May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing to you, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer. Amen.

Over the last several years my thinking concerning Easter has become more and more simplified. I don’t spend nearly as much time trying to understand, explain, or make sense of what happened.

You know the story as well as I do. Jesus died on a cross. He was laid in a tomb. It was sealed. On the third day the “very large stone” over the entrance was rolled back. Women go looking for the body. A messenger says, “*He has been raised; he is not here*” (Mk 16:6b). The tomb is empty and Christ is risen.

I have no explanations for any of that. But I have experiences of that. I’ve seen it happen in my life and I hope you saw in your lives too.

* Have you ever had new insights into your life, a new way of seeing the world, another person, or yourself? Every blind man whose eyes were opened by Jesus experienced new life, a resurrection.
* Have you ever felt stuck, and without energy or direction in life? Remember the lame man and Jesus saying, “*Stand up, take your mat and walk?*” (Mt 9:6). That’s resurrection.
* What about Jesus cleansing the temple? Haven’t there been times when you cleaned out and made a new start? Maybe that was your resurrection.
* Have you ever felt the presence of a loved one who has died? You knew she or he was there. Maybe you spoke to him or heard her voice. More resurrection.
* What about the raising of Lazarus? “*Unbind him and let him go*” (Jn 11: 44b), Jesus said. When has your life been unbound? When have you experienced a new freedom that released and enlarged your life?
* Have you ever had a relationship that you were sure could not be salvaged? There was nothing left. The hurt was too deep and the distance too wide. And then one day a letter is sent, a phone call is made, or a conversation is started. Something changes and the stone is rolled back.

These kind of things are happening all time in thousands of ways. I’ve come to believe that there are really only two questions to be asked about the Easter story.

**The First question: Is it still true?** Is this story true in your life and my life today? That’s the question we bring to this day. It’s not because we think the story might have changed since last year. It’s because our story has changed. Our life is different today from what it was last Easter, and we want to be reminded that Easter is still real.

Regardless of who you are, what you’ve done, or left undone, Easter is still happening. You can count on it. The story was true yesterday, it is true today, and it will be true tomorrow. It may take months or even years for resurrection to free us from the tomb and pull us out of the darkness but it will. That is the promise of today. God never leaves anyone in the darkness of the tomb.

The large stones of our lives are being rolled back. Our tombs are being emptied. And the messenger is still proclaiming the good news, “*He has been raised; he is not here. He is going ahead of you*” (Mk 16:6-7), said the young man dressed in a white robe to the women. He is going ahead of us rolling back stones, emptying tombs, preparing new places, and calling forth life.

Easter happens in the Galilee of our lives: the hometown, the familiar places, the usual relationships, the ordinary circumstances. Easter happens in the everydayness of life. And that brings me to my **Second question: what will you do with your new and precious life?**

“*He has been raised; he is not here.” “He is going ahead of you to Galilee*.”

If we leave here today the same people we were as when we came we’ve missed the point of this day. Easter isn’t the annual remembrance and celebration of an event in history. It’s here and now. It’s a new way of being. It is a new way of living. Easter is less a noun and more a verb. So, tell me this. What will Eastering look like for you tomorrow? How will we now live differently? If this new life and freedom do not change us we might as well put the stone back over the tomb. If we leave here today and don’t think about Easter again until next year then we’ve entirely missed the gift. Our lives are the evidence of resurrection, or not.

Today reminds us that the light of resurrection always prevails. Darkness cannot overcome the light. Regardless of who you are, the light prevails. Regardless of what you have done or left undone, the light prevails. Regardless of your doubts or beliefs, the light prevails. Regardless of your life’s circumstances, the light prevails. I can’t tell you how it happens but I know it does. The light of resurrection always wins. Amen.