

# Message of Easter is 'never give up'

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One of the many messages from Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection is never give up. When Jesus was arrested and brought before Pilate, his disciples became afraid. So afraid, in fact, that most of them hid. Peter lied three times out of fear. Only John stood by Jesus as one can surmise from the eyewitness account available in the Gospel of John. The disciples gave up hope before Jesus was even convicted.

After the crucifixion the disciples gave in to depression. They were so depressed that when Mary burst into the room telling that Jesus had resurrected, they didn't believe her. They thought someone had broken into the tomb and stolen the body.

When two of the disciples were on the road to Emmaus, Jesus joined them. All they could talk about was defeat, death and betrayal. They had heard the report of the women at the tomb that Jesus was risen. But their material view of life said that was not possible.

Fear, depression, disbelief. These thoughts kept the disciples from even admitting that Jesus could and had overcome death.

As current day followers of Christ, don't give up! When Christian principles and ideals are under attack, don't be afraid. When one is persecuted for doing good and being loving, don't run and hide. When someone else tells a lie and gets away with it, don't give in so quickly to depression. When others tell you good news, don't minimize it.

God is on the field. All things are possible to God. Let's be like John. When Jesus was arrested, John stayed with him. When trouble happens, don't run, hang in there. John went to the cross with Jesus. Sometimes I like to think that John was right there close to Jesus when he was dragging

the cross. He certainly was giving Jesus moral support when he was on the cross. In fact, Jesus asked him to care for his mother.

When it seems evil has the upper hand, it's cowardice to give in to depression. When the night is dark, can't we pray? Can't we sing psalms of praise to God and have faith that good is going on even if we can't see it? Then our eyes won't be closed to good when it happens.

The women who went to Jesus' sepulcher early in the morning at least were active. They weren't paralyzed by mental depression. So they were the first to see the risen Christ. And they believed it possible!

When we read good news in the paper about teenagers or community projects, let's rejoice. Let's be willing to believe that good is natural because it is of God. Good is God in action. Good is man reflecting God. It is natural for God to act. He is supreme over all, so it is natural that good is supreme on earth as it is in heaven.

Acts of God are not disasters. That's what happens when material forces wreak havoc. Acts of God are faith, hope, resurrection, and ascension.

We don't have to ask ourselves would we have been like the majority of the disciples and given up, given in to fear, depression, disbelief. We know the answer by how we react to every day events. Don't give up. Have faith and moral courage when bad things happen. Stick to God and have confidence in the power of God. Support those who are suffering injustice and don't abandon them. Be eager and willing to accept that evil is overcome by good. Then we will earn the blessing of Christ today. Let's resurrect today from fear to faith, from depression to praise, from disbelief to acceptance that all things are possible to God. This is taking part in the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

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