

Date: March 8, 2026 (Lent III)

Texts: Psalm 95 / Luke 24. 25-27, 44

Title: "Sacred History"

Intro -

How do we know that the message of Christ's resurrection is true...?

How do we trust that our faith is on solid ground...?

do we...

focus on logical arguments and / or empirical evidences?

(there is a good basis for this, but - is it enough...?)

do we lean on the testimony of God's acts in history -

acts that affirm the truths of the gospel...

that confirm everything that happened in and through Christ
was part of the plan...

that confirm for us the truth of his resurrection

how do we get to a place of acceptance...?

cf. - per C. S. Lewis and a delightful book about him and Tolkien -

The Myth-makers - as relates to their most widely known works:

The Chronicles of Narnia, and -

The Lord of the Rings

this book relates their stories - how they were formed in the crucible of
the trenches during WW I -

out of which Lewis emerged scarred, and -

an avowed atheist

- where was God in the midst of this horrific suffering?

Tolkien emerged with his faith - perhaps more deeply rooted - intact

they met up at Oxford University, developed a deep friendship, and -
the rest (as they say) is history...

as they encouraged one another in the process of

"myth-making" that led to these well-loved stories

and in the process of it all - led Lewis to move from his atheism...

... to becoming one of the most widely recognized defenders of the faith
in his day, and - in ours...

Lewis got there through careful consideration... through loving conversation...
through making the connection between his love of literature, and -
the essence of the story that is of God's grace

and it culminated in this:

he was on a trip to the zoo with his brother, and he notes:

"I did not believe that Jesus Christ is the son of God...

... and when we reached the zoo - I did"

"I had not exactly spent the journey in thought. It was more like a man,
after long sleep, still lying motionless in bed, becomes aware...

... that he is now awake."

what would your story tell of this journey...?

I) Promise and Fulfillment

a part of Lewis' - as it was a crucial aspect for these two disciples walking
with Jesus on the road to Emmaus -

had to do with "promise and fulfillment"

- how "everything written about [the Christ] in the law of Moses...
in the prophets... in the psalms...

how all this must be fulfilled

why...?

- because everything that was written reflects the essence and
the nature of God's plan

and - if God made plain his plan, and then -

only 65% of came to fruition...

- what grounds for belief is to be found in that?

these two disciples were in despair because Christ had suffered...

because Christ had died...

what they didn't see was that all this - and more -

was spoken long ago by Moses... in the prophets...
in the oral and written record of all that God promised
and now -
was seeing it fulfillment -
not out of the blue...
but - as part of the eternal plan of God for our salvation
everything must be fulfilled...
and - it was
and - because it was -
we can trust that what is happening then -
for them - the crucifixion... and -
the puzzling news of the empty tomb
we can trust that this is true, because -
it is connected to the one story that God began
writing back in the dawn of time
this is not a frantic re-write, as if some cosmic editor
read a first draft and marked it up in red pencil...
rather - this is Sacred History...
this is unchanging...
this is solid ground which will not shift beneath us

II) Your Path

what is / has been - the path that you followed...?
what is the path you might be on - right now...?
it seems there should be a place in there somewhere for
careful consideration -
careful reflection on the singular acts of God in Christ, and -
on how they fit in with... jibe with... are consistent with...
all that God has done in history up to now
recognizing that the Biblical account of Jesus' resurrection reveals
that ultimately -

- it is the testimony of God's acts in history that affirm in the heart of the believer that Jesus is alive...

that is how Jesus opened the eyes of his befuddled disciples on the road to Emmaus...

that is how it can work for us as well.

which is not to say this is an easy, straight-forward path

these disciples were in a state...

we sometimes find ourselves similarly afflicted

maybe not because a miracle-working teacher and healer

who seemed to offer the promise of hope and life...

was brutally murdered on a cross

but...

we find there are obstacle on the way:

there are obstacles of personal struggles that make us question

not just the existence of God, but his purported love and care

there are the global obstacles of conflict and warfare, such as drove

C. S. Lewis to conclude that there was no God

there are the obstacles of how do we make sense of the vitriol and

anger directed against those who may feel differently about

any number of issues...

there are obstacles to letting the words of Jesus...

and the actions of Jesus...

which all find their place in the merciful plan of God...

obstacles to letting these be a "revelatory blessing"

because we are looking too much at the obstacles

(think walking around with a phone in your face...)

and not giving sufficient time to what God has already done...

what God is doing at all times

now...

it can be / is tough to give any time to that...

... when (again - as with Lewis) we find ourselves literally in the trenches
it can be tough, when we turn on the TV... open up a newsfeed...
even (heavens forbid) look for updates from FB or Insta...
it can take time - as it did with Lewis...
while it would be nice if we found that place of peace-filled
understanding after just a day and a shared meal
- as with these two disciples...
that is not often the case
and - as with a simple cold, the flu, or other illnesses -
sometimes, we just have to “gut it out”
what we read here...
what we find affirmation for here...
is that God will walk with us on that path...
God will stay with us as we struggle with his claims, and -
the reality of what we see and experience in our lives...
in the world
and maybe...
in the midst of that -
we just need to be challenged to ask:
if this *is* true...
how does that change me?

III) Pertinent Question

... as it has changed so many others before me
(starting with these two disciples...
including C. S. Lewis - since I’ve been noting him so much here
and - if you have not read any of his works, I recommend them:
from the *Chronicles of Narnia* to *Mere Christianity* to
the *Problem of Pain*, and *Surprised by Joy* - among others...)
if this is true...
as so many others who came before us came to accept -

not just because it actually does make sense...

not just because it fits in with a consistent historical framework...

not just because God took the risk (at least - from our perspective)
of making promises...

but then - he fulfilled them... he proved to be worthy of trust...

not just because Jesus showed himself to be that fulfillment...

but also -

because it is truth that makes a difference...

it is truth that effects change...

when we ask... when we wonder...

- what is my place in the world...?

- what is my purpose...?

- how do I make sense of the questions that come at me every day...?

we find that place... that purpose...

in the sacred history of God's redemptive actions

as they played out - leading up to Christ...

as they continue to play out -

in and through our response to Christ

note - the obstacles and the hard issues are still there...

the conflicts that are - tragically - too much a part of this world

have not gone away (just because Christ came...)

but -

we have the promise (which God has shown that he fulfills...)

of finding a way to, if not make sense of them...

then, at least to live with them -

to live with them in a way that reflects and possibly

offers to others -

the same pattern of promise and fulfillment that we find with God,

and - that we have embraced for ourselves