

The Resurrection

“He is not here, He is risen.” With those simple words the angels of God announced the most incredible event in all of history. That announcement declared a victory over death that would not only change the course of history but would have meaning for all eternity. He who had been declared dead was not only alive but was alive forever more. He was not merely revived to life to once again die but He was resurrected to never again face death. The grave could not hold him. Satan was defeated, life everlasting was now possible. What a glorious event.

God’s Word tells us the resurrection was planned before the foundations of the world were established. God had a plan that, should man need redemption from sin, the Son of God Himself would come to dwell among us, taking upon Himself our sins and die in our place. His death and His resurrection were planned. There was never any doubt about it as far as God was concerned. There was never any possibility that Satan could win. Throughout the Old Testaments the prophets said it would happen. Once Jesus was here among us, He too predicted it. Read John 2:19.

God promised it and on that first Easter morning that which was a promise became a fact of history. Death was defeated as Jesus came forth from the grave. Nothing else that has ever, or ever will happen in history, is cause for greater rejoicing. Life abundant and life eternal, both of which were promised by God, are now possible. He lives and that alone will make all the difference.

What does that resurrection mean to us? First, it means fellowship with God because the sentence of our sin that separated us from Him has been paid in full. No longer need we stand before God as sinners under judgment but we can, simply by accepting the provision of Jesus on the Cross, have renewed fellowship both now and for all eternity. The sin issue was cared for on the Cross. The resurrection assured the reality of that fellowship.

Because He lives we can have fellowship with Jesus. It really is hard to fellowship with a dead person. Jesus lives and because He lives we can believe the promises that **“I will never leave you or forsake you,”** and **“I am with you always.”** And that fellowship with Him is possible for all eternity. The promise that He is preparing a place for us and will come again to take us unto Himself that where He is we may be for all eternity can be a reality. Had He not overcome death, none of that would be possible.

The resurrection also means a **totally new life**. Paul wrote in Romans that while the resurrection was a physical fact of history, it was a spiritual fact also. When we trust in Jesus as our personal Savior we become personal participants in Jesus’ resurrection. Because of that Paul noted we have the power, the strength, or the ability to overcome sin and live above our circumstances. We can be victorious in our Christian living. When a person accepts Jesus as Savior, God works in him to give him the same power that raised Jesus from the dead and in that resurrection power we can and must live a different life. Paul, in his letter to the Philippians, wrote that one of his

prayers was that he might experience in his life the power of God that was displayed in the resurrection. Paul knew that the power of God displayed that morning when it was declared, **“He is not here for He is risen,”** is available to us.

A dead God cannot help us with the problems we have today or help us overcome the temptations we face today. A dead God cannot help us break a habit that has held us in its grip, for perhaps years. But a living Jesus can do all of that for us. **“He is not here, He is risen”** and therefore His power is available to us today.

Paul, in I Corinthians 15, used a form of argumentation to show the reality of the resurrection in the life of a believer. He wrote that if there were no resurrection then we would be most miserable for not only would we have no fellowship with God, but we would have no power to do what we know we should do or live the way we know we should live. But since we know that He lives, we can have the fellowship promised and the power needed. Because He lives we have the means to be different, to be what He wants us to be. There is a power now available to us that would not otherwise be available were there no resurrection.

The resurrection means ***fellowship***, it means **power** in our daily lives, and it means that there is ***an eternal victory*** for all who know Jesus as Savior. The resurrection was not for time alone but for eternity.

In I Corinthians 15:22 Paul wrote **“In Adam all men die but in Christ shall all be made alive.”** It is a passage I often quote at funerals because it sums up the blessing that the resurrection provides for those who know and love Jesus. Paul wrote that the death and resurrection of Jesus allows for an eternal relationship, not just one for time. Paul went on in I Corinthians 15 to describe the future, resurrected and glorified bodies we will all have in Jesus. It’s promised to every believer and guaranteed by the resurrection of Jesus. Because He lives, we too can live. A Christian need not fear death because the resurrection of Jesus is the guarantee that we too will be resurrected to life everlasting.

The resurrection means ***fellowship***, it means **power**, and it means ***an eternal provision***. It also means we have a ***new message to share*** with the world. The resurrection means we must share the greatest proclamation of all history, **“He is not here, He is risen.”** Everyone is searching for the answers to what ails our society as well as answers to those eternally important questions of ***“Where did I come from? “Why am I here?” and “Where am I going?”*** The world needs direction and meaning in life. God’s answer to it all is the resurrection. The resurrection is a promise of a life that has meaning. It’s a promise of the victory of God over evil and life over death. That truth must be the focal point of the message we share with a hungry and searching world. The message of Good Friday and Easter is too important to be kept to ourselves. We dare not keep silent knowing that **“He is not here, He is risen.”**

Consider all that is ours because of the Cross and assured by the resurrection. Then consider one more exciting truth. It is ours without cost to us. It is ours without price. We will never deserve it,

we cannot earn it, all we can do is accept it. It cost God everything but cost us nothing. Jesus said, "For God so loved the world that he gave his Son." That was the cost to God. To us he said, "That whosoever believes in Him might not perish but have eternal life." That is what can be ours and can all be ours by, and only by, believing. Sounds almost too simple. That is what Satan would have us believe. But God's Word is clear. The provisions of the Cross and the assurances of the resurrection are all available because of the grace of God through faith and never via works. Paul wrote that if we were able to work for it we would be able to claim a portion of the credit for it. Jesus did it all.

The resurrection is the greatest event in all of history. The defeat of death and the assurance that what Jesus provided for on the Cross can indeed be ours. We must praise Him for the new fellowship that is possible, for the power that is available to live above the circumstances of life, and the power to break the hold of Satan over us. But let's go beyond merely praising Him for the potentials of the resurrection. Let's apply them.

For those who have already made that commitment to Jesus, we are challenged to spend more time in fellowship with Him, fellowship that is found in the quietness of our own home as well as with the fellowship of believers. We are challenged to apply the victory of the resurrection by asking God to give us the victory over sin and to live for Him each day the way we should. We are challenged to allow Him to help us love those we find difficult to love and forgive those we think we have reason to dislike. Let's apply the message of the resurrection by committing ourselves again to the cause of missions and to personally sharing with those we come in contact with the reason for the hope that is within us.

If we do that the reality of the resurrection will be a transforming truth that will make our lives ever so much richer. In the end, that is what Jesus came forth from the grave to do for each of us.