

10.18.20 St. Luke - Jesus Lives

- Over twenty years ago a young Drew Barrymore starred in a film entitled, “Ever After”
 - That film begins with two brothers, in fact they are the Brothers Grimm, arriving in their horse-drawn carriage at a huge French estate
 - There they meet a grand, elderly woman played by Angela Huston, who having read their story of Cinderella, wants to set the record straight
 - Then the movie flashes back to a young woman named Danielle, whose beloved father dies, resulting in her being mistreated and sold into servitude by her step-mother and step-sisters
 - Along the way she meets Leonardo DaVinci, sees his new painting the Mona Lisa, and has her portrait painted by him
 - She also deals with set-backs and villains, princes and princesses, and of course she falls in love with a prince named Henry, and they attend the King’s masquerade ball
 - Her slipper is lost in her haste to flee when her step-mother publicly embarrasses Danielle at the ball by exposing her as a common servant
 - Prince Henry then searches the land until he finds her and slips the lost slipper back on her foot, they get married, and Danielle becomes a princess
 - Soon the film flashes forward again to the brothers Grimm listening to the grand, elderly lady who has been telling the story
 - And then she astonishes the Grimms by unveiling the portrait of her ancestor Danielle, that DaVinci had painted
 - To their astonishment, they realize that what they thought had simply been a fairy tale that they had written down, was a somewhat different, but very real story about real people
 - And then Angela Huston says, “that while Henry and Danielle DID live happily ever after, THE POINT IS THAT THEY LIVED!”
- Today, that is also the point that Luke wants us to hear. He tells a story, and the point of HIS story is that JESUS LIVED, AND IN FACT JESUS STILL LIVES!

- The gospel of Luke is unique, because unlike the other gospels – Matthew, Mark and John – unlike the other gospels, Luke begins with an introduction that tells us WHY he is writing this story, even though there were already other written stories about Jesus.
- And Luke addresses this gospel to THEOPHILUS, which means LOVER OF GOD, who may be a person named Theophilus, or it may be a name for ALL of us who love God, or it could be both
- So listen to WHY Luke wrote to the LOVERS OF GOD: “...many have undertaken to set down an orderly account of the events that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed on to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, I too decided, after investigating everything carefully from the very first, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, *so that you may know the truth concerning the things about which you have been instructed.* 1:1-4]”
- That’s the beginning, but now listen to the ending of Luke’s orderly account from the eyewitnesses
- Unlike the Grimm’s fairy tales which end “and they lived happily ever after,” Luke says that after Jesus was raised from the dead, he met with his disciples and told them: “Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to SUFFER and TO RISE FROM THE DEAD on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed ... You are witnesses of these things. [24:46-48]”
- The point is, Jesus Christ died on the cross, BUT HE LIVES!
- This is such Good News!
 - Sin is forgiven
 - Death has been defeated once, and Christ will defeat it a second time for us too
 - And witnesses from Saint Luke to our parents and godparents, from Sunday School teachers to Sunday service preachers, from people in the next pew to strangers whom God puts in our way to speak a word of grace to us in the surprising moments of our lives – these witnesses have all shared the Good News of Jesus’ death

and resurrection with us, as well as the call to US in turn, to also be Christ's witnesses for the sake of others

- And let's face it, we need the Good News, and the world needs the Good News that JESUS STILL LIVES
 - Are you tired of the pandemic? Are you tired of all the changes that the pandemic has forced on us? But even in the midst of this pandemic, the Good News is that JESUS STILL LIVES, AND THAT HE IS THE SOURCE OF LIFE-SUSTAINING HOPE
 - Are you tired of the political tirades especially surrounding the presidential election? Someone is lying, there is no common ground, and our country is so deeply divided that people cannot agree on what is truth and what is a lie! But even in the midst of this dumpster fire of an election, JESUS STILL LIVES, AND THAT IS THE TRUTH OF TRUTH-SUSTAINING HOPE
 - And with both the pandemic and the politics screaming at us day after day, the screaming drowns out our own cries and the cries of others! Addiction is up. Mental illness is up. Domestic violence is up. Unemployment is up, and some businesses are going under. Students and teachers are struggling. Doctors and nurses are stretched thin. Millions of people have become sick, and hundreds of thousands have died, yet some people persist in the name of person freedom in not even wearing a face mask or standing farther apart. No wonder alcohol sales are up 15%! And dentist report that they are seeing much more damage from people grinding their teeth. BUT THE POINT IS – JESUS STILL LIVES, AND JESUS WANTS EACH ONE OF US AND OUR NEIGHBORS TO LIVE.
- Life is not a fairy tale where people simply live happily ever after. Instead real life has both joy and sorrow.
- The story of Jesus is not that he lived happily ever after in the past, but that after suffering death on the cross he was raised and JESUS STILL LIVES
- And the Good News is that sin has been forgiven, death has been defeated, and the scriptures like Luke, and the witnesses like Luke and many more people up until today have all shared that Good News with us, not as an end in itself, but so that we too might be witnesses for a world that needs – a world that

absolutely needs the Good News of Christ's forgiveness and life shared with us and the world