

John 20: 11-12, 18

Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot...Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!" And she told them that he had said these things to her.

I Corinthians 15: 20-22

But the fact is, Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. For since by a man death came, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.

Darkness filled the sky that day when Jesus died. They took His body down from the cross and buried Him in a borrowed tomb. All His friends that believed thought they lost everything. But on the 3rd day, darkness turned to light.

'Has been raised' is perfect tense indicating up from the grave He arose with a mighty triumph over His foes!

First fruits in ancient Israel, referred to the first installment of the crop.

'Those who are asleep' in this context is synonymous with all who are believers in Jesus Christ who have died.

The two representative men are **Adam and Jesus**. Adam represented the death of man because of his sin, and Jesus represented the salvation of man by His resurrection.

The word ***resurrection***, usually points out our existence beyond the grave. The doctrine of Christ's death and resurrection, is the foundation of Christianity.



TITLE :

"THE GOSPEL OF THE RESURRECTION"

1. The Good News of the Resurrection.

2. The Birth of New Hope.

3. The Significance of the Resurrection.

The death of Jesus Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God, is the center of the gospel. It is salvation to those who will believe.

How did Jesus die? **crucifixion.**

How bad was crucifixion? We get our English word excruciating from the Roman word "out of the cross."
"Consider how dreadful sin must be in the sight of God, when it requires such a sacrifice!"

I. THE GOOD NEWS OF THE RESURRECTION

Adam (by man) is one "head" of the human race, and all mankind was brought under death by Adam. The second Adam, Jesus Christ (by Man) is the other head of the human race, and Jesus brings resurrection to all that are "under" His headship.

The word **gospel** means "good news." As the word was used in ancient times, it could describe any good news. But the best news ever is that we can be saved from the punishment we deserve from God because of what Jesus did for us.

Although Jesus bore the full wrath of God on the cross, as if He were a guilty sinner, guilty of all our sin, even being made sin for us (2 Corinthians 5:21), He Himself did not become a sinner.

This is the gospel message! That Jesus took our punishment for sin on the cross, and remained a perfect Savior through the whole ordeal – proved by His resurrection.

The resurrection of Jesus is not some “add on” to a “more important” work on the cross. If the cross is the payment for our sins, the empty tomb is the receipt, showing that the perfect Son of God made perfect payment for our sins.

The cross was a time of victorious death, a negative triumph. Sin was defeated, but nothing positive was put in its place until the resurrection. The resurrection showed that Jesus did not succumb to the inevitable result of sin. The resurrection is proof of His conquest.

After His resurrection, Jesus encountered four people who symbolized four types of people today who need the Gospel of Resurrection.

4 types of People who need the Gospel of Resurrection:

1. The Devastated Disciple - Peter.

In **Mark 16:7**, the angels even make the statement for the women to tell Jesus' disciples and Peter. ***"But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you."***

Mark 14: 31, 71, 72 *But he spake the more vehemently, If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all... And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art one of them: for thou art a Galilaean, and thy speech agreeth thereto. But he began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not this man of whom ye speak. And the second time the cock crew..."*

Peter represents those people who follow Jesus for a really long time and never thought they would fall, but fell.

When Jesus met Peter, He did not remind him how wrong He was. Jesus told him where to throw his net so he could catch more fish. It was Jesus' goodness that restored Peter.

No self-punishment is enough to make you feel worthy of Jesus. You don't need to forgive yourself; you need to come to Jesus, who paid the bill to forgive you. Once you are in Him, you can have the freedom to not have condemnation.

2. The Disappointed Follower - Cleopas

This is the person who travelled with another disciple on the road to Emmaus. As they were walking, they were very disappointed. Cleopas had expectations which were not fulfilled.

"But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done." **Luke 24: 21**

But Jesus met them and listened to them.

Disappointment, when you feel it comes from God, is so hard to deal with.

When Jesus met them, He didn't just reveal Himself. He broke bread with them and they realized it was Jesus. Jesus wants people who are disappointed in failed expectations to be satisfied.

If you have been disappointed, don't lower your expectations. The solution is to anchor your hope on Jesus, not on healing but the Healer, not on gifts but the Giver. As you anchor yourself in Christ, He sets your heart on fire with hope, overcoming disappointment and discouragement. God is our hope, our refuge and fortress.

3. The Doubtful Believer - Thomas

Thomas was doubting. **John 20: 25** ***"The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe."***

Then Jesus appeared to him and said, ***"Here I am; touch me"***. Jesus paid the price for your sin; He **loves** you and He has the scars to prove it. When Thomas touched the scars, he cried out, ***"My Lord and my God!"*** (**John 20:26-28**).

4.The One In Error - Paul

Paul had no issue with devastation, doubt or disappointment. He was dead **wrong**. He was persecuting and killing Christians.

Acts 8:3 ***"As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison,"*** until Jesus gave him an encounter. Then, Paul had an instant **change of heart** and asked what the Lord would have him do.

Which one of the four categories would you identify yourself in? Are you devastated (by sin, failure)? Do you feel disappointed? Do you have doubts about your faith? Or maybe you are dead wrong – if you are, this is the Gospel for you.

II. THE BIRTH OF NEW HOPE

1. Guaranteed Hope

By His own resurrection Jesus has become the 'firstfruits'.

Firstfruits is the ancient Greek word ***aparche***. In the Septuagint, this word is used for the offering of firstfruits and in secular usage the word was used for an **entrance fee**.

The resurrection of Jesus represents our resurrection, because if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection (**Romans 6:5**).

“As in the firstfruits offered to God, the Jews were assured of God’s blessing on the whole harvest; so by the resurrection of Christ, our resurrection is insured.” (Trapp)

The Feast of Firstfruits was observed on the day after the Sabbath following Passover (Leviticus 23:9-14). Significantly, Jesus rose from the dead on the exact day of the Feast of Firstfruits, the day after the Sabbath following the Passover.

The offering at the Feast of Firstfruits was a bloodless grain offering (Leviticus 2). No atoning sacrifice was necessary, because the Passover lamb had just been sacrificed. His death ended the need for sacrifice, having provided a perfect and complete atonement.

APPLICATION: The resurrection of Jesus is the firstfruits of our resurrection in the sense that He is our “entrance fee” to resurrection. Jesus paid our admission to the resurrection!

2. Joyful Hope

The Bible says, ***"remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world."*** (Ephesians 2:12).

1 Peter 1:6-8 *"In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy,"*

We are 'in heaviness through manifold temptations' as we struggle with the sin and trials but in Christ we already rejoice with 'joy unspeakable and full of glory'

Hope placed in Jesus Christ can only fail if Christ Himself can fail. He paid the ransom-price for sinners when He died for them on the cross. Having paid the price, death cannot hold Him. Christ is 'alive for evermore' (Revelation 1:18) and He will raise us up at the last day (John 6:54).

The Christian has a hope born in his soul by the very power that raised Jesus from the dead (1 Peter 1:3). As 'an anchor of the soul' (Hebrews 6:19) this hope keeps him in all the storms of life.

Application: There is Hope for Light to come to those who live in darkness. Hope for those who are forsaken. Fruits for the barren and healing for the wounded and broken. Jesus paid the ransom through his death and guaranteed it through His resurrection.

III. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF RESURRECTION

Eternal significance

We will live forever—and not just live forever, but we will live forever with Christ—and not just that, but we will have glorious bodies that are like his, with power and glory and life that's far better than what we know now. There is a great reward waiting for us, a reward that far overshadows the difficulties we have.

The eternal reward is important. As Paul said, if faith is good for this life only, then it isn't good enough. But there is an afterlife, there is a resurrection, and there are wonderful rewards waiting for us.

Day-to-day significance

Knowing the resurrection helps us deal with the difficulties and persecutions of believing in Christ when most people around us do not.

The resurrection is **relevant for day-to-day Christian conduct.**

Romans 6: *"We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life"* (verse 4). The resurrection to come means that we have a new life now, a new way of life. Paul explains in verse 6 that *"our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin"*

When we identify ourselves with Christ, we put to death the deeds of sin. We put them out of our lives, and we walk and live in a new way, just as Christ was raised from the dead into a new life. So our behavior reflects the death and resurrection of Christ. Out with the old, and in with the new.

In **1 Corinthians 15: 11-13**, Paul tells us, ***"In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness."***

Because there is a resurrection, **we are to live in a new and different way.**

God's grace doesn't mean that he does not care about the way we live. He does care, he still makes commands, and understanding the resurrection helps us walk in newness of life.

1 John 3:2-3 says, *"Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure."*

So there is no condemnation for us, but there is still the fact that people who believe in the resurrection also change the way they live. Knowing that we will live with Christ forever changes the way we live with him right now.

Paul ends the resurrection chapter: ***"Therefore [because there is a resurrection], my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain"*** (verse 58). It gives us reason to work, and reason to persevere through whatever difficulties we might face.

Knowing about the resurrection gives a new perspective to death. We know that death does not end it all; we know that we will see our loved ones again; we know that life will go on forever. **Hebrews 2:14-15** tells us that Jesus shared in our *humanity* ***"so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death."***

Lastly, by knowing about the resurrection, we are freed from the fear of death. That enemy has been conquered, and we share in the victory that Christ has won! He has triumphed over death, and we share in his life, freed from the fear of death. As we read in 1 Thessalonians, we do not grieve like other people do. We still have grief, but we have a hope that others do not have.

Knowledge of the resurrection helps us die faithfully, in hope and confidence for the future. We know that the best is yet to come.

CONCLUSION:

Because Christ is risen from the dead, we too shall rise. Because of His Resurrection we have an assurance that all those that trust in His name will also rise. He has promised that all who die in the Lord shall never die but have the light of life, when we shall ever be with the Lord.

The first-fruit of a tree is the precursor that more fruit will follow. And Christ is the first Man to have risen from the dead and went back to heaven. He is the First-Fruit from the grave and His Resurrection is a pledge and a guarantee that the rest of the harvest will certainly follow. Christ is risen from the dead, and He has become the First-Fruits of all who 'sleep' and because He lives, all those who are positioned IN Christ will also live.

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the complete assurance that all who have trusted on His name will be raised from the dead, with a new resurrected body that will be like His glorified body. The Lord is the Head of the Church and because He arose from the grave, He is the eternal witness that the Church, which is His body, which will also be raised: For the perishable shall be clothed in the imperishable and the mortal will take on an immortal covering. Those whose bodies are perishing in the grave will rise imperishable and those that are alive and remain will put on immortality.

It was because the deathless Son of God Who has eternal life within Himself, became the perfect Son of Man and gave Himself as a willing sacrifice for the sin of the whole world, that He broke the power of sin and death in the life of ALL who trust in His name. His death paid the price for sin, but His Resurrection broke the power of sin and death forever in all who believe, and together we will live with Him in glory.

Because He lives we too shall live.

