

He is not here: for He is risen.....Mt 28:6

The words of the angel to Mary Magdelene and the other Mary as they came to see the sepulcher (the grave, burial place, where the dead are buried).

Dear beloved, how often would OUR LORD have gathered us together under His wings in like manner as a hen gathers its young ones and we would not! We would not have it. No, don't gather us together under your wings Lord. Let us come together for you. See! We are gathering ourselves for you. Look Lord, how many different churches we have and look how many different names and look how many different denominations and look how many different doctrinal pulpits we have Lord, look, look, look!!!

Look Lord, each year we celebrate all the events in your life. In fact right now we are celebrating your advent, your coming into this world and then sometime next year we will celebrate your crucifixion and your resurrection. Look Lord, how we faithfully continue year after year celebrating the same feasts in the same way, proclaiming the good news with our mouths. But please don't gather us under your wings because really, think about it Lord. If you gather us under your wings, thats too many too close, and you know the old saying Lord, "familiarity breeds contempt". and besides that who knows how hard its going to be under your wings. Was it not you who said, "strive to enter in through the narrow gate", now thats difficult. You see, its much easier to do the same thing every year. Its comfortable and something we can do but gathering together under your wings.....

I know this sounds sarcastic, but its simply a way to get our attention. Even the writer to the scroll of Hebrews (6:1) pleads for progress, pressing onto perfection. This beloved is the Lord's desire. Let's move on. Not repeating the external rituals year after year, but moving on to something new. That is where the Lord's heart is, He is doing a new thing. We are a new creation. Does the word NEW ring anew in your heart.

Just like both the Mary's, we want to run to the sepulchre, the grave, that which represents death and a dead body, each year

celebrating the external rituals which have no life in them, just a memory. Yes, its exciting and seems to contain a certain amount of joy, but it is DEATH.

Yes, Christ is risen historically and the memory of that does produce a certain amount of delight in our hearts and a measure of joy. It brings the families together and creates a feeling of togetherness, even experienced by those to whom Christ is simply a picture on the wall and an occassion to rest at home from work. But friend, do you not know that the past is DEATH. It has no life in it. And every time we run to the sepulchre, the message of God is, "HE IS NOT HERE".

He is not here beloved. Here as in a historical past, in gathering together in these external rituals and man made festivities, in spending season after season doing the same things and believing that the numbers are the standard by which God's work is judged, but like the writer says, "lets move onto perfection".

Let me tell you where He IS! "CHRIST IN YOU IS THE HOPE OF GLORY".

Yes dear friend, He is in you, in the Holy of Holies in you and thats where He rises and comes forth from, in Glory and power and illumination and revelation.

He rises in our LOVE and AFFECTIONS as we become His river of love in the earth and as we are effected by His love and His affection becomes our affections.

And because He is in us and rises in us, our JOY is complete for in His presence is fulness of joy.

As the Prince of Peace rises in us, we ascend into a higher dimension and a greater measure of peace begins to surround us and we find ourselves to be more than conquerors, conquering all things within that take away our peace.

As Christ, the one who is acquainted with suffering, rises within us, we find that patience is formed in us and those things which defeated us before, have no more victory over us. We are now longsuffering with Him and our groaning begins to reach the Fathers

ears for we do not cry as little children in the marketplace but as sons of God groaning for our manifestation and creation to be set free.

As Christ our GENTLENESS and our GOODNESS rises in us, we find ourselves becoming a meek and humble servant eating the nourishing food of the Spirit and the things of this world seem to dwindle, and disappear having no place in our minds and hearts.

As Christ rises in us, our faith begins to rise along with Him and great and wonderful things begin to happen because HE IS RISEN.

Self controlled we become because Christ is risen in us and we become disciples of our Lord, disciplined ones, Praise be to Him. And all things are subjected to us in Him as all things in us are subjected to Him.

Listen! I am not saying that we must stop meeting and celebrating. What I am saying is that if all this is simply external, then this is what Our Lord has to say, " Where the body (dead) is there also the vultures will be gathered".