

Resource Packet

April 2019 - ATONEMENT

“The radical character of the Christian resurrection claim is found in its salvation-history perspective. The Christian claim that ‘Jesus arose from the dead’ or that Jesus is the ‘firstborn from the dead’ is a proclamation of a divine miracle of creation in that God has called back to life a new creature from the old, a new creation from the old, a new history from the old. In this sense, the resurrection claim essentially refers to the inauguration of a new future, a future that promises redemption and deliverance.

“The resurrection claim should mean to us that Jesus’ victory over death ushered in a new age, an age in which the almighty power of God is already fulfilled but not yet consummated, an age in which death is conquered but not yet abolished. This new age is an interim period in which this divine power in the form of the Holy Spirit is at work among us. In this interim period, this Holy Spirit can be understood as the Reality of Jesus Christ to be existentially appropriated by fallen human beings for life sustenance, self-formation, self-maturation and societal transformation.

“The significance of the resurrection claim within ‘true’ Christian descriptions of the self, world, and God is that, despite how tragic and hopeless present situations and circumstances appear to be, there is a God who sits high and looks low, a God who came into this filthy, fallen world in the form of a common peasant in order to commence a epoch, an epoch in which Easter focuses our attention on the decisive victory of Jesus Christ and hence the possibility of our victory over our creaturehood, the old creation and this old world, with its history of oppression and exploitation. So to be a Christian is to have a joyful attitude toward the resurrection claim, to stake one’s life on it and to rest one’s hope upon its promise - the promise of a new heaven and a new earth.”

- Cornell West, “A Philosophical View of Easter”

“The end of everything has come. Therefore, be self-controlled and clear-headed so you can pray. Above all, show sincere love to each other, because love brings about the forgiveness of many sins. Open your homes to each other without complaining. And serve each other according to the gift each person has received, as good managers of God’s diverse gifts.”

- I Peter 4:7-10

“Hang on, just hang on for a minute
I’ve got something to say
I’m not asking you to move on or forget it
But these are better days
To be wrong all along and admit is not amazing grace
But to be loved like a song you remember
Even when you’ve changed”

- Brandi Carlile, “That Wasn’t Me”

"We are the American heartbreak —
The rock on which Freedom
Stumped its toe —
The great mistake
That Jamestown made
Long ago."

- Langston Hughes, "American Heartbreak"

"Lord, I hear of showers of blessings,
Thou art scattering full and free;
Showers the thirsty souls refreshing,
Let some drops now fall on me!

Even me, Lord, even me.
Even me, Lord, even me.
Let some drops now fall on me!

Pass me not, O gentle savior,
Sinful though my heart may be;
I am longing for Thy favor,
Whilst thou art blessing, O bless me!

Even me, Lord, even me.
Even me, Lord, even me.
Whilst thou art blessing, O bless me!"

- Traditional Gospel, "Even Me"

"Once more Atonement Day has come. All pretense gone, naked heart revealed to the hiding self, we stand [sic] on holy ground, between the day that was and the one that must be. We tremble. At what did we aim? How did we stumble? What did we take? What did we give? To what were we blind [sic]? Last year's confession came easily to the lips. Will this year's come from deeper than the skin? Say then: Why are our paths strewn with promises like fallen leaves? Say then: When shall our lust be for wisdom? Say now: Love and truth shall meet; justice and peace shall embrace."

- Chaim Stern, "Atonement Day"

"I confess my own inner confusion as I look out upon the world. There is food for all - many are hungry. There are clothes enough for all - many are in rags. There is room enough for all - many are crowded. There are none who want war - preparations for conflict abound. Let Thy light burn in me that I may, from this moment on, take effective steps within my own powers, to live up to the light and courageously to pay for the kind of world I so deeply desire."

- Howard Thurman

“Sold me out for chicken change
Told me that they had it all arranged
You had me down, and that's a fact
Now you punk, you gotta get ready
For the big payback!”

- James Brown

“Free love? as if love is anything but free. Man has bought brains, but all the millions in the world have failed to buy love.”

- Emma Goldman

“Pastor, tell whoever you’ve been praying to that this is my body. It has been broken from what your followers have done to me. This blood has been spilled in remembrance of you. Pastor, where is my God? I have lost them...”

- J. Mase III

“The country in which reparations actually happen is a very different one than the one we live in.”

- Ta-Nehisi Coates

“When people think about reparations, they immediately think about people who’ve been dead for 100 years.”

- Ta-Nehisi Coates

“By and large, I’m starting to feel like, if somebody doesn’t want to fucking understand – excuse my language – if somebody can’t see the contradiction of saying all lives matter ... then they’re just wilfully being ignorant, and an asshole.”

- Alicia Garza

“To feel the anguish of waiting for the next moment and of taking part in the complex current (of affairs) not knowing that we are headed toward ourselves, through millions of stone beings – of bird beings – of star beings – of microbe beings – of fountain beings toward ourselves.”

- Frida Kahlo

“Stop telling people to reconcile, when you have no idea what it took for them to break free.”

- Zara Hairston

“There’s no way I can pay you back, but the plan is to show you that I understand. You are appreciated.”

- Tupac Shakur , “Dear Mama”

“When we share comfort, healing, forgiveness, and acceptance with one another, we become one together, leaning and depending on one another. As community, we learn that we do not have to bear our burdens alone. We have each other.”

- Zelda Kennedy

“Finally I am coming to the conclusion that my highest ambition is to be what I already am. That I will never fulfill my obligation to surpass myself unless I first accept myself, and if I accept myself fully in the right way, I will already have surpassed myself.”

- Thomas Merton

“But in the main, I feel like a brown bag of miscellany propped against a wall. Against a wall in company with other bags, white, red and yellow. Pour out the contents, and there is discovered a jumble of small things priceless and worthless. A first-water diamond, an empty spool, bits of broken glass, lengths of string, a key to a door long since crumbled away, a rusty knife-blade, old shoes saved for a road that never was and never will be, a nail bent under the weight of things too heavy for any nail, a dried flower or two still a little fragrant. In your hand is the brown bag. On the ground before you is the jumble it held--so much like the jumble in the bags, could they be emptied, that all might be dumped in a single heap and the bags refilled without altering the content of any greatly. A bit of colored glass more or less would not matter. Perhaps that is how the Great Stuffer of Bags filled them in the first place--who knows?”

- Zora Neale Hurston, “How it Feels to Be Colored Me”

“Put it this way: Jazz is a good barometer of freedom... In its beginnings, the United States of America spawned certain ideals of freedom and independence through which, eventually, jazz was evolved, and the music is so free that many people say it is the only unhampered, unhindered expression of complete freedom yet produced in this country.”

- Duke Ellington

“How far will have to go before we learn the lesson?
Gandhi was a Hindu, Martin Luther King, a Christian.
Regardless of religion, they knew love was the mission - and it all comes down to One.”

- India.Arie