

## Resurrection Power

*They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of His splendor.” Isaiah 61:3*

Resurrection. To breathe new life into. To relaunch. That is what God did in Jesus Christ. That is what he wants to do with you and me.

In this season of Easter, Jesus has to prove again and again to believers and nonbelievers alike that he has indeed risen from the dead, and that the resurrection is our inheritance as well. Whether we choose to believe it or not, it is a fact borne out by God’s continuing action in the world, and in his people.

“A minister was in Italy, and there he saw the grave of a man who had died centuries before who was an unbeliever and completely against Christianity, but a little afraid of it too. So the man had a huge stone slab put over his grave so he would not have to be raised from the dead in case there is a resurrection from the dead. He had inscriptions put all over the slab saying, ‘I do not want to be raised from the dead. I don't believe in it.’ Evidently, when he was buried, an acorn must have fallen into the grave. So a hundred years later the acorn had grown up through the grave and split that slab. It was now a tall towering oak tree. The minister looked at it and asked, ‘If an acorn, which has power of biological life in it, can split a slab of that magnitude, what can the acorn of God's resurrection power do in a person's life?’ “

The splintered remnants of the stone slab on either side, and the giant oak tree itself, are reminders that from generation to generation God will work his grace, and that no matter how much we try to deny him, it still will happen. We are so insignificant to the power of God, and at the same time so precious in his sight.

Philip Keller, who told the story above, agrees. “The minute you decide to receive Jesus as Savior and Lord,” he writes, “the power of the Holy Spirit comes into your life. It's the power of the resurrection—the same thing that raised Jesus from the dead . . . . Think of the things you see as immovable slabs in your life—your bitterness, your insecurity, your fears, your self-doubts. Those things can be split and rolled off. The more you know him, the more you grow into the power of the resurrection.”

Let the power of the resurrection turn stumbling blocks into steppingstones. If your temper is a problem, let God turn it into patience. If you are focused on worldly things and God is getting left out, let God revive your devotion to what it

once was and make it even better than before. If you have doubt, dare to let God turn that into the greatest faith you have ever seen.

If you are focused on self, let God show you the others that are out there, the miracles he wants to work with you as part of his band of disciples. If you are in the world, let him show you a glimpse of another world which will knock your socks off!

It's so simple really. It is really saying yes to God, and he takes care of the rest. The power of the resurrection does not take power away from us, it gives us power we never thought we would have.

Think of the three days from Good Friday to Easter. Death to resurrection. Jesus was dead for three days, and rose again on the third day better than ever. Those three days, with all the hopelessness and then the miracle, can be expressed and applied to every difficulty of life. "God weeps with us so that we may someday laugh with him." ~ Jorgen Moltmann

Let us be reminded of the moment of the death of Jesus Christ. The veil of the temple was torn in two. Earthquakes shook the ground so hard it was never the same. And rocks were split open.

But that was not the end of the story. After that rending of the earth, of the temple, and of all of life, new life was coming. In the same way we must be shaken to our roots before new life can spring forth.

If we rely on ourselves and the things of this world to make us happy, that's all we will have. But with the power of the resurrection, there is so much more.

To return to the oak tree imagery of our beginning, think about this. Inside every acorn is an oak tree. In fact, an entire forest of towering oaks. It may take hundreds of years to grow an oak or thousands to grow a majestic sequoia.

But in a single moment, resurrection power makes you eternal. Now that, my friend, is what you were waiting for.