

"ALIVE AND ANEW TO GROW IN LIVING GRACE!"

MAY 2, 2021 - THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

ACTS 8:26-40; 1 JOHN 4:7-21; JOHN 15:1-8

Promises for your pocket or purse - Take notes and carry them with you.

Do you have trees and shrubs and bushes in your yard? Do you have a garden, where you watch life come to life? Spring is a great time to witness new growth. Where will a flower blossom next? Where will a new shoot on the tree begin? Where will the vine branch off to? As we continue the glory and power of the resurrection, we are reminded that Easter is not Easter without those who followed and those who believed. The Good News is final in and of itself; and yet, the Good News means more for those who hear it, know it, believe it, and live by it. The Holy Spirit is alive everywhere. Jesus arose so that we would know 'he is with us always, even to the close of the age.' And yet, Jesus tells Mary, 'be a living branch,' go and tell. In Acts, we hear Philip is told, 'to be alive, to be a living branch.' Being a living branch for Jesus Christ is not easy. May we be alive and anew, to grow in the living grace of The Risen Christ, to go out on a limb trusting The One who says, 'I am the vine, you are the branches, abide in me, grow, be alive and anew, now and forever!'

1. God raises Jesus from the dead to raise us up to be alive and anew, to grow in the living grace of The One who says, "I am the vine, you are the branches." Let us trust we are alive and anew to grow, to go out on a limb, and to be branches of the vine. John 15:5
 - A. We are alive and anew in The Risen Christ, to grow, to be a branch, to go out on a limb, and to bear fruit. Acts 8:29-34; 1 John 4:7, 11, 19-21; John 15:2
 - B. We are alive and anew in The Risen Christ, to grow, to be a branch, to go out on a limb, to be a healthy branch, which might require some pruning. John 15:2
 - C. We are alive and anew in The Risen Christ, to grow, to be a branch, to go out on a limb, and yet, to stay attached, to abide in the vine. Acts 8:35-38; 1 John 4:16-18; John 15:4,6-7
 - D. We are alive and anew in The Risen Christ, to grow, to be a branch, to go out on a limb, and to live for the vine, as the vine lives for the branches. Acts 8:35; John 15:1, 8

2. God raises Jesus from the dead to raise us up to be alive and anew, and to grow in the living grace of The One who says, "I am the vine and you are the branches." Let us be raised up to trust we are alive and we are not now, and not ever, on our own. John 15:5
 - A. We are alive and anew, to be branches. We do not need to be vines; only branches, simply branches, powerful branches, blessed branches, of The Greatest Vine. Let us trust we are alive, to grow, to go out on a limb, trusting the vine. John 15:1
 - B. Thanks be to God, the vine is faithful, and going nowhere. The vine is faithful and will keep us alive and strong. This vine is faithful, and these vine's branches, you, are alive and anew; you will live forever, for Christ is risen, risen indeed! Alleluia! 1 John 4:8-9, 19; John 15:1,5