

We're missing something because we were not there with these disciples when it all happened. Good Friday and Easter that is. They were literally weeping and lamenting when Jesus died and was buried, and when He was raised from the dead three days later, their sorrow and agony turned into shouts of joy.

Those of you who were here on Good Friday were not shedding tears and wailing out loud because Jesus had died upon the cross. And I do not recall anyone here shouting out with joy three days later when the Easter Gospel was read from the lectern.

You see what I mean? We're missing something. Maybe a whole lot. These disciples in our text lived through the sorrow and the joy of both Good Friday and Easter. But we don't. We reenact these events from the life of our Lord. We celebrate them. But we do not live through them as they did.

So, it's a little like watching a rerun of the same television show over and over. We're not going to get all choked up with tears when Lassie gets his foot caught in the trap because we know how it will turn out in the end. And so, we also do not cheer from our living room couches when his foot is freed from the trap. When Jesus in our text tells His disciples, "*You will weep and lament...you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy,*" these words kind of just go through our ears and out again. Weeping? Lamenting? Sorrow and joy? We're just not there.

And that's too bad. Because no events in history have a greater impact upon our lives than the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. But I think you know how it is. We've seen these episodes so often that instead of weeping, lamenting, and then rejoicing, pondering within our hearts the meaning of it all, we yawn through much of it, and when it's over we grab a coffee and a cookie or two on our way out to the car.

And maybe we like it this way. We're not the weeping and wailing, lamenting and rejoicing type. Not usually that is. But if we're not doing these things, weeping and rejoicing with the disciples of Jesus, we're no different from the world around us in this. "*The world will rejoice,*" said Jesus to His disciples. And the world did rejoice when Jesus was dead and buried. But not anymore. Now the people of the world just yawn and think nothing of Jesus' death and resurrection.

But aren't we different from the world? We should be, and we are. For one thing, we are baptized into Christ. Oh, I know, you've seen reruns of this episode over and over too. You know everything there is to know about baptism. Well, I don't. So, bear with me as I ponder my baptism into Jesus' death and resurrection.

And there it is! Here is how we actually participate in Good Friday and Easter. We participate in these events just as the disciple did even though we were not there at the time. Your baptism places you there with Jesus both on Good Friday and on Easter. For in your baptism you actually die with Christ and are raised with Him. The apostle tells us these things in Romans 6.

But I was baptized a long time ago. Well, yes and no. We were baptized once just like we were born once. But even as our birth from our mother has great meaning for us every single day, so does our rebirth in the waters of Holy Baptism.

Jesus speaks of the sorrow and anguish a mother goes through when her baby is being born. And that her sorrow becomes joy. The same is true of our rebirth in baptism. There is sorrow and anguish. But this is turned into joy. It's because in our baptism we die with Christ and are raised with Him. The weeping and lamenting of Good Friday, and the rejoicing of Easter, is all there in our baptism.

And not just the day you were baptized. Your baptism is there for you every day. And so is the weeping, lamenting, and rejoicing. Have you ever read the Psalms of lament in Scripture? You should. There are Psalms where the Psalmist is weeping. Weeping over his sinfulness for one thing.

Do you ever weep because of your sins against God? Maybe not out loud, but at least within your heart? And if not, why not? "Ye who think of sin but lightly," says the hymnwriter, "nor suppose the evil great, Here may view its nature rightly; here its guilt may estimate. Mark the sacrifice appointed. See who bears the awful load. 'Tis the Word, the Lord's Anointed, Son of Man and Son of God."

Some of us sang this hymns on Good Friday. It helps us to properly see our sinfulness. So awful are our sins that they nailed God to a cross! Every day we return to our baptism by repenting of our sins. I'm not saying you have to weep and wail when you do. But if a particular sin really bothers us, we may do just that. We return to Good Friday when we return to our baptism. We see Jesus on the cross dying in agony because of our sin. And we die there with Him. We die to sin to be raised with Him. That's where our weeping becomes rejoicing.

"*A little while and you will not see Me,*" Jesus says in our text, "*and again a little while and you will see Me.*" When a Christian suffers greatly because of a sin he has done, he may feel such guilt that he does not see Jesus. All he sees is his sin and the condemnation he deserves for it. And he knows only sorrow and anguish.

But just as Jesus died to be raised to life, so that Christian who is stuck in Good Friday needs to be brought to Easter Sunday, to the forgiven life Jesus won for him.

"*Your sorrow will turn into joy,*" says Jesus. This joy is for you right now because right now your sins are forgiven. The forgiveness of your sins depends on Jesus' resurrection, for if He had not been raised from death, your sins would not be forgiven. But He is raised! And so are you! Raised with Him in your baptism. Raised from your sins because they are forgiven. Raised from the weeping and anguish of Good Friday to the shouts of joy of Easter.

And sure, everything you're hearing is a rerun of the same episode. But, as we heard in our Acts reading, it is the "*message by which you will be saved.*" And so, it's the only rerun that is worth hearing again and again, today, tomorrow, and forever. Amen.