

Lenten Reflection

Holy Saturday April 15, 2017



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In His unfathomable grace and love, God gives us salvation. We receive this gift of salvation by the grace of God through believing in Jesus Christ as the Incarnate Son of God who died on the Cross for our sins and rose from the dead for us to have eternal life. I have long accepted salvation through faith in Jesus, not by my works, and the future promise of eternal life in God's heavenly kingdom. Nevertheless, I have struggled with the "here and now," thinking that I had to work to keep pleasing God. I had turned Jesus into a future promise that had little to do with my life now.

God reveals to us a much different and deeper truth in Paul's letter to the Romans. In a miraculous, mysterious way, we spiritually joined Jesus in His death. *We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.* [Romans 6:6].

"Our old self" – we are no longer who we were before. Yes, in our flesh we still fail and commit sins. However, our true self is no longer that of a sinner drawn to evil. Our true self was freed from sin because Jesus gave us His righteousness, holiness, and perfection.

However, the wonder does not stop there. Not only did we die with Christ. We also live with Christ. *Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.* [Romans 6:8-11]. Christ now lives in us and we live in Christ. Our spirits are one with His. We are pleasing to God because Christ's nature is now our nature. Our "work" is now to believe and receive God's grace for our daily living. Our "work" is to put aside our efforts – to "die to self" – and rest in the fact that the love of Christ is living in us and through us to transform us and to change the world.

On Good Friday, Jesus Christ died and we died with Him. Three days later, He rose from the tomb and we rose with Him. We died with Christ, and we live with Christ. The Easter Story is not just a legend. It is truth. It is God's story and it is our story. Alleluia!

