I rarely go back and look at old sermons because usually they aren’t as awesome as I remember. But we are in strange times and I had a vague memory about my sermon from last Holy Saturday, which seemed germane to our current reality. Here is the snippet from last year centering on what happens on this day. “Today is the time between the action. Jesus has been killed and is lying in a tomb. In many ways it is a day that should be marked by melancholy. A day between evil and triumph, which in many ways is our life in a microcosm.” Well, in many ways, I think we are even more in-between this year than we were last year. Meaning that this Holy Saturday might have even more to say to us than it did last year. We are most definitely living in a time between the actions of normal life. A time where life as we know it has been suspended; A time where things we took for granted are forbidden – there is no gathering at church, there is no gathering with extended family. I mean we can’t even gather at the Lumber Inn on the weekend, which I thought was required by law in the town of Delafield. But here is a question as we think about our current time in the in-between and compare and contrast it with the in-between of Holy Saturday -- what will normal look like on the other side of this and will it look like it did for the Disciples?

Let’s start with the disciples. Before these past few days of Holy Week the Disciples were hanging out with Jesus, feeding the 5,000, turning water into wine and seeing people get raised from the dead -- all pretty exciting stuff. And it is very easy to argue that on the surface what they were doing before today looks a lot more exciting than what the disciples will experience in the weeks and months to come. Sure, after tonight, Jesus is raised from the dead and all, but he would ascend 40 days later. And so it would all be different; the band never would be the same. After today the mission shifts from Jesus doing the heavy lifting to the disciples becoming the body of Christ. Jesus tried to explain to them that this had to happen, but you can almost get the sense, at least early on, that they were disappointed by their new reality because the new reality seemed a lot more pedestrian than the old one. As best we can tell the disciples never had the same kind of big events that Jesus had. Most of the interactions we read about are small affairs, the conversion of an Ethiopian Eunuch, the start of a church in Ephesus or the baptism of a jailor’s household. Certainly, all good things but all relatively small things as well. But the question we need to answer is whether there smaller nature makes them less vital or interesting. And while it is not hard to argue that the post resurrection lives of the disciples were different, this does not mean that those things could not be joy filled as well.

Now lets move onto us. I am guessing that when we come out of this, the new reality is probably going to look less exciting than the old reality. We will think twice before jumping on a plane to head to exotic locations, we may attend fewer sporting events and be more cautious in how we interact with others. I saw the other day that someone was proposing that the handshake should be gone for good. We may come out of this in-between time feeling like the party is over. Gone will be the carefree pre-pandemic days. But what if instead of being disappointed, we think of it like the disciples finally came round to understanding. What if we come out of this living in the same reality that the disciples lived in? Maybe we can come out of this and no longer look for the biggest and most exciting thing but look for the small things where God is glorified. Maybe it can be in time with our children, or a visit with a friend or a walk in the woods. Maybe we can come out and see that true joy has been in front of us all the time; The joy that comes from knowing that our redeemer lives. Will we come out of it resurrected, able to see how God can infuse everything?

In 1st Corinthians St. Paul describes our resurrection in this way, “In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.” Will this be how we emerge from this time? Will we be changed? Will we see the beauty and wonder and awe of the smaller things? Will we realize that all good things were created by God no matter their size. Yes, I know it would only be a foretaste, but it would not be a bad way to live. Loving this world in all of its beautiful strangeness this day and forevermore.