

LIVING IN THE POWER OF THE RESURRECTION

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As we celebrate the season of Easter, it is appropriate for us to reflect on the power and promise of the season and to name and claim and live in that power. In our time, we hear a lot about the use and abuse of power. We think of it as power over, not as power with. We have learned to explore and tap into the power of the atom, to build sophisticated weaponry for war, and to explore outer space. Also, we have made amazing advances in medicine, technology and other fields, but we have in large part failed to tap into a far greater power – the power of God’s Spirit always available to us. In our western culture, we glorify a different kind of power, privilege and superiority. Many of the advances made are good in themselves, but if we make them ends in themselves or use them for destructive purposes, they rob us of life’s deeper meaning and the possibility of relating to the global human family in a life-giving way and of living a Spirit-filled life.

The Easter season invites us to take a look at ourselves individually and as a nation as well as members of the global human community. The promise God offers us is that “all may have life and have it in abundance.” The prayer of Jesus is that “all may be one.”

When we watch the evening news, the challenges seem daunting. We hear stories of endless wars, conflicts, budget deficits, failed relationships and abuse and neglect of every kind. We know to a great extent that what we have tried up to now is not working well for most of the human family. In this regard, Paul offers good advice: “We are not to keep festival with the old dough.” We need a new dough that is empowering and life-giving, a new way of living and relating to the global human family and of living a Spirit-filled life.

When we decide to follow Christ, there is no guarantee that we will never have challenges or problems to deal with. The promise is that no matter how great the challenges, they never need have the last word in our lives. Easter is not just about an empty tomb. It is the story of your triumph and mine because we follow and live in the power of the Risen Lord, offered to us through God’s Spirit. We have God’s promise that the Spirit will walk with us as victor, friend, and sustainer every step of the way. Are we ready to allow all the stones to be rolled away from our lives, individually and as community and nation and get in touch with the Spirit within? We must

remember that gifts are never given for oneself alone. We are called to be God's presence, God's love, God's hands and heart, God's truth and wisdom in a topsy-turvy world.

We all need reminders that there is something more important than our own agenda. It is to build a system of harmony and peace where all people can enjoy life's abundance. We have the ability to move from being a dominating power to becoming a promoter of peace, compassion and justice. The question is do we have the will to restore the soul of our nation and move from materialism and militarism and a sense of superiority to a path of global wellbeing, justice and peace? May we have the courage to choose God's plan and return to our best selves and choose life for ourselves and our descendants for generations yet to come.

Through the power of the Resurrection, a new light will shine in our minds and hearts, directing us toward a new way of thinking and relating and solving problems and do it in such a way as to bring life and not death to our world. The Easter message and mandate always leave us with a mission – to leave our comfortable settings and way of thinking and doing things, and to bring God's truth and healing into our wounded world and to do it in the name and power of the Spirit of God. May the hope and energy of Easter fill our minds and hearts as we welcome the life-giving Guest who guides and sustains us at every step of the way.