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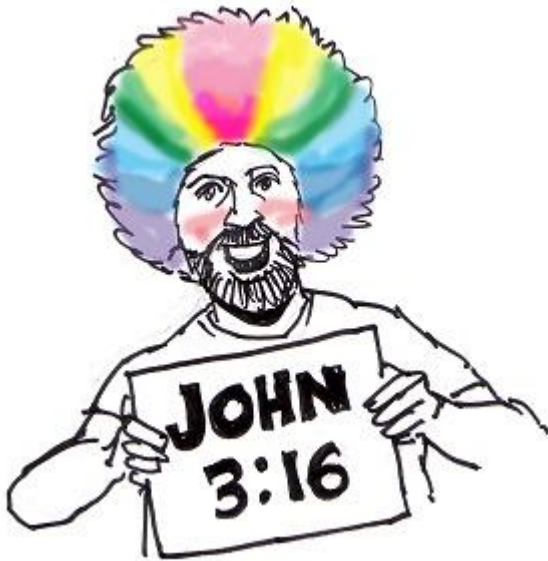
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“Whoever lives the truth comes to the light” (John 3:21).

[Acts 5:17-26](#); *John 3:16-21*

Jesus tells Nicodemus he must be reborn to enter God’s kingdom. Rebirth is new creation by the breath of the Spirit. The Spirit comes like the wind, mysterious and beyond our control. To these metaphors Jesus adds light. To grasp this mystery, Nicodemus, who came in the dark of night for fear of his fellow Pharisees, must now step into the light. Without light, we are blind to the gift God offers, and we stumble through life searching for earthly meaning and motivation. But only the light of faith can guide us to God and eternal life.

This scene in John’s Gospel, has summarized the Gospel so well that verse 3:16 has merited a rainbow-haired man sitting in the stands with a sign behind home plate at many baseball games. Look up the verse and you will have the essence of Christian transformation. The fourth Gospel offers this truth not as an idea but as a lived reality within the faith communities springing up everywhere because of the preaching ministry of the Apostles. The death and resurrection of Jesus are the light, breath and rebirth happening for believers every day.

What Jesus accomplished on the cross and from the tomb is being repeated for the Apostles. Imprisoned by the Sanhedrin for preaching in the temple, they walk free from the locked and guarded jail. This is the power of the resurrection: Apostles cowering in a locked room are now fearless evangelists. Nothing can contain the Gospel. This freedom is a sign that God’s love has been poured out to save a broken, blind and conflicted world. Instead of judgment, God sent the Beloved One

to save the world, not condemn it. The first words of the Gospel are “Don’t be afraid.”

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