

"HE IS RISEN"

Matt. 28:1-8

Intro: (Pray and read the Scripture.)

Ever since I was a child I have heard and read arguments as to what is the most important:

- 1) The birth of Christ.
- 2) The death of Christ.
- 3) The resurrection of Christ.

As far as the Scriptures are concerned, it is apparent that they all are so closely related to each other that the importance of any one of them is related to the truth of the others.

-- If Christ were not virgin-born, His death is of no greater importance than any other person's death.

-- If He had not died, there could have been no resurrection.

-- Apart from the meaning which the Scriptures attach to His death and resurrection, the manner of His birth would be insignificant.

And so on and on!

Therefore, it is really foolish to argue about which is the most important. They all stand or fall together.

Thank God, they stand!

What a glorious declaration we have from "the angel of the Lord" in vv. 5-7! "He is not here: for He is risen, as he said."

Paul approaches this same kind of a glorious affirmation in 1 Cor. 15:20 after he has stated what it would mean if there were no resurrection of the dead. Listen to his words:

"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept."

For the next few minutes I would like to discuss with you from the Scriptures some of the important facts that are bound up in this little statement of overwhelming importance, "He is risen"! It became:

- 1) The theme of apostolic preaching.
- 2) The keynote of the NT Epistles.
- 3) The basis of the hope of all Biblical prophecy -- as can be seen so clearly in the book of the Revelation.

What does it mean -- in part?

Let me present it in these three ways:

- 1) It verified some things -- at least 4.
- 2) It signified some things -- at least 3.
- 3) It ratified one thing.

Note with me what these are.

## I. THE WORDS, "HE IS RISEN," VERIFIED:

## A. His death.

How could He have risen if He had not died?

And yet down to the present day you find those who are still debating and denying the fact that He died.

Read the record of Scripture.

- 1) The Roman soldiers believed that He was dead.
- 2) Pilate believed that He was dead.
- 3) The Jews believed that He was dead.
- 4) The disciples believed that He was dead -- and this includes the women who went to the tomb on that resurrection morning.
- 5) "The angel of the Lord" believed that He had been dead.
- 6) The Lord Jesus believed. Cf. Rev. 1:17, 18.

Let some try to convince themselves that He only lapsed into unconsciousness and that He was revived in the tomb. Or let others say that it was somebody else's body that was placed in the tomb -- and that the Lord really escaped death altogether. But as for you, you read the record and see that these words, "He is risen," could never have been spoken if the Lord Jesus Christ had not really died!

## B. His own words.

Note in v. 6, "as He said."

This takes us back to Matt. 16:21 -- and to several verses after that:

"From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day."

It might not have been unusual to predict that the Lord would be killed, but it certainly was to predict that He would "be raised again," and when it would be: on "the third day."

And if our Lord had not been raised from the dead, it would have thrown a big cloud of doubt over everything that He had to say!

Think of all that that included! If we can believe the greatest prediction that He made, then we can believe it all!

There were at least two other outstanding things that were verified by the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, and I want to take them up together because Peter deals with both of them in the message he preached on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2.

The resurrection of Christ verified:

- C. His Deity.
- D. The writings of the Old Testament.

Please turn to Acts 2. Read vv. 22-24. Note the words, "because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." HE could not be held in the power of death, is what Peter is saying.

BUT WHY?

Read v. 25 ff. It begins with, "For" -- a word which indicates an explanation. The passage quoted from Psalm 16 goes down through v. 28, but we have our two answers in v. 25. JESUS CHRIST HAD TO BE RAISED FROM THE DEAD BECAUSE:

- 1) DAVID (AND MANY OTHER OLD TESTAMENT WRITERS) SAID THAT HE WOULD.
- 2) HE WAS AND IS THE LORD!

There would be no greater blow to our Lord's claims to Deity than the successful repudiation of His resurrection.

AND -- If He were not raised from the dead, the truth of the whole Old Testament would be thrown into question!

But thanks be to God -- "HE IS RISEN"! Therefore, WE KNOW:

- 1) That He died.
- 2) That His own words are true.
- 3) That He is God. Cf. Rom. 1:4.
- 4) That we can absolutely depend upon the prophecies of the Old Testament -- all of them! Cf. 1 Cor. 15:4.

But let us go on. The resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ signifies at least 3 very important things.

## II. THE WORDS, "HE IS RISEN," SIGNIFIED:

- A. His victory over death and the grave.

After speaking of resurrection in 1 Cor. 15, Paul gives us that triumphant note at the close in vv. 55, 57:

"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? . . . But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

A man once remarked, "You Christians are strange people. You weep at your funerals, but you also sing hymns and give praise to God. How strange you are!"

Is it any wonder when we can say with the Apostle Paul,

"Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him" (Rom. 6:9)?

And also with our Lord: John 11:25, 26a, "I am the resurrection and the life . . ."

B. His victory over His enemies -- including Satan.

They did everything to keep His body in the tomb. They sealed it. They set a guard. But He arose in spite of all of their authority and efforts. Cf. Eph. 1:20-22.

Concerning Satan -- John 16:7-11, esp. 10, 11.

C. His victory over our sins.

As Peter spoke from Solomon's porch in the Temple in Acts 3, he concluded with these words:

"Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities."

The sin question has been settled.

As Paul explains the relationship between the resurrection of Christ and our sins in Romans 4:25 he wrote this,

"Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."

The resurrection of Christ stands as eternal proof that God is satisfied with the work of His Son. Cf. Rom. 10:9, 10.

And so all of this is signified by the resurrection of Christ: VICTORY OVER 1) DEATH,  
2) MEN, SATAN, AND DEMONS,  
3) OUR SINS.

There is one final thing I want to mention.

By the resurrection of Christ we have certain things signified, other things verified, and . . .

—III. THE WORDS, "HE IS RISEN," RATIFIED -- ALL THE PROMISES OF SALVATION.

Salvation is the all-inclusive word that covers the whole scope of God's redemptive work for men. It takes into consideration:

- 1) The past.
- 2) The present.
- 3) The future.

It is the word which includes such great Bible truths as:

- 1) Redemption.
- 2) Propitiation.
- 3) Reconciliation.
- 4) Justification.
- 5) Forgiveness.
- 6) Sanctification.
- 7) Glorification.

And again we could go on and on.

NONE OF THESE GREAT WORDS WOULD MEAN ANYTHING AT ALL TO US IF IT WERE NOT FOR THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST! And Peter states it as clearly as it can be stated in the beginning of his first epistle (vv. 3-5).

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

Concl: How full of praise our hearts should be this morning if we know this resurrected, living Saviour!

And if you do not know Him, what better time to trust Him. He is your only hope of eternal life, of the forgiveness of your sins, of peace and joy in this world of sin.

— If you do not know Him, "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."