THE FEASTFOR THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST Rev. Carl F. Thrun
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IN NOMINE JESU

I Peter 1: 3 - 9: BLESSED BETHE GOD AND FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST! BY HIS GREAT MERCY WE HAVE BEEN BORN ANEW TO A LIVING HOPE THROUGH THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST FROM THE DEAD, AND TO AN INHERITANCE WHICH IS IMPERISHABLE, UNDEFILED, AND UNFADING, KEPT IN HEAVEN FOR YOU, WHO BY GOD'S POWER AREGU ARDED THROUGH FAITH FOR A SALVATION READY TO BE REVEALED IN THE LAST TIME. IN THIS YOU REJOICE, THOUGH NOW FOR A LITTLE WHILE YOU MAY HAVE TO SUFFER VARIOUS TRIALS, SO THAT THE GENUINENESS OF YOUR FAITH, MORE PRECIOUS THAN GOLD WHICH THOUGH PERISHABLE IS TESTED BY FIRE, MAY REDOUND TO PRAISE AND GLORY AND HONOR AT THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST. WITHOUT HAVING SEEN HIM YOU LOVE HIM; THOUGH YOU DO NOT NOW SEE HIM YOU BELIEVE IN HIM AND REJOICE WITH UNUTTERABLE AND EXALTED JOY. AS THE OUTCOME OF YOUR FAITH YOU OBTAIN THE SALVATION OF YOUR SOULS.

We COME to EASTER with the feeling that FINALLY we have a RIGHT to FLOWERS, and MUSIC and BEAUTY, and HALLELUJAHS! We are SURE that there is something MORE to LIFE and JOY than EARTHLY THINGS. We know about HOPE, and LIFE, and RESURRECTION! There is the SOUND of PARADISE LOST and PARADISE REGAINED in all the lessons of EASTERTIME - - but certainly never more fully than here in PETER'S LETTER.

How WONDERFUL - - that 25 years after the 1st Easter, there was NO DIMMING of the MEMORY of PETERS'S EXPERIENCES. What had happened to HIM in those hours from FRIDAY to SUNDAY MORNING would NEVER be repeated again - - and PETER lived to find WORDS to RECALL what had HAPPENED in those HOURS.

Think back! Could you STAND the CROSS - - the PAIN of SEEING someone you LOVE DYING

THAT WAY? And then, he LIVED through the EARTHQUAKE - - when the ROCKS were RENT, and the GRAVES were OPENED, and many of the SONS of GOD APPEARED in the streets of JERUSALEM. Could you STAND the TERROR of the HOLY of HOLIES being REVEALED through the TORN VEIL in the TEMPLE? - - - the BREAK with the OLD CONCEALMENT and the WONDER of the NEW REVELATION? Could you STAND the TERRIFYING DARKNESS over all the WORLD and the DYING CRY of our LORD? Could you begin to put into WORDS the DEEPER DARKNESS over your OWN SOUL, as the day WORE ON and Jesus lay in the TOMB of JOSEPH?

For PETER, as for the rest, there had been that HOLY SATURDAY of AWESOME QUIET and NO REAL RELIEF. What could they SAY to one another - - much less to anyone else - - about what was HAPPENING to their BODIES and SOULS - - to THEIR LIFE in those, ~~what seemed like~~ ~~ETERNAL~~ HOURS, from GOOD FIRDAY to the DAWN of the RESURRECTION?

And then, finally, comes the DAWN - - comes the SUNRISE - - comes the ANGEL - - - - - and the WORD comes to SHAPE in ~~his~~ Peter's SOUL, as in ours, SINGING ETERNALLY: "I KNOW THAT MY REDEEMER LIVES!"

Many more than 1900 years have come and gone. There are MANY CHANGES - - KINDGOMS have ARISEN, and DECLINED, and DISAPPEARED. The average man could not even begin to NAME them - - - but EASTER is STILL HERE - - it STILL SERVES the HEART. It is STILL, for all MANKIND, the FEAST of HOPE, of LIFE, of JOY, of PEACE, of RESURRECTION!

This is the DAY of the RESURRECTION! This DAY is JOY and HOPE and PEACE! It is ALL these things - - because for PETER as for US, it is the ASSURANCE of WORK PERFECTED and ACCEPTED.

WHY was GOOD FRIDAY such a BLOW? You can say it to yourself - - to LOSE your BEST FRIEND, to have ALL your HOPES DASHED to PIECES, to have to go on LIVING WITHOUT HOPE. And WHY was EASTER such a JOY? Because it gave you BACK your FRIEND - - because you could UNDERSTAND Him now. You could see the NATURE and the NEED of the WORK, and SUFFERING, and DYING of this LORD JESUS. RESURRECTION could only mean that the WORK of JESUS had been ACCEPTED and that the FATHER'S RIGHTEOUSNESS is fully SATISFIED.

Our text may be the 1st EASTER ANTHEM written for the church by its great leader, PETER.

He would be tha man to say: "BLESSED BE GOD FOR ALL HE HAS DONE" - - - "BLESSED BE GOD WHO HAS BEGOTTEN US INTO A LIVING HOPE" - - - "BLESSED BE GOD BECAUSE ETERNAL LIFE HAS BEEN PREPARED FOR US."

THIS IS THE DAY OF THE RESURRECTION! THIS DAY is JOY and HOPE and PEACE! This day is ALL these things - - because it LIFTS the VEIL and gives us a GLIMPSE BEYOND the GRAVE. When the VEIL is NOT LIFTED, we find DEATH so COLD and FRIGHTENING. But NOW with the LIFTING of the VEIL - - with the GLORY of the KNOWLEDGE that the GRAVE could NOT HOLD HIM - - - - - we come through to KNOWLEDGE, and JOY, and HOPE, and PEACE. Never mind the talk about the "IMMORTALITY" which the PHILOSOPHERS like to SPIN about. Here is our DIRECT and CERTAIN ANSWER: "JESUS LIVES!" If you have any DOUBTS about this GREAT and GLORIOUS TRUTH - - DISCARD them here at Jesus' TOMB. FORGET about them in the days AHEAD! Remember, that ~~ONLY~~ ONLY HE LIVES!

The RESURRECTION of JESUS assures us that we are MOVING FORWARD from the CHANGING to the UNCHANGING. Somehow we will MAKE IT to the CHANGELESS LIFE with CHRIST, our LORD. The SCRIPTURE KNOWS such HAPPY words as "UNCHANGING" - "INCORRUPTABLE" - "UNDEFILED" - - - - applied to the FUTURE HOME ~~and~~ and the FUTURE LIFE and the

FUTURE JOY. This is our "LIVING HOPE!" There is only ONE CONDITION - KNOW CHRIST and LOVE HIM.

This is the DAY of the RESURRECTION! This day is JOY and HOPE and PEACE! All these things are TRUE - - because each LESSON of this day ASSURES US of the UNFAILING HELP of the UNFAILING HELPER! All the little questions stay SMALL: "Will I be able to HOLD OU Shall I ever be able to REACH such GLORIES? Will I EVER SEE MY LORD CHRIST as PETER saw Him?" With ALL the UNFAITHFULNESS - - with all the DISTRUST of SELF - - with all the SHORTCOMINGS that we ACKNOWLEDGE and DEPLORE - - - - we are STILL CERTAIN of the VICTORY. This JESUS of GETHSEMANE and GABBATHA and GOLGOTHA and the GARDEN TOMB - - - do you think that HE will FAIL US NOW that He sits on the THRONE of HEAVEN? SURELY we shall have TRIALS. We shall have PLENTY of them - - because they KEEP US straight and humble. But FAITH was made to be TESTED - - and it is only a little while that we have the testing - - and then we have the GLORY! We have an UNFAILING HELPER! This FAITH is BEGOTTEN by GOD. Unless we turn against HIM, He will KEEP US in that FAITH and bring us HOME to GLORY.

This "LIVING HOPE" is also begotten of GOD. It is NO DREAM that Peter had. It was a

BLESSED REALITY for him to SEE his RISEN LORD. He knows it 1st hand - - that God has PREPARED HIS INHERITANCE YONDER. He knows that Jesus goes to PREPARE a PLACE for US. This He has heard from JESUS' OWN LIPS. THANK GOD for the MESSAGE of a man who RAN to the GRAVE that 1st EASTER DAY and can WRITE to ALL of US: "YOU ARE GUARDED BY THE POWER OF GOD OPERATING IN YOUR FAITH UNTIL YOU ENTER FULLY INTO THE SALVATION OF OUR GOD." Amen!!!