

- Today = 3<sup>rd</sup> after Easter, still contemplating RESURRECTION!
- Familiar with opposite complements? *Schadenfreude*, joy at someone else's pain. "Parting is such sweet sorrow, That I shall say good night till it be morrow."<sup>1</sup>
- Attended a funeral yesterday, glorious! A common message of sad hope, joyful sorrow, expectant loss. Not hope as in, "Maybe, maybe not". But hope as in, "soon, I just don't know exactly when".
- Remember the context of John 16: last moments before betrayal, torture, death, burial. The gospel lesson (John 16:16–22) presents an apparently contradictory picture of emotion and expectation.
  - Presence / absence (16)
  - Sorrow / joy and then a reversal thereof (20)
  - Impermanence / permanence (22)
- Kind of fitting, don't you think, in light of the events of the past week?
- Seems like a series of blows, one after another:
  - Helen
  - Liz
  - Bob
  - Every staff member struggling with a health problem, but one
- *But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. (1 Thessalonians 4:13)*
- *We remember before you Lord, all your servants departed this life in faith and fear: and we bless your holy Name for all who in life and death have glorified you; praying that you will give us grace that, rejoicing in their fellowship, we may follow their good examples, and with them be partakers of your heavenly kingdom.*

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<sup>1</sup> "Romeo And Juliet", Act 2, Scene 2, 176–185.

- Fitting hymns

- **Jesus Lives And So Shall I**

Jesus lives, and so shall I.  
Death! thy sting is gone forever!  
He who deigned for me to die,  
Lives, the bands of death to sever.  
He shall raise me from the dust:  
Jesus is my Hope and Trust.

Jesus lives, and reigns supreme,  
And, his kingdom still remaining,  
I shall also be with him,  
Ever living, ever reigning.  
God has promised: be it must:  
Jesus is my Hope and Trust.

Jesus lives, and by his grace,  
Vict'ry o'er my passions giving,  
I will cleanse my heart and ways,  
Ever to his glory living.  
Me he raises from the dust.  
Jesus is my Hope and Trust.

Jesus lives, I know full well  
Nought from him my heart can sever,  
Life nor death nor powers of hell,  
Joy nor grief, hence forth forever.  
None of all his saints is lost;  
Jesus is my Hope and Trust.

Jesus lives, and death is now  
But my entrance into glory.  
Courage, then, my soul, for thou  
Hast a crown of life before thee;  
Thou shalt find thy hopes were just;  
Jesus is the Christian's Trust.

- **The Strife Is O'er**

The strife is o'er, the battle done;

The victory of life is won;  
The song of triumph has begun: Alleluia!

*Refrain*

*Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!*

The powers of death have done their worst;  
But Christ their legions hath dispersed;  
Let shouts of holy joy outburst: Alleluia!

The three sad days are quickly sped;  
He rises glorious from the dead;  
All glory to our risen Head! Alleluia!

He closed the yawning gates of hell;  
The bars from heaven's high portals fell;  
Let hymns of praise His triumphs tell! Alleluia!

Lord, by the stripes which wounded Thee,  
From death's dread sting Thy servants free,  
That we may live, and sing to Thee: Alleluia!

- The Narnia series ends with a train wreck—and the revelation that it was only the beginning of the true story, "which goes on forever, and in which every chapter is better than the one before."
- Bob is saying (like the Unicorn in Narnia Chronicles): "I have come home at last! This is my real country! I belong here. This is the land I have been looking for all my life, though I never knew it till now. The reason why we loved the old Narnia is that it sometimes looked a little like this. Come further up, come further in!"<sup>2</sup>
- A joyful sadness. I find it hard to imagine Bob's voice no longer in my ear—at least, not yet!
- Lessons:
  - If the gospel is real: would you really want to stay here? And if you did want to stay here, why? For those you love! Go out today and tell someone you love that knowing and following Jesus is the most important thing that they will ever do.

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<sup>2</sup> *Chronicles of Narnia*, "The Last Battle".

- Don't grieve as those without hope. Think about the message of John 16.