

WORD FOR THE DAY: Celebration

April 4

Ecclesiastes 3:4 says there is a time and a season for everything, “a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance.”

The Easter season gives us the opportunity to experience this full range of feeling. The excitement of the Triumphal Entry is followed by the grief of Good Friday—which gives way to rejoicing at Christ’s Resurrection.

Lately, for believers, it seems that “weeping” and “mourning” have been more *en vogue* than “laughing” and “dancing.” Fasting, confession, and lament are emphasized as spiritual habits over the equally important practices of feasting, rejoicing, and celebrating.

Why should believers celebrate? For one thing, because we have a God who does! In Luke 15, Jesus tells three parables that reveal how our Father rejoices over the redemption of his children. As the parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the prodigal son all end with friends and neighbors joining together to celebrate the finding of what was once lost, so God calls for rejoicing in heaven over sinners who repent.

Believers should also celebrate because it is the overflow of genuine joy. And the empty tomb is cause for great rejoicing! It is the dawning of our hope—the reality that death is defeated and resurrection life is ours, now and forever, through Christ.

As we celebrate this truth at Easter, let our fasting turn to feasting, our weeping to laughing, and our mourning to dancing. These are holy practices too. For now in our celebrations, we anticipate the celebration to come, when we will join with all God’s people at the greatest feast and celebration of all—the marriage supper of the Lamb—where our Risen Savior and his bride the Church will be united, and our joy will overflow for all eternity!

REFLECTION

- How can you or your family make “rehearsing our coming joy” a motivation for your celebrations?

PRAYER FOR THE DAY

Father, You are the source of all joy! Help us rejoice in the resurrection of Jesus this Easter—let our celebration of this day be the genuine overflow of the joy in our hearts as we behold the wonder of the empty tomb and the reality of our salvation. Amen.