

Into the wounds...

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The doors were locked.

The disciples hid in fear of the others.

And Jesus came among them.

Wished them peace.

And then showed them his hands and his feet, as if to say

– there is nothing anyone can do to take me from you.

And then he says,

As I have been sent...

So now I send you.

Get going. There's work to do.

We know that the narrative continues.

We know about Thomas' doubt and Jesus' reappearance at a later date to make the point –

“you needed to see, Thomas. But how blessed are those who never saw and still believe.”

Today, though, I want to comment briefly on the

“hovering in fear.”

I think we still hover, quite a bit.

And, why not?

There is plenty to make one fearful in this world:

- **the quietly building crescendo of natural disasters,**
- **unrest around the world,**
- **illness,**
- **economic distress,**
- **the grip that addiction and depression has over many...**
- **life: lost, marginalized...**

It's easy to go on.

And, sometimes fear is of our things of own making, our own creations, so to speak.

We want to travel fasssst....

- **Who has not traveled and at one point been fearful in turbulence surrounding an aircraft,**
- **someone carelessly driving on a highway...**

Fear and sadness, violence and loss of life...

I thought of the war torn areas of the world.

- **I am not a Libyan loyalist or rebel.**
- **Yet, there is sorrow today in the family of Kaddafi, whose youngest son and three grandchildren were killed by a**

NATO missile strike. Good. Bad. Who am I to judge. Do his alleged wrongs make it right for such killing? For me, nothing makes killing “right.”

- The pain of loss, though, – I can identify with that – even for someone many might consider an enemy.**
 - Enemies have families, too.**
 - Enemies are members of the human race, too.**
 - Enemies are just enemies from another enemy’s point of view.**

**And in the midst of then and now, Jesus appears and says,
“Peace be with you. As God has sent me, so I send you.
Forgive sins, that is – reduce the distance between others and me. If they are not ready, do your best and move on.
When they are ready...they’ll remember you.**

If we think of ourselves as inside a locked room in our lives, in a place surrounded by some sort of boundaries, a protective border so to speak, surrounded by fears-at-a-distance within which we live and move – perhaps we are much like those disciples, fearful of the others and the events that have happened or may be on their way.

It’s no way to live.

It occurs to me that fear always has more power when viewed from the outside, as a “perfect” storm of several dimensions erupting all around us in succession, at once.

- **It is a fearful thing. The main source of fear is in our inability to control events, manage them, change their course – and so in final desperation we flee:**
 - **Into an upper room; behind closed doors. Afraid. Fearful of pain, sorrow, death –**
 - **a loss of what we have come to hold dear:**
 - **too often these become the inside locks on the door – fading with time to the point we forget they are even there**
 - **our world smaller, more insulated, more removed**
 - **and, in the process pushing God further away, for to draw closer demands the doors be flung open wide**

Fear pushes us to imagined safety realized in isolation, withdrawal, and diminution of spirit, hope, life...

And then along comes Jesus.

- **He who walked through every imaginable fear,**
- **through the deepest moments of human despair and physical pain –**
- **and he has not only survived but invites us to rise through and above it all with him –**
- **Sending us out into the cause of our fears – the others.**

**In fact he says it – Don't be unbelieving in this.
Put your fingers in my wounds;
drink the cup I have drank;
Believe in me.**

Enter into my wounds.

My injury.

My hurt.

My peace.

**That's an inside job. That's a peace that passes all
understanding. A belief that soars above any possible thing that
affects, hurt, or causes us sorrow.**

**For me, that's God. And sometimes, I, too, am like Thomas. But
like him, as well, I return to the room, gather in the company of
others, and place my hands in the wounds that Jesus knew so
well.**

**And I believe that this cross and the one who hung on it is the
path beyond the doubt, the pain, the hurt, the fear – to the joy
and understanding that none of these things has any hold on me
beyond the moment.**

**And, as the Scripture says, the things that are written down are
done so that we will believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son**

of God, and in the act of believing, have real and eternal life in the way he personally revealed it.

May it be so.