

**“Easter Is About A New Life!”**

John 20:1-18

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Rev. Jeong Park

Fair Oaks United Methodist Church

It's Easter! Easter greetings to you again, ***Christ is Risen, He is risen indeed!*** That's all! Probably, we don't need anything else. Easter is all about the resurrection of Jesus and truly He Is Risen today!

We all are here to celebrate our risen Christ, so many words may not be necessary. I hope you do not expect a long sermon this morning. But Easter is very special not because Jesus is risen, but because we need to understand what is resurrection. The Easter message can be extremely easy or very difficult. Last week on Friday morning, I tried to explain to our Little Methodist School preschool children about the meaning of Easter. I realized that Easter is not an easy topic for our children nor us. The concept of resurrection is not an easy to understand. This morning, my task as a preacher is to make you believe in the resurrection of Jesus. How? The event of resurrection is not so much about the revival of the dead body out of the tomb, but about the concept of new life.

Is it possible for us to explain a reasonable process of resurrection? Please do not think of me as a scientist but I am a pastor who proclaims the word of God. Let's slightly shift our approach on the resurrection of Jesus, not ask about physical evidence of resurrection, but trying to find out what resurrection can teach us. The resurrection of Jesus' story in the Bible is not focused on scientific evidences to prove the revival of the dead body, but how it influenced and impacted his followers. How did the new life of Jesus change people's lives?

The key is a new life! Simply speaking, the essence of Easter story is not about death, but it is more about new life and new beginning possible because of the love of God. Let's remember Good Friday symbolizes the power of death, but Easter Sunday shows us that the love of God is much stronger than death. In God, death has no power to control us nor to end our life. Rather God begins a new life out of death. Wherever we see a new life

and a new beginning, we need to discern that God is still making Easter events happen in our lives. When new life begins, that is where the event of resurrection happens! God works there!

I am the father of a new baby boy, eight-week-old Joshua, and three-year-old Jacob. I am very proud of my two boys, but to be honest with you, the reality where I am and what I do is not always fun, but it is quite challenging. Moreover, this won't be an eight weeks event, but a life-long commitment. It is scary! Sometimes, I wonder why I receive so many congratulations! I am still not sure about all the blessings being a parent, but I will never forget the moment I witnessed when Joshua was able to breathe on his own as a new life in this world. Isn't it a miraculous event and life for us to breathe on our own! To me, the same things are true in nature: flowers, trees, and every living creature in this world. Why do we celebrate a new life? Because a new life is not dying but growing, bringing energies and excitement in our lives. In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit is often described as a breath of God. Our life is given from God and God dwells in us and helps us breathe everyday on our own. It is a great blessing, isn't it?

Our Scripture reading today describes the resurrection of Jesus, but the more important thing is to remind us of the power of new life. We can summarize the whole of the Scripture story with three words; crying, the empty tomb and great joy. Crying represents the darkness of no life. The empty tomb is a symbol of surprise that the dead body was gone, but God brought Jesus to life out of death. God can change our life from death. Jesus' followers were overjoyed to realize that Jesus was resurrected. The resurrection is all about joy of new life, not about how the dead body could be revived.

The resurrection is not a past event every Easter, but is the reminder of God's love in our daily lives. Every day can be a new beginning in God's love and your new day can be a new chapter of God's new resurrection story. The resurrection story teaches us how we live in God's love as resurrected people. May the blessings of Easter be with you always! Amen.