

falls on the truth of Jesus' resurrection. So the
respond to the proclamation of the young man in the
gospel of the Easter vigil? He says to the women, "[Jesus] has been raised."

Do we believe him or not?

Now, listen to this wisdom í .

It has been said that, "*We keep moving forward, opening new doors, and doing new things, because we're creatures and*

... curiosity keeps leading us down new paths." © Walt Disney (1901-1966)

If we believe in the Resurrection what are we doing about this new reality?

Are we moving forward?

Three old friends had just arrived in heaven. As part of their orientation, St. Peter asked what they'd most like to hear their friends say at their funerals which were still pending.

"I'd like to hear them say I was a good doctor & a good family man," said the first.

"I'd like to hear that I was a wonderful husband & great teacher," said the second.

"Those both sound terrific," said the third,

í "but I'd like to hear them say, 'Hey, look, he's moving!'"

(Clark, *Sunday Mornings 2*, Easter 5B, What Would They Say?*)

Are we moving into the Resurrection and what would we like people to say at our funerals? ****If we died today, what could they say that was true?*** He was the smartest guy in his graduating class. She was the cutest girl in the 2nd grade. She was the finest doctor in town. He was the best teacher in the school. He built the most beautiful church in our diocese. **And so on**

All good things, and all of it could be true about us. Yet, none of it gets to the heart of what Jesus is talking about when he tells us to *go out and bear good fruit*. None of those things will last: Not smart or cute or doctor or teacher or builder.

These things will run their course and disappear.

There's only one thing that lasts, one thing that we can carry with us when we go home to God, ***and that is our loves***. To be clear, not our sentiments, which are passing fancies, but our loves. ***True love is a doer not a talker***. It helps the most important thing in the world to happen: It helps people to flourish and to thrive.

And that is the good fruit that Jesus will be looking for from us.

Wishing won't make this happen. We need to be proactive.

To build LOVE we need a plan. It begins with learning *the habit of seeing how much our words & deeds affect other people*. It's amazing, but most of us do not recognize the impact we have on others. The fact is that from moment to moment we are either adding or taking away life and joy from the people around us.

We've simply got to start being aware and seeing reality differently.

2 Next, we need to build *the habit of asking the key question* before we speak or act: Will this help my neighbor to thrive - or not? The answer will usually be

to do. Will we do it? We will, *if* we ask the
or the very *act of asking* the question from the
and gives us his power to do what is necessary.

Truthfully, we must admit that we cannot “do it all” by ourselves. We will not be useful, productive or successful unless we connect our lives to the mission & power of Jesus, the Risen Lord. We are *branches* of the main vine, as Jesus tells us in today's Gospel account: *I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing.* Living connected to Jesus will always give our lives meaning, í purpose, direction and infinite value.

So there is the question: are we connected to Jesus? Or are we just in the same general neighborhood? The answer is probably very clear to those around us.

If we are connected to Jesus, we'll value the things that God values, the things that really matter. **And, most of the time, our deeds will match our words.**

If we're connected we'll see ourselves as Jesus sees us, with love & compassion, but with no illusions. And that's the way we'll see one another, with love and compassion, but with no illusions.

If we are connected to Jesus, we will even *surprise ourselves* with the brave and noble deeds that rise from our hearts almost without thinking. Acting ***boldly in the name of Jesus***, just as Paul & Barnabas did, we'll wonder for a moment where did all that goodness and courage come from? *And, then we'll know.*

It came from God who shapes history through us!

(*Ideas: *Sunday Morning*, Clark, 5th Easter)

We are different now í .

Children, let us not live in word and speech, but in deed and truth. 1 John

At this Resurrection Liturgy of the Vine, connected to the Risen Lord Jesus Christ, let us *keep moving* forward into the Resurrection Reality of a world reborn,

í let us open new doors, walk down new paths

... and make some history!

(How's that for a final act!!!)