

**Emmanuel Episcopal Church
Covenant Group Discussion**

Look - Book - Took
March 13, 2008

Based on Lessons for the 5th Sunday in Lent

Old Testament: Ezekiel 37:1-14 Ezekiel's call and commission

Epistle: Romans 8:6-11 Life Thru the Spirit

Gospel: John 11:1-45 Lazarus Death and Jesus Raising Him from Death

Look

Father Bruce told us that the lessons on Sunday make a preacher very happy. They help us get ready for Easter. They all touched on life coming out of death – it's like experiencing an Easter during Lent. We were reminded that without Good Friday there would be no resurrection. Death is the door to everlasting life.

1. Father Bruce said that death is healing. Have you experienced healing while working through a tragedy in your life?
2. Ezekiel describes being set down in the middle of a valley full of dry bones. Father Bruce explained that this was referring to the people of Babylon whose souls were dying. Ezekiel was to breathe life into them so they would live again. Have you ever experienced a time when, can you describe a time when you, like the people of Babylon felt that your spirituality was dying?
3. Can you give some examples of things in your life that witness to the power of the resurrection.

Book

1. The Valley of Dry Bones story in Ezekiel is the first scripture we read about coming to life. At the end of the passage, it reads: "And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil;..." What do you think is meant by the words "place you on your own soil"?
2. In the gospel lesson, we heard the story of the death of Lazarus and his coming to life again. After hearing of Lazarus's illness, why did Jesus wait two days longer before deciding to go back to Judea?
3. Jesus says that 'those who walk at night stumble because the light is not in them'. Why do you think Jesus says this in response to the disciples questioning his decision to return to Judea where the Jews tried to stone him?
4. The gospel says that Jesus was 'disturbed in spirit and deeply moved' when he saw Mary and the Jews that were with her weeping over the death of Lazarus. The gospel also says that 'Jesus began to weep'. Why did Jesus weep?

Took

Father Bruce reminded us that death takes many forms. He related the story of 'bionic Eleanore' whose physical problems could not be solved without the power of the resurrection. Working through a tragedy is often a form of death, resurrection, and transformation. He reminded us that we often shy away from responding because we forget that Christ is with us.

1. How can we experience joy over death?
2. Father Bruce gave us some homework. How can we allow the death/resurrection experience to transform us to love our neighbors?