

## **Where is God when we need Him?**

*Jos Strengholt, on Psalm 23 and Luke 24:13-35*

I find it interesting to see how much people talk these days. When we go to a shop, or walk in the street, people talk.

And you may have noticed, football is not the topic. We talk of one thing only, Corona of course. How awful life is at the moment, how careful we must be, all the things we miss. And as Christians we may wonder, where is God in all this?

We have read the story of two men who were walking to Emmaus. They were talking, and they also had one thing only they could talk about: The awful and rather strange events that had occurred in Jerusalem, just days before.

And that was clearly the topic all people were talking about. Even nature made people scared - there had been an earthquake and the sun had gone black at 3pm on Friday. If nature does unexpected things, we feel very uncomfortable, don't we?

Where was God in all this?

When Jesus asked the men what they were talking about, they were surprised, How can anyone not know what everyone was talking about.

As if someone today on the street asks you what is going on; why are the streets so empty; why do those people try to keep such distance from each other.

'Don't you know what is going on!'

And where is God in all this...

Jesus knows the needs of people. He knows that most people, in difficult circumstances, have a psychological need to talk about what is going on.

The two men did not have to tell Jesus. He had felt the nails. He had seen the inside of the grave. He had risen. He was the main character in God's redemption story.

But the men talked and talked. And they shared their misery. And they wondered where is God in all this. Where is God when you need him most! Why does God not make himself visible in a great show of signs and miracles. Why does he not stop this Corona Virus with one movement of his little finger.

Why does God allow this fear to be in our midst.

Those two men kept talking, and never recognised the presence of God in their midst. In the midst of the chaos of their days, of their mind, of their heart, God was very present. Very close. It may help to talk less and to listen more. Listen with the heart.

The light went on when Jesus broke bread with them. "When He was at table with them, He took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. [...] He was known to them in the breaking of the bread."

Maybe it was that they now finally saw the wounds in his hands.

Luke, in his Gospel, clearly refers to our holy eucharist with his words.

When we share the holy meal together, Christ becomes visible in our midst. God is very present.

In the midst of our crisis, where is God? He makes himself known in broken bread and in wine poured out. He makes himself known in his suffering Son.

This is our God, the servant King.

God is with us, and as He lived among us as Jesus Christ, He understand your pain and suffering, and your questions, your fears.

In the midst of our darkness, He, our suffering Lord, shines as a light. Through him we know that God is always close to us, especially in hard times.

As soon as these men saw and recognised him, as soon as they realised - God is with us, Jesus vanished from their sight. Why did he not stay a bit longer!

But they could not hold on to him.

Jesus had explained to them extensively how the Jewish Scriptures, the Old Testament, testifies to Him on every page.

That is how today we meet with God, and how we know that God is present in our midst.

He has always been with his people, in good days and bad days. And we have the wonderful assurance of this in the bible.

This God is with us today. The one who led his people Israel through the desert, the one who was with Jesus even in his darkest hour, He is with us.

He led Israel to the promised land.  
He rose Jesus from the dead.

He is with you. On good days and bad days. He is always there with you. Your Good Shepherd.

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me, and you comfort me.

**+ Amen**