't believe everything you read.” Well you shouldn't believe everything you hear either. People say all kinds of things that are not true. If there is anything that the internet should teach us it is this truth. A little healthy skepticism is a good thing.

Then it happened on the next Sunday. Jesus appeared to the disciples again. This time Thomas was there. And Thomas reached out his hand and he believed. And “Doubting” Thomas declared “My Lord and my God.”

It happened on a Sunday. As familiar as we are with the story of Thomas, that is the one detail that seems to go unnoticed. Jesus was made known to his disciples as they gathered on a Sunday. In fact it was a Sunday not unlike this one. It was in the spring. The birds were singing and the flowers blooming.

And Jesus made his presence known to his disciples. He gave them his peace. He breathed on them the Holy Spirit. And he let them know that he was truly alive. Then he commissioned them to proclaim forgiveness of sins.

And his disciples believed. They believed that he was alive and they believed that he had died for their sins. And eventually when they were ready they went out to proclaim the good news of forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ. And through believing in him they received new life.

It all happened on a Sunday. It all happened where the disciples had gathered together. Well? Guess what? Today is Sunday. And Jesus’ disciples are gathered here. And Jesus promised that wherever two or more were gathered in his name he would be there. The risen Christ is with us.

What, you doubt me? Do you need to see the wounds in his hands and feet to believe? Look around you. We are the body of Christ. We are his hands and feet. Just touch and see that we have all been wounded. Some have lost love ones or been through turmoil in our lives. People have hurt us, but we have been raised up. We were once dead, but now we are alive.

Jesus is here breathing the Holy Spirit on all who will believe. He says “Peace be with you.” Believe in the risen Christ. And through believing you will have new life in his name.