



April 5 – Easter, Don't Overthink It

Growing up, one of my favorite books was “The Puzzle Book” from the 1982 Childcraft series. It was filled with puzzles, riddles, brain teasers, etc. There was one riddle that was my favorite. It was named, “The Wizard’s Problem.” IT spoke of the Wizard of Wapollo who was about to take a bath. The tub was in the bathroom at the top of the castle, with stone floors, walls, and ceiling. His cat was chasing a mouse and knocked the door shut with a slam. The Wizard was locked in the bathroom. He went to shut the water off in the tub and the faucet broke. The room started to fill with water. How would the wizard survive and not drown? *(He cannot use magic)*

If you have figured it out already, please know that you are WAY smarter than I was at 9 years old. I fretted over that for days trying to figure it out. My brother looked at the answer. Day after day I would make guesses and he would delight in saying “Nope.” Finally, I looked at the answer. And it said????? He pulled the drain plug.

Everyone should have some idea of how to drain a bathtub. Instead, we overthink things. That is why shows like “Are you Smarter than a Fifth Grader?” gained in popularity. We either forget some of the basics, or we overthink things. Adulting gets tough sometimes. We can get stuck, much like that riddle, and forget about the basics.

The women go to the tomb early in the morning. This would have been the responsibility of close family members. They arrive and everything goes a little crazy. There is an earthquake and a heavenly being whose appearance was like lightning. The guards pass out. The angel tells them, “Do not be afraid” and then tells them to go to Galilee. As the women depart in haste, Jesus greets them. After the greeting, Jesus tells them the same things: Do not be afraid and go to Galilee.

Why is going to Galilee so important? That command makes it into multiple Gospel accounts. The disciples are invited to go to Galilee. The more I read this text, the more I am convinced that this is an invitation to return to the basics. They have just been through a series of traumatic experiences. Jesus gave a farewell speech, shared a meal, and then they fell asleep while Jesus prayed. They just witnessed the arrest, the trial, the crucifixion, and the burial. Now there is a great earthquake and beings that look like lightning. It is a lot to take in.

Jesus answers the riddle. Pull the plug. Go back to where it all started, back to the basics. It is a simple reminder to the women, the disciples, to all of us; when life gets out of control, go back to basics. The journey started with a wedding. It started with celebration in community. The journey moved through healing and preaching, through feeding and prayer.

This is a message that the Church universal would be good to remember. When things get complicated, and we are not sure how best to be church, or to be a follower of Jesus, we go back to our Galilee. We go back to basics and remember that all of it is centered in love for one another.

Friends, the world can be quite difficult to navigate. It can feel overwhelming at times. We long for someone to “tell me something good.” And today, that is hearing that the good news is alive in the world. It can be difficult to see with everything that goes on in the world. This Easter reminder is simple: Do not be afraid. Go to Galilee

Do not be afraid. Our hope, our joy, our good news, is in knowing that God is with us. It never meant there would never be times that frightened us. We find comfort in the presence of God. Then, go to Galilee. Go back to the basics of faith. When we are not sure how best to follow Christ, we go back to the start. We celebrate community. We journey with others. And as we do, we cling to love, love of God, love of other, and love of self. It really is that simple. Don't over think it. Do not be afraid. Go to Galilee. Amen.

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