

CHRIST IS RISEN!

I pray that the joy and blessing of the resurrection be upon all of us! I pray that Christ is risen in the hearts of all of us, whether we are happy and joyous or sad, frustrated, abandoned, and alone. I pray that we understand this year even more than before that Christ is risen, regardless of whether or not we can feel His love. It is important that we believe that Christ became incarnate, was crucified, and resurrected for us, regardless of how we feel. Whether we feel that we have successfully joined into His resurrection, or if we feel that we have pitifully failed, or if we feel rejected; in fact, our feelings are irrelevant when it comes to the things of God. We often refer to these things in our human language as 'ontological' or 'existential realities,' things that we try to define who God is or who Christ is as God. These realities are unrelated and independent of whether or not we feel that they are happening or whether we participate in them in our church services. The ultimate reality is that Christ is risen!

Even if the whole world ends up being like that paralytic man in the Gospel, unable to express anything, to say anything, or make any gesture of any kind, Christ's ability to heal, to act, and Christ's desire to save never change. These realities are not rooted in us. Christ is risen not because we've done something, or because we did not do something, or because we feel something that brings upon us Christ's resurrection or His love. Christ is risen because Christ is always risen. Christ loves us because Christ is love and He always loves us, and because in God, Christ always wants to save us, whether we feel that or not.

Christ descended into the depths of hell so that He may save those who are long dead, those who are paralyzed, in a way that we cannot even begin to comprehend. Death within that state of paralysis, darkness that is close to non-existence. In our sinfulness and in our inability to perceive life, Christ's life, let alone participate in it, we are unable to save ourselves because of our corrupt nature. That is why Christ came, in order that we die with Him and are also resurrected with Him, in Him. The ultimate reality remains always this: 'Christ is risen!'

This is quite important to understand in the long run – not only now, as we go through the Paschal season or whatever we may be trying to survive in this particular moment. It is essential to realize that the reality of life in the Spirit – the life in Christ – is not dependent in any way on our emotional response. Life in the Spirit is founded on Christ's commandment: to love God and to love our neighbor; to live each day and every step of the journey in obedience that flows from love for Christ.

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(Romans 6:8-11 Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. Likewise, you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.)

Ovidiu D Druhora