

Pastor Writes

The Lord is risen! He is risen indeed!!Alleluia!!

This was the manner in which the early Christians used to greet each other on Easter day. We celebrate Easter because we rejoice in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. The resurrection is the central lynchpin of the Christian faith. Without the resurrection there is no faith or hope. The resurrection of Jesus shows that the history of the world will be governed according to God's power and purpose. It reveals to us that Jesus is the first fruits of the new creation.

The death of Christ on Good Friday seemed to have been the end of the world for the Messiah and his disciples. In spite of Jesus repeatedly teaching them that the Son of Man had to suffer and to die and then be raised again on the third day, the death on the cross seemed to be irreversible. The final nail was struck and they had watched Jesus die. Now there was no going back on the fact of his death. The disciples themselves were filled with fear that they had locked themselves for fear of the Jews on the evening of the first day of the week. The threat was too real for them. Their leader had been crucified and now it could be the turn of any one of them. They were also terribly depressed that their leader who had promised them a kingdom, was now cruelly snatched out by the cross. What happened on that morning has radically altered human history ever since. Mary came back as the first apostle with the message, 'The Lord is risen.'

The Disciples Peter, Thomas, and James the brother of Jesus, and Paul were all radically transformed because of the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus. They were willing to give up their lives for the truth that they had come to know and experience. Many other martyrs down the centuries have followed their footsteps. No one in their right senses would be willing to die for a lie if Jesus hadn't risen from the dead. It transformed each one of their lives radically and it continues to transform anyone who believes in Jesus and his resurrection. The early morning visit to the empty tomb calls us to faith and faithfulness.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ gives us several reasons to rejoice. Firstly, we know that because of the resurrection of Jesus, sin has been defeated. Christ paid the price for our sins, died on the cross and rose again on the third day to show that sin has been defeated. Secondly, we know that all the powers of darkness tried to keep Jesus in his grave so that his death will not be appropriated by human beings for their salvation. This too was not possible as the power of the Holy Spirit helped Jesus to break open the tomb on third day and rise again. The resurrection of Jesus shows that Satan is a defeated foe. Thirdly, we also see that because of the resurrection of Jesus, death has been defeated. Death who was an enemy has been defeated and is no more the last step for the believer in Jesus Christ. Therefore Paul's saying rings true, 'Where O death is your victory? Where O death is your sting? The sting of death is sin and the power of sin is the law but thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.' The resurrection of Jesus therefore gives us a comprehensive victory and sure hope of our own resurrection to eternal life.

As we celebrate this Easter may we remember that the same Holy Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead is living within us, and that he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to our mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in us. The power that raised Jesus from the dead defeating all the powers of darkness put together is available to us. Therefore, we have an obligation and are called to live not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit of God. For if we live according to the flesh we will die. But if by the Spirit we put to death the misdeeds of the body we will live. May we this Easter season live by the Spirit of Christ who calls us to be faithful to him. Wish you all a very happy Easter! May the risen Christ empower you and use you for his glory in the days to come.

Shalom

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