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Resurrection Eyes
I Corinthians 15: 45

It has been over a year or so now, and I don't even have nightmares about it any more.
But I do think about it.
I was running up Hawthorne, coming up toward the church, right in front of the Braggs' office building, crossing Fourth Street just as the light was changing. There were a couple of cars stuck out in the left lane, sure to make their turn once the light changed and the oncoming traffic cleared,
which meant they would provide safe cover for me as I snuck across the road, too.
Over fifteen years I am sure that I have pulled the same stunt five hundred times at the same spot.

Only this time was different.
A red truck suddenly came barreling up behind these cars stuck out in the left lane,
and its driver apparently decided that he didn't want to wait for the next light.
Flooring his accelerator, he swerved right into the next lane, in front of the car on the right that had already stopped, then came hurtling through the intersection. The only impediment to his progress was me.
They say that as you die, your life passes in front of you, but I have no recollection of that.
I stood, paralyzed with sheer terror, as this red truck traveling at least sixty or so, rocketed toward me, a few feet away. I couldn't dive, or even blink.
All I had time to think was, "*You are a dead man.*"

But give the devil his due. As he had swerved right at high speed in front of one car to enter the intersection, in an instant, he now veered left to miss me by a whisker.
I was so paralyzed, that I didn't even have time to turn and catch his license plate. But as I glanced to my right, there was a Presbyterian nurse, who was just opening her eyes, not wanting to see the inevitable carnage. When she opened her eyes and saw that I was still alive, whole and standing before her,
she looked as if she had seen a ghost; I gave her a smile and a wink and ran on my way.
Funny how the world looks at such a moment. I suddenly had resurrection eyes.
The little flowers, scant splashes of color that I normally ignore, I paused to notice.
I heard the chirping of birds, sounds that I normally don't register.
Every blade of glass was a curiosity.
I relished the warmth of the sun, and I realized that sometimes merely the act of living is a sheer joy.
Resurrection eyes remind you that at the base of all spirituality is the experience of wonder.
As I went on my way, I could not help but repeat the prayer with which I begin every day:
"I thank you my Lord, for another day of life."

Creative and enduring spiritual expressions come from people who sense God's presence
in the heights and depths of everyday experience.
They emanate from people who for some reason have been given resurrection eyes.
I think of a man born to incredibly rich, accomplished parents, the son of British industrialists,
a young man who put all his privilege aside so he could become an overseas missionary,
much to his friends' and family's consternation.
He wanted something special to sing on Trinity Sunday that might inspire his people,
so he penned immortal words that we still sing today: "Holy, Holy, Hoy, Lord God, Almighty . . . "

His name was Reginald Heber. He drowned upon having a stroke while swimming.
I think of a man in love with a beautiful young woman, engaged to be married to her,
only to watch her die in a tragic accident. He dedicated his life to working with handicapped people,
and finally fell in love with another beautiful girl, only to lose her to an untimely death, too.
The man's name was Joseph Scriven, and if you look in your hymn book,
you'll find that he wrote the words to the hymn, "What a Friend We Have in Jesus."
He managed to see his existence with resurrection eyes and counseled us, "Never be discouraged."
There was a headstrong young woman who had been commissioned as a missionary,
only to be informed that there were not funds sufficient to send her.
So she went to church in a dark and gloomy mood only to hear some saint whom she greatly respected
rise and pray, " Oh my Lord, whatever happens to us, have Thine own way with us."
Adelaide Pollard went home that afternoon to compose a poem with those words as her theme,
thus viewing her frustrated existence in a completely fresh manner.
Each of these people in the living of everyday life, often painful, devastating life,
found the ability to see the world with resurrection eyes.

To come to the Lord's Supper on the Sunday after Easter seems so right.
When we come to our Lord's table on Maundy Thursday, the mood is dark, our attention riveted
to the encroaching darkness that settles around that Gethsemane night like an enveloping tragic fog.
The elements of the Supper point our attention on Maundy Thursday to the sacrificial nature of God's love,
but to celebrate the Supper on the Sunday after Easter is to be reminded
that our God is not only a God of sorrows, but ultimately and also a God of joy.
We eat the bread symbolic of our Lord's broken body, drink the cup symbolic of our Lord's spilled blood,
But we do so with eyes of resurrection and expectation, looking with Easter eyes "until he comes."
We are always to have Easter eyes when we celebrate the Supper,
looking forward to our Lord's coming in His fullness.
On Maundy Thursday when we celebrate the Supper,
we are aware that we are children of Adam,
mortal, weak, vulnerable, and flawed.
But on this Sunday after Easter, as we partake of our Lord's table,
we are reminded that we are children of the second Adam,
who is a life-giving Spirit, and who nurtures and equips us for eternity and fellowship with our God.
In Adam, all died. In Christ, shall all be made alive.
May the elements of this Supper give us resurrection eyes to see the wonder of our lives.

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