

THE POWER OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION

Philippians 3:10

Scripture reading: Matthew 28

Intro: No one can really call himself, or herself, a Christian who does not believe the Gospel. The Gospel is “the power of God unto salvation.” And basic to the truth of the Gospel is the historic fact that the Lord Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, and when we say raised we mean physically, actually, in reality. And so it reasonably follows that no one is really a Christian who does not believe in the physical resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ following the terrible death that He died on the Cross.

We have four records in the Bible of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ – one in Matthew, one in Mark, one in Luke, and one in John. That is the reason I asked Mr. Ryan to read Matthew’s account of the resurrection of Christ so that we could all have that record of history fresh in our minds. In addition to these we have that great testimony to the reality of the resurrection of Christ in 1 Corinthians 15. In that chapter Paul both defined and supported the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let me read to you what he had to say at the beginning of the chapter. If you like, you can turn to that chapter and follow the reading because I am going to read several verses from it.

(Read 1 Cor. 15:1-9.)

So we have overwhelming evidence of the resurrection of Christ.

But there have always been people who disputed the truth of this event. We heard in our Scripture reading how the Jewish elders paid the soldiers who were guarding the tomb to say that our Lord’s disciples came at night and stole the body of the Lord, and that He did not arise from the dead after all. We have people today, lots of them, who deny the Biblical teaching of Christ’s resurrection. And they were present in the early church. They denied that there would be any resurrection at all. Notice what Paul said to them beginning with 1 Cor. 15:9. (Read down verses 9-19.)

So there is no Gospel, no way of salvation, if there is no resurrection, because, as we have seen, the Gospel not only has to do with the fact of Christ’s death, but why He died, and the good news that He was raised

again from the dead. People have always believed in resurrection. We are told in Hebrews 11:19 that the reason that Abraham fully intended to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice to the Lord back in Genesis 22 was because he believed that God was able to raise Isaac back to life again.

Job, who probably lived in the time of Abraham, had this to say about his own resurrection:

25 For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:

26 And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:

27 Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another (Job 19:25-27a).

Even Daniel had this to say about resurrection:

2 And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

3 And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever (Dan. 12:2-3).

Paul asked even King Agrippa, before whom he was defending himself, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" (Acts 26:8).

People know in their hearts that the doctrine of resurrection is true. People who have never turned to God, repenting of their sins, who have not believed in Jesus Christ as their Savior, don't like to think that they will be raised to stand before a holy God to be judged by Him, and yet that is exactly what the Bible teaches.

But the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ stands in a place of importance all by itself. And how tragic it is that today, even when many people go to church they may do so for an Easter egg hunt rather than to hear the glorious truth of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. How much lower can the churches stoop when they use a children's Easter egg hunt to get people to come to church. Can you imagine Paul or John or Peter, or even our Lord, encouraging such a practice?

Easter Sunday is not any more special than any other Sunday here at Trinity Bible Church because we commemorate the resurrection of Christ

every Sunday. That is why the church has met from its very beginning on the first day of the week because that is the day in which the Lord Jesus Christ was raised triumphantly from the dead.

But now let me ask you a question, and then spend the rest of our time today answering it from the Scriptures. This is the question: ***Why is it important to believe in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ?***
(Repeat the question.)

This is a question of such great importance that I cannot possibly tell you in the time that is left all that the Bible has to say on this subject, but I want to give you some of the main points.

I. IF YOU BELIEVE IN THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST, IT IS EVIDENCE THAT YOU BELIEVE IN THE DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST.

There had to be a death if there was going to be a resurrection. But why did He die? He never sinned in word, or thought, or deed. The only kind of witnesses that the Jews could get to testify against Him were liars, and they weren't even smart enough to be sure that they agreed with each other. So why did He die?

I read you that answer a few minutes ago when I read from 1 Corinthians 15 that "Christ died for our sins." He died as a Substitute for all who will ever be saved. He took our sins upon Himself. He accepted sin's penalty which is death, eternal death, for all of His people, and no film out of Hollywood, nor any documentary by any national network, can possibly show the extent of His sufferings. How can you portray on a screen that our Lord's soul was made an offering for sin? Or how can any preacher portray even in words what it means that *He was made sin for us*?

But why was He made sin, as we are told in 2 Cor. 5:21? It was "that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." What does that mean? It means that by the death of our Lord we who are trusting in Him for our salvation from divine judgment have been "justified by His blood" (Rom. 5:9). We have been forgiven, cleansed, and made acceptable to God. And as an eternal testimony that God was fully satisfied by the death of His Son on behalf of those sinners whom God gave to His Son to secure their salvation, He raised His Son from the dead. But let me add further proof that God is satisfied with the work Christ did when He died on the

Cross. And you will find this in Ephesians 1 where Paul made this the third petition of his prayer for the believers at Ephesus. He began his prayer with the words “that ye may know,” and, as I have said, this was the third and last request in his prayer:

that ye may know ... 19 what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,

20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places (Eph. 1:18m, 19-20).

The fact that the Lord Jesus Christ was not only raised from the dead, but afterwards ascended back to the Father, and is seated at the Father’s right hand, is evidence that the Father was fully pleased and His righteousness completely satisfied by the death of His Son. So He raised Him from the dead, brought Him back to heaven, where He is now seated at the right hand of the Father.

Now I want to take you to the verse which I have announced as my text for today: Phil. 3:10. In that verse Paul said that the first thing that he wanted to know about the Lord was “the power of His resurrection,” that is, *the power of Christ’s resurrection!*

Now the question I have is this: Why did Paul want to “know” Christ, “and the power of His resurrection.” Or to state it another way, how did Paul expect to have a continuing benefit from the resurrection of His Savior? And if we can answer that question as it involved Paul, then we will be in a position to see how it should affect your life and my life as the people of God today.

Let me begin to answer these questions by pointing out another fact regarding the death and resurrection of Christ which is brought out in Scripture. It is this:

II. IF YOU BELIEVE AS A CHILD OF GOD IN WHAT CHRIST ACCOMPLISHED FOR YOU BY HIS DEATH, THEN YOU MUST ALSO BELIEVE THAT ACCOMPLISHED SOMETHING VERY IMPORTANT FOR YOU BY HIS RESURRECTION.

And since Christ is alive, it must have been be a way in which we have a

continuing benefit from His resurrection.

The New Testament teaches that we were united with Christ in His death. This means that since Christ died for us, His death was our death. But we also were raised when He was raised. We benefit totally from our Lord's death, and we continue to benefit from His life. Paul expressed it this way in Romans 6, beginning with verse 3:

3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

7 For he that is dead is freed from sin.

8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:

9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.

10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God (Rom. 6:4-10).

Now I am not going to separate the death of Christ from the resurrection of Christ. Together they are the work of God on our behalf. But I will say this: we are justified by Christ's death; we are sanctified by His life. But we never would experience sanctification if it were not for the death of Christ. And also it needs to be said that just as the resurrection of Christ followed His death, so, if we have experienced justification, sanctification is going to follow.

What is "the power of His resurrection"? It is the power of our living Savior by which we are being sanctified. It is the power of the resurrected Christ by Whom we are gradually becoming more and more like He is. We can still sin, and will continue to sin as long as we are in the flesh. But sin is no longer our master; the Lord is. And we can say Gal. 2:20 just as confidently and just as truthfully as Paul said it and as he wrote it.

Concl: By reading the first part of Philippians 3 you can see what Paul

trusted in before he was saved. He was busy trying to save Himself, but he had nothing like he had in Christ after he was saved – a crucified and living Savior Who made him acceptable to God and through Whom he had victory over sin which, when finished, would mean that he would be like His Savior.

Remember, as the Apostle John wrote, “He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life” (1 John 5:12). It is not religion that we need. There is no religion that can make us acceptable to the God Who made heaven and earth, and Who made us. Christ is the only Savior, and He is a sufficient Savior. It is not Christ and something else, or someone else, but Christ, and Christ alone. By His death He justifies us, and by His life we are being sanctified. We are saved by His death, and sanctified by His life. And some day we will all know the glorification, the total perfection that results from our justification and our sanctification. What an amazing Savior we have!