

# ***PRAISE INTERNATIONAL***

## ***Paschal Sermon***

### ***Acts 10:34-43 OT Reading Isaiah 25:6-9***

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Christ is Risen

Last week we gave an update on the El Salvador Mercy offering – we have now topped last week!

Before I go into this weeks message I want to attempt to summarize something about last weeks message on the Posture of Jesus. I realized after last weeks message that one might conclude that I was suggesting that the Posture of Jesus was without Power. Jesus Power was and always will expressed in Grace and Truth with specific destination Love. His goal is not to overpower you and force but to invite – while I will not take time to develop this can be seen in this matrix – Grace and Truth – Hang out ( everyone is happy) – Check out ( I don't care) and Call out ( overpower to secure the outcome). Grace and Truth are about Love!

This week I want to share what is known in much of the Church as the Easter Paschal Homily (sermon) it was written by **St. John Chrysostom** most estimate about 400 AD. He was a Church Father and considered an excellent theologian and teacher.

In the Eastern Orthodox tradition it is repeated every Easter – its almost as if to agree that it cannot be improved.

- This ancient sermon is all about Jesus!
  - After he died, went to Hell and completely disempowered it, leaving Hell and its demons **“embittered.”** This word, repeated several times, means “resentful.”
  - Such is the reaction of one who has been deceived, or tricked.
  - This speaks of the “Christus Victor” theory of atonement in which Jesus comes to earth posing as a human (and hence a sinner), but when he dies and goes to Hell (as all humans/sinners must), and then He reveals his true identity!
  - He's now able to bring the full power of God to destroying Hell's hold on all creation.
  - Overcoming Death by Death – defeating Sin by becoming Sin.

**This sermon is not to be just “preached.”**

- There is considerable intended **“audience participation.”**
  - **Every time the speaker says "embittered," the congregation is to repeat it.**
  - **Same with the word "risen."**
  - **And every time the word "dead" or "death" is spoken,**
    - The congregation stomps its feet, just like Jesus stomped on Hell.
    - It is a bit of a reminder of the **festival of Purim and the traditional reading of the Book of Esther**; there the Jewish congregation is to stomp its feet and boo and hiss and shake noisemakers every time the name of the villain Haman is mentioned.

**Traditionally no sits during the reading the Sermon:**

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*And the secret is simply this Christ in you!  
Yes, Christ in you bringing with Him the hope of all the glorious things to come.*

*Col 1:27b JB Phillips*

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PASCHAL HOMILY

by St. John Chrysostom (d. 407 CE)

(First paragraph responsive)

**If any be a devout lover of God,**

let him partake with gladness from this fair and radiant feast.

**If any be a faithful servant,**

let him enter rejoicing into the joy of his Lord.

**If any have wearied himself with fasting,**

let him now enjoy his reward.

**If any have laboured from the first hour,**

let him receive today his rightful due.

**If any have come after the third,**

let him celebrate the feast with thankfulness.

**If any have come after the sixth,**

let him not be in doubt, for he will suffer no loss.

**If any have delayed until the ninth,**

let him not hesitate but draw near.

**If any have arrived only at the eleventh,**

let him not be afraid because he comes so late.

**For the Master is generous and accepts the last even as the first.**

He gives rest to him who comes at the eleventh hour

just as to him who has labored from the first.

He has mercy upon the last and cares for the first;

to the one He gives, and to the other He is gracious.

He both honors the work and praises the intention.

**Enter all of you, therefore, into the joy of our Lord, and,**

whether first or last, receive your reward.

O rich and poor, one with another, dance for joy!

O you ascetics and you negligent, celebrate the day!

You who fasted and you who have not fasted, rejoice together.

The table is rich-laden: feast royally, all of you!

The calf is fatted: let no one go away hungry!

**( Get Ready for Actions and Repetition)**

Let all partake of the feast of faith.

Let all receive the riches of goodness.

Let no one lament their poverty,

for the universal kingdom has been revealed.

Let no one mourn their transgressions,

for the light of forgiveness has **risen (repeat)** from the tomb.

**Let no one fear death, (stomp)**

for the **death (stomp)** of the Saviour has set us free.

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*Col 1:27b JB Phillips*

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He has destroyed **death (stomp)**, by undergoing **death (stomp)**.

He descended into Hades and took Hades captive!

He **embittered (repeat)** it when it tasted His flesh!

And anticipating this, Isaiah exclaimed:

*"Hades was embittered (repeat) when it encountered Thee in the lower regions". (Isaiah 14:9 Hebrew)*

- It was **embittered,(repeat)** for it was brought to nothing!
- It was **embittered,(repeat)** for it was mocked!
- It was **embittered,(repeat)** for it was overthrown!
- It was **embittered,(repeat)** for it was despoiled!
- It was **embittered, (repeat)** for it was put in chains!

Hell received a body and encountered God!

It received earth and confronted Heaven!

It took what it saw,

but crumbled before what it had not seen!

O **Death**, (stomp) where is thy sting?

O Hell, where is thy victory?

**Christ is risen! (repeat)** And you, o **death**,(stomp) are annihilated!

**Christ is risen! (repeat)** And the demons has fallen!

**Christ is risen! (repeat)** And the angels rejoice!

**Christ is risen! (repeat)** And Life reigns!

**Christ is risen! (repeat)** And not one dead (stomp) remains in a tomb;  
for Christ having risen from the dead,(stomp)

has become the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep.

**To Him be Glory and Power, now and forever, and from all ages to all ages.**

**Amen!**

#### **Closing Prayer**

We exalt in your love,

O God of the living,

for you made the tomb of death

the womb from which you bring forth your Son,

the first-born of a new creation,

and you anointed the universe

with the fragrant Spirit of his resurrection.

Make us joyful witnesses to this good news,

that all humanity may one day

gather at the feast of new life

in the kingdom where you reign

for ever and ever. Amen.

#### **Communion**

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*And the secret is simply this Christ in you!*

*Yes, Christ in you bringing with Him the hope of all the glorious things to come.*

*Col 1:27b JB Phillips*

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