

Pastor Geoffrey R. Boyle  
Easter Sunday  
20 April 2014  
Grace-Trinity Lutheran Churches, Wichita  
Colossians 3:1-4

*In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit*

Christ is Risen! (*He is risen, indeed! Alleluia!*)

Dear Saints, you made it!  
The fast is over!  
The black and purple are gone.  
The veils removed.  
The solemn and restrained joy is now full-throttle.  
Death has been destroyed.  
And now life is opened up for all.  
Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again!

The promises of old have been fulfilled.  
The story we've been following has reached its climax.  
And today is the day of salvation!

When the women came to Jesus' tomb an angel said to them,  
*"Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified.  
He is not here, for He has risen from the dead."* (Mt 28:5)

And on their way, running to tell the disciples, Jesus Himself met them.  
They took hold of His feet and they worshipped Him.

That's what Easter is all about:  
Believing and worshiping the risen Christ.

But we must know that this rising of the dead isn't just for Jesus.  
It's also for you.  
Already in your baptism, this death and resurrection were applied to you.  
What goes for Christ, goes for the Baptized.

So St. Paul says today,  
*"If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory."* (Col 3:1-4)

Therefore, if you are baptized—  
if what goes for Christ, goes for you—  
then why are your eyes cast on the things of old?

In the face of suffering, and doubt, and fear, and even death,  
do not set your eyes on the things of the earth.

The casket is a lie, just as the tomb.  
 Death has no power, no claim on your life.  
 Satan is defeated and sin is put away.

So what have you got to fear?  
 And I don't mean just for today, but for the rest of your life?

When St. Paul says "*seek the things that are above,*" he intends for it to be on-going.  
*Keep seeking* the things above.

And that doesn't mean up in the clouds, or in some sort of dream land of idealism—  
 it means to look with faith.  
 Keep looking to the promises of the Father.  
 Keep trusting that His word is true, even though things around you say otherwise.  
 Look to Christ—  
 and again, that's not a call to look up in the clouds or even deep within you,  
 it's a call to look at the place He's promised to be *for you*.

Look to the sacrament; remember your baptism; hear the preaching of the Gospel.

These are ongoing events where Christ has promised to meet you and save you.  
 We remember our baptisms daily by confessing our sins and believing the word of forgiveness.  
 The Lord's Supper is celebrated here every Lord's day and on other feasts and festivals.  
 The preaching of the Gospel of Christ crucified for you is all we have decided to know.  
 So seek the things above by being joined to this altar, by participating in the life of this church.

Easter's a very special day, there's no doubt about it.  
 But Easter is what goes on here *every single Sunday*.  
 In fact, it's because of Easter that we worship on Sunday—  
 and not on Saturday, the Sabbath, like the Jews of old.

Every Sunday is another Easter.  
 Every Sunday we gather around the preaching of Christ and the gift of His body and blood for  
 our forgiveness, life, and salvation.  
 You can never get too much Jesus!

But if you're not a part of that, you might ask yourself: "*why not?*"  
 What keeps you from the gifts of God?  
 What pulls your eyes down from heaven and onto earth?  
 What gets in the way of His promises?

Whatever it is, put it away.  
 For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God!  
 What goes for Christ is yours as well! You are the baptized!  
 You've died to the things of this world,  
 don't seek after them anymore.

Don't seek to protect your own image, or gain the favor of men.  
Don't hold that grudge, let go of your anger.  
None of it is real; none of it will last.  
It's all been defeated and left to rot in the tomb.

God is not angry.  
He does not treat you like your sins deserve.  
In fact, He love you, and is Himself your life.

And today is the proof.  
Today is the Feast of the Resurrection,  
the celebration of the end:  
no more sorrow and no more pain,  
no more fear and no more frustration,  
no more shame and no more death.

Death has been trampled down by the death of Christ,  
and upon those in the tombs, He has bestowed life.

And that means for you.  
So be what you are.  
Seek what is yours.  
Set your minds on Christ, and all is yours.

And when Christ who is your life appears,  
then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

And the taste of that glory comes from this altar.  
The feast is ready.  
Come and eat.  
Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Christ is risen! (*He's risen indeed, alleluia!*)

*In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit*