

## Easter

What strikes you most about the presentation of the gospel's grand event and miracle is how understated the whole thing is.

Most churches on Easter morning do far, far more to pull out all the stops, blare the brass band, and ratchet up the drama to fever pitch than any of the four evangelists ever tried to do. There is joy and holy drama here, make no mistake.

But there is something marvelous about its understated nature. As someone once noted, when you present a triumphal event in non-triumphal fashion, you create a sense of irony that, in turn, creates a community of those who truly understand the deeper meaning of it all.

The fact is that like his entire ministry, so even the capstone event of the whole gospel happened quietly and out of this world's limelight.

The gospel gets revealed to women, to clueless former fishermen, to all those whom the wider world regards as bumpkins and the marginalized.

There is something glorious to behold in the fact that King Herod and Pontius Pilate, though they had been deeply involved in the machinations of all that led to Jesus' death, now simply disappear out of the frame once Jesus is raised.

Jesus came, died, and rose again not for this world's winners who are always so cocksure that they have everything under control but

rather for all those lost, least, last, and lonely folks who know that without an infusion of divine grace into their lives, there is flat out no hope.

Thanks be to God the gospel gives us just what we need: not brass choirs and fireworks in the sky but new life way down in the deepest parts of our hearts.

### On Redemption

The catholic priest Erasmus two centuries ago wrote these powerful words:

How much more wonderful the work of redemption is, in comparison with creation. It is more marvelous that God was made man than that He created the angels; that He wailed in a stable than that He reigns in the heavens.

The creation of the world was a *work of power*, but the redemption of the world was a *work of mercy*.

### Where the Fire Cannot Reach

Corrie Ten Boom put it like this: "In the forest fire, there is always one place where the fire cannot reach. It is the place where the fire has already burned itself out.

Calvary is the place where the fire of God's judgment against sin burned itself out completely. It is there that we are safe."