

INTRODUCTION

Because the resurrection of Christ is an actual historical event verified with undeniable and unmistakable proofs, it continues to have present-day impact as the Good News is proclaimed. Souls are born into God's family; the spiritually dead are made alive through faith in Christ. Every believer has already been blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ; and Satan's kingdom is rendered powerless and inoperative against all who are saved (Col. 2:15; Heb. 2:14, 15; 1 Jhn. 3:8).

Once again, my prayer for you is exactly that of the apostle Paul's:

That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what *is* the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated *Him* at His right hand in the heavenly *places*, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And He put all *things* under His feet, and gave Him *to be* head over all *things* to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. (Eph. 1:17-23)

Oh, that we may see and experience the glory and grandeur of the Christian life He has for us right here—right now! The resurrection of Christ is A PRESENT REALITY!

We see:

THE DECLARATION WHICH IT MAKES (Rom. 1:4)

THE JUSTIFICATION WHICH IT PROVES (1 Cor. 15:16, 17)

THE MOTIVATION WHICH IT SUPPLIES (1 Cor. 15:30-32)

THE SANCTIFICATION WHICH IT ASSURES (1 Cor. 15:33, 34)

THE EXPECTATION WHICH IT PROVIDES (1 Pet. 1:3)

THE GLORIFICATION WHICH IT PROMISES (1 Cor. 15:49-51)

Paul writes to the Philippians:

For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body [a body humiliated by the curse] that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself. (Phil. 3:20-21)

The apostle John writes:

Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. (1 Jhn. 3:2)

- This earthly body is sown in the likeness of the first Adam, but it will be raised in the likeness of the Last Adam. Keep in mind, Paul uses the word “sow” seven times in this chapter. “Sow” indicates death *and* life (1 Cor. 35-36).
- This earthly body is sown a perishable body but will be raised an imperishable body never to die again (cf. Rev. 21:4).
- It is sown in dishonor but raised a glorious body reflecting the glory of God.
- It is sown in weakness but raised in power.
- This earthly body is sown a natural body but will be raised a spiritual body, perfectly adapted for heaven.

Just as decomposition of a seed isn't an obstacle to life, so the decomposition of the body isn't an obstacle to the resurrection! (1 Cor. 15:36).

THE ANTICIPATION WHICH IT CREATES (1 Cor. 15:51-52)

The resurrection of Christ reminds us that this world is not our home. Today our military has the sounding of reveille and taps, which have a distinct sound and meaning. During Paul's day, there was also a distinct sounding of the trumpet which meant, “Break camp and move out!” One day the church will “Break camp and move out!” to our eternal home!

For the child of God, our citizenship already is in heaven. We are pilgrims headed for home. We are strangers longing for home. We are sojourners—we aren't home yet.

*This world is not my home, I'm just a passing through,
My treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue.
The angles beckon me from heaven's open door,
And I can't feel at home in this world any more.*

—Source Unknown

THE CONSOLATION WHICH IT GIVES (1 Cor. 15:58)

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

The resurrection of Christ and our future resurrection assure us that our labor and work are not in vain in the Lord! Every believer should “always [be] abounding in the work of the Lord.” There is no place in the Christian life to quit or to take it easy. No matter who we are or what our age might be, we can and will be used of the Lord until He calls us home. At no time should any believer ever say, “I've done my part, or I've given my money, let someone else do it now.” Just recently I mentioned that faithful and effective ministry is costly. It requires time, prayer, sacrifice, and humility. But in light of Christ's resurrection and our future resurrection, it's well worth it. The resurrection of

Christ gives eternal value and worth to all that we do in His name. I love Eugene Peterson's paraphrase of verse 58:

With all this going on for us, my dear, dear, friends, stand your ground. And don't hold back. Throw yourself into the work of the Master, confident that nothing you do for Him is a waste of time or effort. (*The Message*)

Because the resurrection of Christ is A PRESENT REALITY, Paul says:

- God's grace was not in vain (v. 10)
- Our preaching is not in vain (v. 14)
- Our faith is not in vain (v. 14)
- Our labor is not in vain (v. 58)

CONCLUSION

Once again, Christ's resurrection *is* a past historical event. And yes, His resurrection gives the believer assurance for the future. But the resurrection of Christ is also A PRESENT REALITY!

- A world filled with anger and resentment needs to see what love and forgiveness look like.
- A world filled with fear and doubt needs to see hope and Christian optimism.
- A world filled with relativism needs to see truth in shoe leather.
- A world filled with rejection needs to see acceptance in Christ.
- A world filled with mistrust needs to see trust incarnated.
- A world that's dying needs to see life.
- A world filled with gloom and despair needs to see joy for living.
- A world that so desperately needs to see Jesus needs to see Jesus in us. They need to see life in living, warmth in worship, joy in the journey, and yes, even gladness in giving.

Have you personally trusted Christ as Lord and Savior? Have you experienced the life-changing and life-giving work of Christ in your own life? Are you personally living in the sphere of the resurrected and ascended Lord? As a believer, are you growing in your walk with Christ? Are you living the victorious Christian life? Are you anticipating His return?

Just remember, we do not worship a Babe in a manger. Our Savior is no longer on the cross. He is no longer in the tomb. He is RISEN, ASCENDED, GLORIFIED, and EXALTED at the right hand of God! HE IS LORD!

*He is Lord, He is Lord!
He is risen from the dead and He is Lord!
Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess
That Jesus Christ is Lord.*