

Sunday, April 4 – **Resurrection of Our Lord – Easter Day**

Readings: Acts 10:34-43

Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

1 Corinthians 15:19-26

John 20:1-18

Prayer: *God of mercy, we no longer look for Jesus among the dead, for he is alive and has become the Lord of life. Increase in our minds and hearts the risen life we share with Christ, and help us to grow as your people toward the fullness of eternal life with you, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen*⁸²

Focal Verse: “The Lord is my strength and my might; he has become my salvation.”

Psalm 118:14

Reflection:

The Bible says that God loves a cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9:7). This means, of course, that we ought not give reluctantly or because we think we have to, but willingly, because we truly want to.

“Give from the heart!” people say. But Jesus seemed to speak of something else: Give where you want your heart to be, and let your heart catch up. Don’t just give to things you care about. Give to things you *want* to care about. Don’t decide the amount of your giving by how much you care, but by how much you *want* to care.

It is sometimes easier to *act* oneself into a new way of thinking than to *think* oneself into a new way of acting. We can control what happens to our hearts.

The Bible promises that giving – especially *financial* giving – will be rewarded by God. Paul says, “The one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully ... you will be enriched in every way for your great generosity” (2 Corinthians 9:6, 11). Those who give of their earthly treasure experience the spiritual reward of hearts increasingly drawn into the wondrous love of God.⁸³

What do you hear?

How does it make you feel?

Toward what are you being drawn?

What do you sense you should do?

⁸² Evangelical Lutheran Worship

⁸³ Powell, Mark Allan, Giving to God: The Bible’s Good News about Living a Generous Life, © 2006, Errdmans Publishing, p. 55-57.