



# AN UNEXPECTED JOURNEY

## MOPPING UP

As our time with JRR Tolkien comes to a close, we are in this awkward stage of already knowing that the resurrection has happened, and yet that we are still not living in a place of perfect community and reconciled relationship as was promised in both the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament. While there are a number of different ways to look at this time of tension, most biblical scholars refer to it as the already-not yet. We have been assured that through the example of Christ's life, death, and resurrection in conjunction with the wealth of knowledge that our beloved saints have left us along the way, we are capable of living as Easter people and helping to bring about the kingdom of God.

However, there is a challenge in this tension that we must face both as individuals and as a community of faith. We must proclaim that as people who believe in resurrection, we are also people who believe in an end to injustice and systems of oppression. In fact, we must be willing to step out and place ourselves in the proverbial "line of fire" from time to time if we are to make God's beloved community a reality, because if we don't we are effectively denying the restorative power of resurrection in the world.

This embrace of resurrection and reconciliation can be a counter-cultural and isolating experience if we allow it to be, and yet when we rely on our brothers and sisters in community, what seems to be an insurmountable task becomes a little more possible.

## WEEKLY CHALLENGE

As people in the tension of the "already-not yet" it can often feel overwhelming to know where to even start. This week, I challenge you to look back over the last few weeks and locate a place where you can actively work to bring about restoration and reconciliation in your community.

Are you willing to live as Easter people? Are you willing to proclaim a message of resurrection in a world that deeply needs to hear it?

**Additional Resources:** Please take a moment to either read or hear what Author Peter Rollins has to say about living as people that proclaim resurrection. [HTTP://VIMEO.COM/19258866](http://vimeo.com/19258866)

*Without equivocation or hesitation I fully and completely admit that I deny the resurrection of Christ. This is something that anyone who knows me could tell you, and I am not afraid to say it publicly, no matter what some people may think...*

*I deny the resurrection of Christ every time I do not serve at the feet of the oppressed, each day that I turn my back on the poor; I deny the resurrection of Christ when I close my ears to the cries of the downtrodden and lend my support to an unjust and corrupt system.*

*However there are moments when I affirm that resurrection, few and far between as they are. I affirm it when I stand up for those who are forced to live on their knees, when I speak for those who have had their tongues torn out, when I cry for those who have no more tears left to shed.*

**Daniel 9:20-25:** <sup>20</sup>While I was speaking, and was praying and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God on behalf of the holy mountain of my God— <sup>21</sup>while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen before in a vision, came to me in swift flight at the time of the evening sacrifice. <sup>22</sup>He came and said to me, 'Daniel, I have now come out to give you wisdom and understanding. <sup>23</sup>At the beginning of your supplications a word went out, and I have come to declare it, for you are greatly beloved. So consider the word and understand the vision: <sup>24</sup>'Seventy weeks are decreed for your people and your holy city: to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place. <sup>25</sup>Know therefore and understand: from the time that the word went out to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the time of an anointed prince, there shall be seven weeks; and for sixty-two weeks it shall be built again with streets and moat, but in a troubled time.

**Luke 10:17-20:** <sup>17</sup>The seventy returned with joy, saying, 'Lord, in your name even the demons submit to us!' <sup>18</sup>He said to them, 'I watched Satan fall from heaven like a flash of lightning. <sup>19</sup>See, I have given you authority to tread on snakes and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing will hurt you. <sup>20</sup>Nevertheless, do not rejoice at this, that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.'

- Scriptures from the New Revised Standard Version -

# REFLECTIONS