

Your Life is filled with so much irony, what appears to be one thing on the surface can be radically different. Look at all these beautiful people, look good, smell nice. Most of you. But on the inside it's more complicated, isn't it. Sinfully complicated and yet ironically, you are holy by His declaration, baptized into His death and resurrection, but it doesn't seem like it.

Consider before you the finest pastor in the history of Risen Savior; one of the top 5 vicars. But there's always more to the story. I may end up being the worse you've had, considering who comes after me.

Life is not always as it seems, is it? More to the story. The Passion of Our Lord is full of irony:

-Jesus calls His horrific death, His glory. -Betrayed with a sign of affection.

-accused of blasphemy, while the accusers committed blasphemy, failing to worship Him.

-The people confessed Jesus deserves to die according to the Law; true, but not as they meant.

-Also the high priest said it was expedient that one man should die for the people. True, but not in the way he meant. -Legitimate trials for Jewish people cannot take place in darkness.

-Greatest of situational irony, the will of the Father is the same as the mob. The Father wants Barabbas go free; Jesus to die in his place.

-The people ask for Jesus Blood to be on them and their children, killing Him is a just act; they're right but not in the way they meant. -He's pronounced innocent 5x, still condemned to death.

-No epitaph, ever been so true, no accusation so precise, the mocking charge of Pilate: "Jesus of Nazareth King of the Jews." -Even the devil was used by God for good.

-For this most evil, unjust of all acts, the greatest good in all creation.

How, where God loved the world, saved even the likes of you.

-The irony throughout is caused by contrast between the good, gracious will of our Father and the sinful, evil intentions of people. What is meant for evil, God always uses for good for His people. That irony happens even in your days.

Your life is full of irony, when you don't realize all that's yours, live, act like it. What did that angels declare to you today, **remember how He told you.**

Life is not as it seems. In 1815, a message was received in England, "Wellington defeated." The entire nation goes into state of mourning, what now? Their hero, army done. The next day after the fog lifted, the full message revealed, "Wellington defeated...Napoleon at Waterloo." Your entire reality changes, more to the story. Like the women, disciples saw horrific death, defeat; then historical fact, their Savior is alive. Life not as it had seemed, as for you as well, your entire reality changes. **Remember what He told you.**

As from our Lord's passion, perhaps the greatest true story of irony: A pastor, death-row inmate walked to the gallows together. The criminal stood above the trapdoor. Moments later, it would open to rope him into eternity. An officer asked, any final words. "I place all my confidence in the Lamb who made atonement for my sins. God have mercy on my soul," he said. He turned toward the man who'd been the shepherd of his soul, his confessor, preacher, the one whose hand he received the body, blood of Jesus in the Supper. To this pastor, said, "I'll see you again." Then noosed, hooded, dropped out of this world into another. Many similar scenarios like this in history. Condemned men found repentance, faith when certain death loomed.

What makes this so remarkable, so ironic -this man, others hanged that day, the most hated men in human history. Guilty of atrocities

so horrific. These were Hitler's men, closest confidants. Yet in the months leading up to their executions, many of them had been transformed from Hitler's wolves into Christ's lambs.

God worked through a farm boy from Missouri, who grew up to be an LCMS pastor, reluctant chaplain to 15 Protestant war criminals during the Nuremberg trials. Pr. Gerecke went, cell by cell, to introduce himself, invited them to chapel services. 15 chairs set up, 13 filled. Liturgy, hymns, prayers, hearts were changed. He catechized them. Lips once barked, "Heil Hitler!" now "Amen" as they knelt to receive the Sacrament.

When word came Pr Gerecke was going to be sent home, they wrote a letter to Mrs. Gerecke, begged her, have him stay. On that letter, signatures of all these former Nazis; had great power, rank now humbly beseeching an America housewife, who hadn't seen her husband in 3 years, let him stay. Her brief reply to husband, "They need you." A whole volume about sacrifice and love.

How ironic, these evil men, now in paradise. The scandal of Christianity is not these men went to heaven; but God loved them so much He dies to get them there, to draw them unto Himself. In 1961, Pr Gerecke died, entered the innumerable company of saints who'd gone before him, like one that said "I'll see you again." And he did.

The irony you live. People can truly change by the power of God's Word.

The irony of a cemetery. We've all suffered a death; a dear loved one, grandparent, parent, spouse, child, miscarriage. As the women Easter morn were told, resounds unto you, **remember how He told you.** Your entire reality changed. **Remember how He told you. I am resurrection and life, whoever lives and believes in me will never die.** Which of us don't long to touch His nail scarred hands that brought us forgiveness, peace. You will hold your loved one again for eternity. Their voice you still remember, you will hear again. Their warm embrace, again.

All God wants to do is give you everything. Think on that fa moment. All God wants to do is give you everything. Why don't we believe that? Well, because we don't have everything... or do we? How ironic we live, think, about family, friends, money, house, job, stuff. If God give us our whole inheritance now, all our hearts desire of things; we'd waste it, hurt ourselves like the prodigal son we heard a few weeks ago.

Ironic. You think you don't have much family. How often you think you're alone, that no one cares for you, that you're not loved, think God's not involved in your issues.

Ironic the way we act, often our homes don't seem like they're filled with baptized people living in the wake of Jesus death and resurrection.

In Christ, you have, right now, all things. What more is needed. You have Christ, His works given to you, you, a forgiven, baptized child, heir of His kingdom. The only love and truth and life this world has ever known, is yours. Why do you not live like it. How ironic you spend so much time, so much anxiety, so much effort, as if it's not true.

How can immortality, resurrection not change everything for you. Your life from water, blood from His pierced side.

**Remember how He told you.** He bears your burden, comforts you, will never leave you.

**Remember how He told you.** Repent, bask in the forgiveness of sins. Bask in the beautiful reality of this day. **Remember how he told you.** You will never die. Death is dead. He did it all for you to spend eternity with Him, your loved ones in Christ. I'll see you again is true.

**Remember how He told you,** that is the answer to all of your life's irony, the answer for your greatest needs. He is risen just as He said. The Lord is risen!