

## The Risen Lord and the Desire for Greatness

The Lord is risen. Alleluia.

I just love the Alleluia. The way the angel appears in the reading today is almost cheeky: he comes down, rolls back the tomb, sits on it, and then has this conversation with them, as if to say, “Of course He’s risen. He told you so.” It’s probably my favorite account of the four different accounts we can use for Easter morning.

I want to start by saying this, and you may know this, but each and every person here is made for greatness. Do you believe that? And even on a deeper level—and this is even a finer point than that—not only were you made for greatness, you were made for perfection. In fact, we will not fully get to heaven and reign with the Lord until we are perfect. That’s a big task, isn’t it? Not only were we made for greatness, but we were made for perfection.

Now, I want to state as my thesis that we actually all know this. We know this on some gut level. All of us recognize that this world is really messed up, and all of us have aspirations for something greater. At the end of the day, God is the One who placed this in our heart. This is not a natural longing we have. This is a supernatural longing because we are made in the image and likeness of God.

We know this especially among the young. Very often, the young have aspirations for something greater, to be great. And then maybe throughout life we get knocked around a bit. We experience failure and other things, and we begin to suppress that desire for greatness.

In fact, our discontent with this life and its various things is not a bad thing. The various ways that we experience discontent are not bad, and we should not suppress them. Because within that sense of discontent—that the world is not as it should be, that I am not as I should be, that I am made for something greater—and that whisper of the Holy Spirit that in fact we are made for perfection, there should actually be a seed of resurrection grace that we celebrate this day.

But if we try to go about greatness, our hunger, our ambitions, the things we hope for—especially the big things we hope for: world peace, perfect family life, that I would be the way I know that I am probably called to be—if we go about that on our own terms and in our own strength, we won’t be discontent. We will be disappointed. Discontent is not a bad thing. Disappointment really kind of is a bad thing, and can even move into a place of despair. Don’t go there.

The key to this thing, and what we celebrate, is that we don't have to do it. That's the key to this. The key is that we don't have to do it. And in fact, we can't. Who does it come from? It comes from the Lord.

### **The Treasure in the Side of Christ**

There is a very beautiful homily by St. John Chrysostom, a Father of the Church. He has one line I've been meditating on this entire week. St. John is meditating on the Passion that we celebrated on Friday—and I said yes, celebrated. I won't go back there. Deacon Carl preached a really beautiful homily, as did Father Val.

But St. John is meditating on the side of Christ, where Christ was pierced. He says the following: "The soldier pierced the Lord's side. He breached the wall of the sacred temple, and I have found the treasure and I have made it my own."

In John's Gospel, the Lord refers to Himself as the temple. So that's what he's talking about. One more time, listen again: "The soldier pierced the Lord's side. He breached the wall of the sacred temple, and I have found the treasure and have made it my own."

The blood and water that come from His side, St. John specifies, and the Church has always taught, represent Baptism and Eucharist, these great graces that we have. That's the treasure: finding Jesus within us by our Baptism and in the Eucharist.

And if we find that treasure—which we have found, whether or not we recognize it on a day-to-day basis—the Lord Jesus is our treasure. Are we able to make it our own? Because St. John said, "I have found the treasure, and I have made it my own."

What does that look like? It looks like a recommitment of our lives to the Lord. That's what it looks like: a recommitment. It's a recognition that I am made for greatness, even perfection, and I can't get there myself.

### **Make the Treasure Your Own**

In striving to make that treasure our own, we receive what are called the fruits of the Holy Spirit. There are twelve of them, but I'm going to talk about just five really quick.

The first is peace. Do you want peace in your heart? The second: do you want a heart of generosity? Do you want a life of self-control? Do you want a heart of kindness for others? Do you want joy?

Beautiful. You have found the treasure. Now make it your own.

And peace to all of you this holy day, and to all who love the Lord in simplicity of heart.