

# Easter Sunday

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 20 April 2025

Preacher: Fr. Wade Miller

[ 0 : 00 ] Christ is risen. He is risen indeed. Hallelujah.! In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.! In Colossians chapter 3.

And that context leads us to Colossians chapter 2, verses 11 through 13. The heart of what he's talking about. Where we read, In him, that is Jesus, in him, you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, By putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ, Buried with him in baptism.

Buried with him in baptism. In which you were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, Who raised him from the dead. And you being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He is made alive together with him.

Having forgiven you all trespasses. What St. Paul is saying is that circumcision, That mark of the old covenant, Is no longer the entrance into covenant with God.

It is now baptism. And baptism means that we were buried with Christ and raised with him to new life.

[ 1 : 50 ] St. Paul says that we have been forgiven all trespasses. Happens in baptism. And we are made alive with Christ. Having now shared in his life that triumph over the grave by his glorious resurrection.

That's the context of what we heard here in our epistle text. So in light of this, listen again as I read our epistle text from Colossians chapter 3, verses 1 through 4.

Remember, if then you were raised with Christ. Remember, we were buried with him in baptism. If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above.

Where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on, not on the things of this earth. Set your mind on things above.

For you died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, appears, then you will also appear with him in glory.

[ 2 : 57 ] Easter is the celebration of our Lord's victory over death and the grave. Jesus lived a life of total obedience to the Father.

Fulfilling all the requirements of the law and righteousness that culminated in his ultimate act of love. As he laid down his life for the world.

That's what Good Friday is all about. And Easter now is about the cosmic transformation that he has brought about by overcoming death and the grave.

By his physical and bodily resurrection. Jesus rose physically and bodily. Not just spiritually.

And Jesus now, he comes to bring life. And he transforms death into life. And baptism is our entrance into this new life.

[ 3 : 56 ] As we are taken from death, having been buried with Christ in baptism. So that now we are united to him. And we now share and participate in this new life, in this resurrection.

And of course, we witnessed this, this morning. This amazing miracle and new birth. As Henry now received Christ.

And now has been brought into the church. And now participates in this life that Christ has brought. As he overcame death. So then the question is, is that it?

Is Easter and baptism about getting our ticket punched for entrance into the pearly gates?

Therefore, we just go, eat, drink, and be merry. Right?

I'm afraid a lot of people think that's it. And it's not it. Is Easter about singing some up-tempo songs about Jesus conquering death?

[ 5 : 03 ] Feasting on a huge Easter meal a little later? Probably committing the sin of gluttony a little bit? And then just going back to what we were doing before Ash Wednesday. Is that what Easter is

all about?

St. Paul says here in our epistle text, emphatically, no. St. Paul says, for you died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

He goes on to say, seek those things which are above. He says, set your mind on things above, not on earthly things. This is our calling as baptized Christians.

Now, don't misunderstand. It's not as though St. Paul is saying, ignore life. He is not. Or that we just sit around and contemplate on heaven. That's not the point.

We still have work to do. We still have a vocation. We still have responsibilities and people to care for.

[ 6 : 08 ] We still have to live in this world where we see brokenness. But we do this by always, always having an eternal perspective in everything that we do.

And that eternal perspective is to guide us now as baptized Christians in all that we think, do, and say.

You see, we have been snatched out of the jaws of death. And we have been brought into the kingdom of God. And now we are to live as people of the kingdom, bringing everything under the lordship of Jesus.

That's our calling as baptized Christians. Therefore, we are to live as new creatures in Christ who have been set free from sin and death.

We do not have to freak out about life. Our life as baptized Christians is one of resurrection and hope, even in the darkest of times.

[ 7 : 14 ] Our struggles are to be seen through the lens of eternity, not just our present troubles. Our priorities, our values, are ordered by the eternal kingdom of God.

Our relationships are built upon the foundation of following Jesus. Therefore, serving and sacrificing is to be the rhythm of our lives. It's to be the purpose of our lives.

We are to always be growing and maturing in Jesus Christ. That is why our epistle ends with those words. When Christ, who is our life, we dwell in him and he in us.

Christ, who is our life, when he appears, then you will also appear with him in glory. That's why we're here.

That's our hope. Dear friends, death has been destroyed by our Lord who conquered death and the grave. The great enemy of death, Jesus has conquered.

[ 8 : 22 ] And now we share in his victory as baptized children of God. And we believe that we will be raised up on the last day to live in a transformed and renewed physical world with renewed and physical bodies, void of anxieties, pain and suffering and death.

And this new life begins in baptism. This new life began today for Henry. In baptism, we were put on a new path.

And that path never ends. It only leads deeper and deeper into communion with our God as we follow Christ, who is our life.

We are called then to live, to work, to go about our lives, always thinking about God's kingdom and how best to live as faithful subjects to our Lord and King, Jesus the Christ.

We have peace because we belong to Christ who has come to give us life. He did not come to condemn us.

[ 9 : 40 ] He came to save. Baptism then is that external, physical, objective act that God does, that God does for us, bringing us into his ever-growing family.

Dear friends, we might not feel peace and comfort. As a matter of fact, we might feel anxiety. We might feel alone, alienated.

But baptism means we received the mark and seal of God because he claimed us as his own.

And nobody can take that away. We belong to him. Our calling then is to honor our heavenly father by following his eternal and perfect son.

Having received the gift of the Holy Spirit through water and holy baptism. And then walking the path to eternity where life has replaced death. Where love has replaced pride and selfishness.

[ 10 : 52 ] And where selfless sacrifice and service is the rhythm of our lives. It is the purpose. Dear baptized Christians, set your mind on things above.

And do not fear the challenges, the frustrations, the pain of this life. Not even death itself. Because you belong to God.

You have been given the mark in holy baptism. You are his. And he will never forsake you.  
Therefore, let us be joyful even in the midst of suffering.  
Let us remember the promise that he will raise us up on the last day. Christ is risen. He is risen.  
In the name of the Father and of the Son of the Holy Ghost. Amen.