

The Resurrection
January 2, 2022
Matthew 27:57-28:15¹

"The Bible tells the truth about God. The four Gospels tell the truth about Jesus. We read the Bible together as God's people to hear God's Word to us. We will engage in the faithful interpretation of the Bible under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We gladly hear the Word with open minds and full hearts. Together we will hear and do the Word from God as a faithful and obedient people. Amen." ~ **Dr. Rodney Kennedy**

Were it not for the intervention of Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus (John 19:38), the body of Jesus might not have had a decent burial. Joseph and Nicodemus had come to believe in Jesus, even though they had not openly testified of their faith. God kept them hidden, as it were, that they might care for the body of Jesus. Since Joseph was a rich man, and he prepared the new tomb, he helped in the fulfillment of prophecy, Isaiah 53:9 - "He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death" (NIV).

In contrast to the loving care given by Jesus' friends, notice the plottings and maneuvering of the Jewish leaders. The disciples had forgotten that Jesus promised to rise from the dead on the third day, but His enemies remembered. Pilate permitted the leaders to set a guard at the tomb. This guard put an official Roman seal on the stone. All of this was of God, for now it was impossible for anyone—friend or foe—to steal the body. Without realizing it, the Jewish leaders and the Roman government joined forces to help prove the resurrection of Jesus Christ.²

The Pharisees remembered Jesus' words and took them to heart, but His followers struggled to remember during this time.

As I have said before, anyone that has actually done any research doesn't have an issue that Jesus existed and was a (good) man, their issue is that He was the Son of Man and Savior. The biggest reason of all I believe they have a hard time "believing"? If they do, they are then accountable and everything changes. So what about the Resurrection?

Mark Twain once wrote that a lie can go around the world while truth is still lacing up her boots. There is something in human nature that makes it easy for people to believe lies. It was not until the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost, and the powerful witness of the Apostles, that the Jews in Jerusalem discovered the truth: Jesus Christ is alive! Any sincere person who studies this evidence with an open heart will conclude that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is a historic fact that cannot be refuted.

We must never underestimate the importance of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The world believes that Jesus died, but the world does not believe that He arose from the dead. Peter's message at Pentecost emphasized the Resurrection. In fact, it is emphasized throughout the Book of Acts. What is the significance of the Resurrection?³

It proves that Jesus is God's Son.

Jesus stated that He had authority to lay down His life and to take it up again (John 10:17–18).

Noticed He laid down His life, He gave it.

As we looked at last week, the Son was literally forsaken by the Father for God's glory and for our salvation. The Son submitted Himself to God the Father.

It verifies the truth of Scripture.

Both in the Old Testament and in the teaching of Jesus, His resurrection is clearly taught. If Jesus had not come out of the tomb, then these Scriptures would not be true.

The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool."

Psalm 110:1

Isaiah 53

If everything about Jesus is true EXCEPT for the resurrection, our faith is futile.

¹ Some of outline taken from Warren Wiersbe.

² Warren Wiersbe, Be Series.

³ Ibid.

There were over 500 witnesses who saw Jesus alive at one time (1 Corinthians 15:3–8). These appearances of the risen Christ were of such a nature that they could not be explained as hallucinations or self-deception. The people who saw Him were surprised. It would have been impossible for over 500 people to suffer hallucinations at the same time. Even the Apostle Paul, who was an enemy of the church, saw the risen Christ; that experience transformed his life (Acts 9).

It assures our own future resurrection.

Because Jesus died and rose again, we shall one day be raised to be like Him. In fact, the entire structure of the Christian faith rests on the foundation of the Resurrection. If we do away with His resurrection, we have no hope.

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. **Galatians 2:20**

For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-18

It is the proof of a future judgment.

Because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead. **Acts 17:31**

If Jesus is who He said He is, then there must be a judgment. Some say a loving God would not judge, however, based on God's character and Truth, this is loving and because of who He is!

It is the basis for Christ's heavenly priesthood.

Because He lives by the power of an endless life, He is able to save us "to the uttermost" (Heb. 7:23–28). He lives to intercede for us.

It gives power for Christian living.

We cannot live for God by our own strength. It is only as His resurrection power works in and through us that we can do His will and glorify His name (Romans 6:4).

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. ⁸ We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; ⁹ persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed—¹⁰ always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. **2 Corinthians 4:7-10**

It assures our future inheritance.

Because we have a living hope, we can experience hopeful living. A dead hope grows weaker and weaker before it eventually dies. But because Jesus Christ is alive, we have a glorious future (1 Peter 1:3–5).

Whenever God's people gather on the Lord's Day they bear witness that Jesus is alive and that the church has received spiritual blessings. When the followers of the Lord gathered that first Lord's Day, they were discouraged and defeated.

"Believers" in all kinds of cults will claim their way is true because of what they have experienced. But Christians have the weight of church history, Scripture, and dependable witnesses to back up their own personal experiences of faith.

"Come and see!" was followed by "Go and tell!" We must not keep the Resurrection news to ourselves.

Prayer Focus:

- **Be confident in the Resurrection of Jesus.**
- **Live in confidence because of His Resurrection.**
- **Be sure others know about His Resurrection and the life that it brings.**