

Alleluia, Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Grace to you and peace, from God our creator, Christ our savior and the Holy Spirit our keeper. Amen

We constantly teeter, on the edge of life and death. On this day, like no other, we come face to face with that teetering edge. Today, God, the creator, the redeemer, the friend, meets us on this edge, this cliff, the precipice of mortality, tipping between life and death.

As we've remembered in these three days, when left to our own ways, finally we are agents of death: we kill, we kill the earth, we kill each other, we even kill God. We give ourselves over to our fears, our wants, our hates. We carve up God's abundance with our scarcity, slicing and cutting away, us versus them, until there is nothing. We grieve God, killing his future, his son, torturing him first for good measure, then finishing the job with a bloody, suffocating horror. Death. It's predictable. You can count on it.

But it's a lie.

This dawn, this day, like no other, exposes that lie by the simplest and unlikeliest of things, an empty place, some witnesses, and a call across time to believe. It's not just that because God is God, he is stronger and greater than all else, though this is true. If it were just that, why wouldn't God simply avoid dying? No, it's that God died. It's that death's cold grasp took him. Jesus' lungs gave up, his heart stopped, his mind emptied. It's that, only by his real death could he really meet us on our teetering edge.

Jesus stands with us on this cliff, and sees what we see. He sees the sting of that vast, black expanse of nothingness. And with his God-human eyes, he sees life. He sees us. It was his own cold death which clarified that sight.

He sees us, *alive*.

“Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him.”

That honesty about death, that witness to resurrection, that empty place, all proclaim one time for all, that death is not the end. God's story does not end with or in death. God's story and our story are the same. God made is so by the life, death and resurrection of his future, his only son, born so vulnerably, wrapped in swaddling clothes, and dying so horribly, wrapped again in a linen cloth.

Death's silence may be deafening to our teetering ears, but it does not get the last word. We have been given ears to listen and our hearing is redeemed by his call. "Go now and tell..." God's Word continues and calls us to witness, not just with words, but with life, with abundant life, with life eternal.

Now, we may think we are alive, but are we really? We may be breathing, but do we truly breathe in and breathe out, connected to that most rare and precious of gifts, the air? Our hearts may be beating, but are we awake to the new life every beat promises? Our minds may show activity, but are they on fire with God's thoughts for new life all around us, love for our neighbors as ourselves?

Are we alive to all that God has set before us? Do we show up hungry to God's feast of life with all our senses, moved by the gentlest breeze, transformed by the simplest greeting, crushed by the smallest tear?

Or do we teeter towards death, stuck in endless cycles of wants, claiming them as needs, never seeming to having enough, hoping for more, not even thankful for what we have, blind to true, costly love for our neighbors and ourselves. We do teeter on the edge, saint and sinner, at the same time.

God's good news in this most sacred of all miracles, is his choice for new life, abundant life, life beyond time. Dare this day to stand with God on that cliff and been seen by his loving gaze. Dare to see the lie that death is and the new life you are becoming. Dare to see your neighbor with those same God-human eyes of love. Dare to witness to the empty place where life won out over death.

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Thanks be to God!