

Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Virginia



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EASTER MESSAGE FROM THE GRAND PRELATE

William Sangster was a prominent evangelical Methodist minister in Britain. In 1958, he was diagnosed with an incurable disease that caused progressive muscular atrophy, that gradually paralyzed him. Eventually, even his vocal cords were paralyzed. On Easter morning, a few weeks before his death in 1960, his daughter came to visit. Using stiffened fingers, he scribbled a message to her saying, "How terrible to wake up on Easter and have no voice with which to shout, 'He is Risen!'" Then, pausing a moment, he added, "Far worse to have a voice and not want to shout."

We should feel like shouting this Easter because we know that Christ has risen from the dead.

As *The Bible Knowledge Commentary* (Walvoord & Zuck, © 2002), puts it: "Christ's death as God's sacrificial lamb was to pay the redemptive price for the sins of all people so that God might be free to forgive those who respond by faith to that provision. Christ's resurrection was the proof of God's acceptance of Jesus' sacrifice. Thus because He lives, God can credit His provided righteousness to the account of every person who responds by faith to that offer."

That gives us something to shout about. Easter gives us the celebration of eternal life! Those who know and follow Christ have a certain hope of resurrection and eternal life. Romans 8:11 says, “and if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who lives in you.”

All other past religious leaders are dead. No faith except for Christianity asserts that its leader rose from the dead. Jesus’ resurrection vindicates His teachings and all His claims. Jesus is the only person who ever died and then rose again to remain eternally alive. No wonder the first disciples were overjoyed when they first saw the risen Lord. And that is a joy that continues to reach us today.

Christ’s resurrection not only fulfills prophecy, but it proves his divinity and identity as the Messiah and Savior. He came to earth as the humble child of a virgin, lived a perfect and sinless life dedicated to teaching about God, was falsely accused and executed and, most importantly, after three days in the tomb He rose! But the good news does not end with Jesus’ resurrection. It continues through the promise of our own future.

In 1751, Thomas Gray wrote a poem titled ‘Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard.’ One line from that poem says, “The paths of glory lead but to the grave.”

Not so with Jesus. Not so with those who believe in Him. For us, the paths of glory lead *from* the grave. He is risen! He is risen indeed!

This Easter season may our hearts and mouths be full of exuberant praise for our risen Savior Jesus Christ. He not only conquered death. His resurrection is the guarantee that all who believe in Him, even should they die before His return, will similarly be raised from the dead to experience eternal life, with Him in Heaven. May the presence of the risen Christ, both personal and powerful, both intimate and infinite, go with us both now and forever more...

Happy Easter

Rick Saunders

Grand Prelate