



## The Inner Meaning of the Paschal Greeting

We are forgiven, we are saved, we are redeemed. Christ is Risen! These words say everything: they are the foundation of our faith, hope, and love; of our Christian life; of all our wisdom and enlightenment; of the Holy Church, heartfelt prayer, and our entire future. These words destroy all human calamity, death, and evil; they give life, blessedness, and freedom! What miraculous power! Can one grow tired of repeating them? Christ is Risen! Can we ever have enough of hearing them? Christ is Risen!

But do we all understand the true meaning of these words: Christ is Risen? What does this mean: Christ is Risen? After all, Christ was risen neither today, nor yesterday, but many, many centuries ago. Who in our time can doubt that Christ indeed rose on the third day following His death? No one! In that case, to what are we witnessing when we respond to the greeting “Christ is Risen!” with the words “Truly He is Risen”? Are we witnessing only to our faith, or to something else as well?

Christians should participate in the very Resurrection of Christ. The Apostle Paul says: *And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins* (1 Corinthians 15:17). It follows that we are celebrating the greatest Christian feast day, the feast of all feasts, for Christianity itself is founded upon the Resurrection of Christ. But should our celebration be limited to observing the church rubrics and to our presence in church? Where is the inner, spiritual meaning of this feast? Can remembrance alone of the great and global event of the Resurrection of Christ bring us salvation?



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No, Christians should participate in the very Resurrection of Christ! Participate how? Through the Mystery of Confession and the Communion of the Holy Body and Live-Giving Blood of the Savior. During the days of Great Lent – the days of repentance, cleansing, and rebirth – we should renew our hearts in order to rise with Christ. Therefore, whoever has not participated in the very Resurrection of Christ has not understand and does not have within himself the true meaning of the words “Christ is Risen!” and the reply “Truly He is Risen!”

Likewise, the reply “Truly He is Risen!” alone does not demonstrate that we have the Resurrection of Christ in us and in our hearts. It is confirmed by joy in the Lord and demonstrated by love for Christ. Whoever loves, remembers God’s love and has no doubt in it. But remember, beloved brothers and sisters, how in your recent confession you repented for sometimes murmuring against God and for doubting His mercy; remember how you accused the Lord for your undeserved sorrows and unbearable sufferings; and even for the unwillingness to hear your prayers!

Remember how, living in sin, you were inclined to think the Lord merciless, both deaf and blind to your woes and needs! But now, having united with Christ, do you recognize that He is a God of love and mercy, and not of punishment? If you have indeed recognized this truth, then you have undoubtedly understood God in His designs and loved the Lord with a pure heart. Then Christ is risen in you, and you can now consciously reply to the joyful Christian greeting “Christ is Risen!” with the words “Truly He is Risen!” Amen.

*Translated from the [Russian](#).*