

The Resurrection of Christ

I believe the most fearful thing man has to face is death. It comes many times unexpectedly, and no matter how long a life one lives, death arrives never invited. Death is final. It closes a door that cannot be reopened.

Death is final. No one really likes it that way, but that's the way it is. Some are spending fortunes on trying to preserve the body, because they believe that one day man will conquer death. Many thousands of religions on Earth exist because man fears death and desires strongly that death won't be the final end of man. However, it's a fact, an absolute reality and truth, that death has been completely conquered and that there is a means by which people need not fear death.

Two thousand years ago, death's hold on man was broken. In the book of Luke chapter 1, we see a man by the name of Zacharias. Just before the birth of Christ, he proclaimed the work of Christ in coming into the world. He said that Christ was coming:
⁷⁷To give knowledge of salvation unto His people by the remission of their sins.
⁷⁸Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us,
⁷⁹To give light to them that all that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.
This is Luke 1:77-79.

It's quite fitting and proper to meet on Sundays, on the first day of the week, as we know our Lord rose on the first day. It's quite fitting to meet on a Sunday to remember and to learn of the day that victory was won over death.

Romans 6:22-23 says:

²²But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.
²³For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The cross is a place that death met its end. The Bible tells us in Colossians 1:13-14 what was accomplished when Christ paid the sin debt of the world for those who believe and received him.

Colossians 1:13-14 says:

¹³Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:
¹⁴In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.

Christ died that we could have eternal life. The victory was won when Christ submitted Himself to let death do to Him all it could. He endured it for our sakes and then He rose victorious over sin and death.

In II Corinthians 5:19, it says, *To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.*

Romans 6:9-11 tells us that death was conquered by Christ's resurrection. It says there:

⁹Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.
¹⁰For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

¹¹Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Those who believe and trust in Christ are assured that death has no hold on them. For those who believe in Jesus, in Christ, there is no death, because it has been conquered. The death of the physical body, of course, takes place and that takes place for the believer as well, but it becomes just a bump in the road when it happens. And at that very moment, we are ushered into the very presence of our Lord. Second Corinthians 5:8 says, *We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.*

No one who is related to Christ Jesus can die. He is the Lord of life. Early Christians in Rome were buried in the catacombs beneath the city. Some died in the Roman stadiums and were fed to lions and wild beasts for the entertainment of the pagan Roman citizens. Yet, the real heart of what it means to be a Christian is found in two simple words inscribed on the tomb of a certain fallen child of God. The inscription says, "Titinius lives." In other words, that person who had given his life for the Lord lives.

For the Christian, there is no death, as such. This body can die, but the real person will not die. We go on living with the Lord, and that's when real life really begins for the Christian... is when we are ushered into the presence of our Lord.

The compelling message of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is this. There is victory over death for the believer, the one who trusts in Jesus Christ as Savior. We can say with Paul the apostle with all assurance of I Corinthians 15:55: *O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?*

Then we see that we should all flee to Him who conquered death for our salvation. And we who have been saved should strive to live our short lives on this earth for Christ that we might share this wonderful truth.

What does the resurrection of Christ mean to you? As believers, God tells us that because of Christ's resurrection and victory over death, our physical death is simply a door that opens into the very presence of the Lord.

Notice with me if you would in II Corinthians 5:1-6:

¹For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

²For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:

³If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.

⁴For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

⁵Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.

⁶Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:

John 3:36 explains that: *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

Everyone on Earth will die and then face one of two eternities. Note that John says the person who believes has everlasting life. He also says that the one who does not believe

shall not see life and the wrath of God abides on Him.

Revelation 20:11-15 explains that for the lost there is a second death. First, there is physical death, but afterward, there is a second death in which the unbeliever is cast into the lake of fire for all eternity. Now, the good news is that Jesus suffered and died and resurrected from death. He proved that He was God, because only God has power over death. Note the promise of God in these verses:

John 3:16: *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

John 4:14: *But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.*

John 5:24: *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.*

John 6:27: *Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.*

John 6:40: *And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.*

John 6:47: *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.*

These verses that I just read to you were spoken by our Lord, Jesus Christ. Jesus cannot lie. Jesus has told us that, if we would believe in Him and receive Him as Savior, He gives unto us eternal life, and not only to me but unto you if you will believe Him, if you will trust Him as your Savior.

Note the warning that God gives to everyone. John 3:36 says that: *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

Romans 6:23 says, *For the wages of sin is death... [and notice this...]; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Everyone listening has to make a choice, and you are making a choice. You've heard God's truth in which He lovingly tells us our need. We are sinners, and because we are sinners, we are under the condemnation of sin. Hell is the eternal destiny of all those who reject Christ and die in their sins. You've either believed on Jesus and received eternal life or you have not believed. You have either believed and received full forgiveness of all your sins or you have not believed and are headed for the second death.

God's desire is clear. God sent His only begotten Son to Earth to suffer and die so that you and I might have eternal life. John 17:3 says, *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*

John 20:31: *But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.*

Romans 10:9: *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*

Today, right now, what will you do? God in His love and mercy has given you the opportunity to hear His plan of salvation... for you. Will you believe and receive eternal life?

Second Peter 3:9 says, *The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*

Would you come to Christ and be saved? First John 5:13 says: *These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.*

First John 5:20: *And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.*

Won't you receive Him today as your Savior?
Ask Him to come into your heart right now.

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Until next time, this is Doug Anderson reminding you it's a good life living for the Lord. May the Lord bless you richly is our prayer.