

April 5 –Delivered
Easter Sunday
Luke 1:1-4



Now the end our Lenten journey occurs, but it is actually the beginning. There have been

a few clues along the way as we stare back with the centurion. I don't know if you noticed. The phrase, "Truly, this was the Son of God," has hung in the air like a mist from heaven. Delivered from one who is unexpected, for sure, but the "Amen (Truly)" of his confession strikes a chord on this most blessed day.

In our fifth devotion, I hid a "three-dimensional shadow of the cross" clue. It is unsurprising if you missed it. I tossed the idea in knowing full well that there is no such thing as a three-dimensional shadow—except maybe here. The cross overwhelms all shades of history, present, and future. It is the answer to every question, the antidote to every sorrow, and the preparation for exhilaration. The centurion caught a breath of it as he stood below the one who died for the entirety of creation.

He breathes out what we live. Jesus, "Truly, this is the Son of God."

The strange reality of our comprehension is who gets to deliver this infinite news. A Roman barbarian confesses it below the cross and those around him are stunned. Women bring news this day to those who hide themselves in an upper room. It is an embarrassing reality. The gospel writer, Luke, begins with an unknown courier bringing the message of salvation to a man named "God lover." There, the handoff happens in a way that promises that the gospel message is given, even for a mere one.

But it is here that we change. The centurion's message is not meant to look forever back, but eternally forward. "Truly this is

the Son of God,” does not exist merely in history, but at this present moment. The new centurions, a trio of women named Mary, and couriers of the gospel do not just exist in pages delivered two thousand years ago.

God hides his truth in the voice boxes of undesirables.

But the centurion was in the shadow of the cross.

So are you.

There is a trick (that’s the wrong word, I know it) in all this. The three-dimensional cross looks forward also. The centurion’s words are not trapped in that time but delivered deliberately to those who would hear on this extraordinary resurrection day. I don’t know if he ever heard about the reality of a resurrected Christ, but it seems to me, the whisper of that glorious wind might have hit him after this moment. Somehow, someway, the message dropped off at the house

of Theophilus has made its way to yours too. The shadow of the cross leans forward to this time also and the work of the resurrection continues today with speed.

It would be easy to talk about Theophilus and his courier who carried the Letter from Luke. Yes, that would be an easy way for our centurion to see the beginning. Luke was a historian who studied the words and writings of those who went before him. It would be wonderful if Our Centurion could linger with a couple of disciples on the Road to Emmaus, but that certainly is not given to us. It would be REALLY nice if we knew that he was tucked into the room when the Holy Spirit rushed in like a mighty wind. Yes, that would be magnificent.

But, I suppose it is enough for us to know that we are ensconced in the shadow of the cross. The work of the cross—the confession underneath the cross, will not end no matter which centurion

sinner utters it until the one who hung on that very cross returns.
Jesus' resurrection gives his voice back. And it gifts us ours.

This is the Son of God.

Truly.