

“... it is God who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness,’ who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us.” 2 Corinthians 4:6-7.

Dear Christian friends,

March generally is the least favored month in the year for me. The adage given to March is “in like a lamb and out like a lion, or in like a lion and out like a lamb.” I find the month to be a trial to be endured. Winter’s harshness gets tedious to me this month and I truly long for balmy weather. I relish the change that Spring should bring. But often this month can be fickle. The weather can be sunnier and warmer for a couple of days; then the arctic air plummets again settling us into a deep freeze cycle. If the weather in January or February is balmy, it seems that winter comes with a vengeance in March.

This month mentally and physically I find a very strong desire for winter to depart and the new season to get firmly established. I feel in my body and soul like an electronic device where the battery is getting low in its charge. My functionality may be fragile without a ‘recharge.’ So I have learned that a winter get-away is a great opportunity for that recharge of mind, body and soul. I often quip that my winter vacation gives me enough energy to get over the last snowdrift of the year!

This year March gives us a full plate in the Church year. We begin it well into Lent and we will conclude the month with the Resurrection of our LORD (Easter). We will go through a multitude of feelings and experiences in these weeks. We begin it in Lent with Jesus’ long journey to Jerusalem and his discipleship of us. We celebrate his triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, when he is exalted with the people’s praise. Then we immediately shift to Jesus’ Passion (his suffering and death) when he is rejected by his people. We conclude with the glorious news brought from the Garden Tomb that Jesus is risen! This month spiritually will be dramatic if we authentically engage our Christian faith through it.

Lent is a great time for a recharge. We often consider this Church season to be a “kill-joy” because a centrality of its theme is our Christian discipleship. We are encouraged to more fully engage in our relationship to Jesus as the Christ and LORD. While we often focus upon the hardship that spiritual discipline can impose; we are neglectful if we don’t acknowledge the great benefit that such discipline can also bring. My cell phone, without a down-time for a recharge, does not get better in its reliability to function, especially when I may need it! The Lenten discipline can be our down-time for a recharge to make us more reliably functional.

Once again I am taking my winter retreat, even during Lent, to get a recharge. While I will rest my body, I also will be filling my soul through scripture reading and meditation. Truly the LORD reminds me that I have this treasure of faith in a clay jar! As you live through this season of Lent may the LORD Jesus Christ be your source of encouragement and recharge. Thanks be to God for his steadfast love and mercy for us.

In Christ forever,

Pastor Kevin.