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There seems to have been a lot of going and coming on Jesus' part in the days after His Resurrection. It is interesting to consider what exactly His Resurrected body was like. He appears to Mary Magdalene at the tomb, and she mistakes Him for the gardener, and then when she recognizes Him tells her not to touch Him, saying, *for I have not yet ascended to my Father*. He appears later that day on the Road to Emmaus to two of His disciples, who also do not recognize Him. He appears that evening to His disciples and stands in their midst, He breathes on them and says receive the Holy Spirit. He appears again, eight days later to His disciples, this time with Thomas present and invites Him to reach out and touch the nail prints in His hands and feet and in His side, saying, *behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have*. He even eats with them, eating a broiled fish and a piece of honeycomb, and then by the Galilee, aiding in a great catch of fish for the disciples and preparing them breakfast. Even after His Resurrection, we see that Jesus was quite literal about His saying, *a little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father*. This also gives us much to think upon, not just of what our own resurrected bodies will be like, and what properties they will have, but more importantly how this affects our own spiritual maturity.

*A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father*. Jesus said this during the Last Supper, right before He was taken from them, arrested in the garden, and then sentenced to death and crucified. They did not see Him for three days, as he lay in the tomb, but then came the overwhelming joy of seeing Him again on that first Easter Morning. But we know the truth behind the adage, *absence makes the heart fonder*, and so He must tell Mary Magdalene, already of great faith, to not touch Him, and then gives doubting Thomas the ability to reach out and touch His wounds so that faith may be born in him anew. Ultimately though, Jesus warns His disciples that they shall not see Him, and then they shall see Him, because in a sense He must wean them from His physical presence so that they may begin to grow into mature faith. James and John, the Sons of thunder, who were ready to call down fire from heaven on those Samaritans who refused Jesus, and Peter who pulled out a sword and cut off a servant's ear when Jesus was arrested in the garden, must begin to learn the ways of peace. In the days after

His Resurrection, Jesus drives home the message to His disciples that from this moment on they are pilgrims and strangers in this world.

And so are we pilgrims and strangers in this world. This is after all what it means to be baptized, to be buried with Christ in His death, and risen with Him to newness of life. When we were baptized, we vowed in the sight of God, or our sponsors vowed for us, that we renounced the world, the flesh, and the devil, that we would be led by and follow Christ only. And even though these vows are sobering, in many ways are we more favored now than the Disciples were in the week between the Ascension and the descent of the Holy Spirit. Because at our Baptisms we immediately received the gift of the Holy Spirit, making Christ present with us spiritually. Without the power of the Holy Spirit our baptisms and our baptismal vows would mean very little. Likewise, we must remember to take our baptismal vows seriously. Christ, through His death and resurrection, through His glorious ascension and the descent of the Holy Spirit has overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil enabling us to follow in His footsteps.

Yet the battle rages on. St. Peter warns us strangers and pilgrims to *abstain from fleshly lusts, the lusts of the world, which war against the soul*. Little did we know when we were baptized that we were signing up for a lifelong war, taking our place in the battle of good against evil. But we are reminded that this war as St. Paul says, is *not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places* (Eph. 6:12). And so, St. Peter exhorts us to honest conversation, even when we are wrongfully called evil, yet by our good works all may see the glory of God. We are called to be people of peace, *for so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: as free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as servants of God*. The English Priest, Melvin Scott that the Christian...*is only to condemn the world by showing it something better, not by abuse of it. He will best show what is wrong by doing what is right. Christianity works not by revolution, but revelation, and the Christian is so to live that the world shall confess that the Christian life is truly beautiful (honest), and a sure comfort and stay in times of sorrow and anxiety--"in the day of visitation.*[\[1\]](#)

This is how the disciples lived after the Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus, and this is how we are called to live. The cross and the empty tomb are the signposts of the transformation of life, the Christian life. And yet the unpleasant reality is that even despite the cross and the empty tomb still we

must repeatedly pass from sorrow into joy. We strangers and pilgrims are not without sorrow. We are not without bewilderment and perplexity as new life takes form within us. As St. Paul writes: *But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. Likewise, the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words. And he who searches the hearts of men knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. We know that in everything God works for good with those who love him, who are called according to his purpose* (Romans 8:26).