

I live no longer I (my ego), but Christ lives in me.

The Gospels are not just audible – such as we experience them every Sunday. They are also legible, which means you can actually read them and ponder what they are presenting. And if you do ponder the Gospel narratives that tell of Christ's resurrection, such pondering may have a *radical* effect upon you. What I mean is: people may not be able to recognize you.

Have you noticed how at first his followers – confronted by Christ's resurrection – don't get it? When he appeared in that upper room, his disciples assumed he was a ghost; they were startled and terrified. As for the two disciples Jesus joined on the road to Emmaus asking what sort of things they were discussing, there was no recognition on their part – only surprise that he hadn't heard the news of his death! Only after the disciples invited him to dine at an Inn and Jesus broke bread as if he were breaking open their minds did they recognize him – and now knew why their hearts were aflame when he spoke to them.

And then there was Mary Magdalene back at the tomb, distressed over the missing body – who, seeing a gardener, asks who stole it – then hears her name spoken with such affection and only then does the gardener turn out to be Jesus, much to her astonishment. And of course we have Thomas – who missed out on the first appearance of Jesus to his disciples in that upper room. He can't believe their story. Dead is dead. "If whatever it was you saw can show me wounds in his hands and side – verifiable evidence of an execution – then I might (I say *might*) believe what you say." And then there is that fishing moment in John's Gospel *when it was already dawn, Jesus was standing on the shore; but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus.*

And so we too may be initially perplexed by these resurrection narratives. Unless - for instance - we understand how *St. Paul* understood Christ's death and resurrection! For him it was more than a one-time event within a Roman governor's jurisdiction. For Paul Christ's death and resurrection was something for each of us *to experience – liturgically, sacramentally, as pivotal, crucial* to our lives. Did you know that? As Paul says in his letters: *I have been crucified with Christ: yet I live no longer I, but Christ lives in me.* Or again: *Or are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? . . . so that just as Christ was raised from the dead . . . we too might live in newness of life.* That process is to begin from the day of your baptism – meaning you are already risen from the dead. The Gospel resurrection narratives were but prelude to our own – daily.

So getting back to where we began – relative to the initial failure of people to recognize the risen Christ - have you at times also become unrecognizable; are you the person you were twenty, forty years ago – even as Paul was no longer Saul? I mean if you are being daily processed from who and what you were to someone who has laid aside one's burial clothes and now breaks bread and sets hearts on fire – and who enters a room and radiates: *Peace be with you* and is so sensitive as to say within a dense crowd *Who touched me?* are you not rising from the dead into a fresher apparition - everyday?

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