

“The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” Psalm 27:1.

Dear Christian friends,

We live this month between two solitudes. Holy Week celebrations will lead us to the most dire experience: the suffering and death of Jesus our LORD. Good Friday is the most sombre day in the Church year. Any Christian celebrating it cannot help but feel the great sorrow that such a day brings. It is necessary for us. However two days later we experience jubilation: the Resurrection of our LORD! Therefore April in the Church year can be very similar to April in our natural world; it can be filled with temptation and hope.

Officially we have left winter behind us and have crossed into Spring. Every natural gardener in western Canada gets antsy at this time of year. I know daily I find myself at least visually examining my perennial flower beds. I am hoping to see the first signs of new growth. The great temptation is to get rustling around in the dead vegetation left from last Fall; to begin uncovering those plants. Winter and its induced dormancy has been long enough. I long to see those new leaves for this year's vegetation. The great warning, for people like me, is to not disturb that dead vegetation; not yet. Anyone who decides to start uncovering those plants now risks a great disappointment: a killing frost can still come. So every good gardener lives these early days of April, abiding the dreariness that the growing season is in; patiently watching, but not touching, the vegetation that is there. A much more healthy and vibrant plant will be the reward.

So too in this earthly life as Christians, we have this great longing that can come upon us. We long to enter into the great and promised feast that LORD Jesus Christ assures us he will bring. We long for the full physical presence and experience of Jesus living among us. We truly would prefer to not have the reminder of Good Friday but simply skip to the Resurrection of our LORD and Easter joy. However Easter is meaningless without Good Friday, and Good Friday is meaningless without Easter. Those two events need to go together for us to have salvation hope. We need to abide in the times that our LORD grants to us. We need to live as life is given to us, so that the vibrancy that true faith brings can be experienced in our lives. Temptation will be great but divine patience will be truly fruitful.

The Psalmist declares that great promise of God, precisely when he personally is being assailed with the greatest difficulties of this life. Yet he will trust in God and abide in God's timing for him.

This month we can faithfully walk with Jesus. It will take us into the darkest moments of life as we remember Good Friday. When we live to see Easter Sunday the greatest surprise and joy will fill us with wonder and awe at God's mighty deeds. Just as the weather outside will dictate to gardeners the need for patience, so too does God's Holy Spirit counsel us into patient waiting knowing the Day of the LORD certainly will come.

Live the fullness of Christ Jesus as LORD and Savior again this April as we journey into Jerusalem with the LORD and experience everything that befalls Jesus there. Now I need to find some safe dirt to play in.

In Christ forever,

Pastor Kevin.