

The Old Paths

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“What The Resurrection Means To Us”

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Each of the gospel accounts end with the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Truly, the resurrection of Christ is the focal point of all we do and say! When someone confesses, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God,” they are proclaiming their belief in the resurrection of Christ (Acts 8:37; Rom. 1:3-4)! The apostles’ preaching pointed to the fact that Christ resurrected from the dead. The book of Acts makes this clear (Acts 2:22-32, 3:12-15, 5:29-32, 13:26-37). In reading the New Testament, we learn that the epistles written to the churches and to the Christians of the first century focus on the resurrection of Christ (Rom. 1:1-4; I Cor. 15:1-8, 12-58; Gal. 1:1; Eph. 1:20-23; Phil. 2:5-10; Col. 2:12, 3:1; I Thess. 4:14; II Tim. 2:8; Heb. 13:8; I Pet. 1:3, 21, 3:18, 21; Revelation). The reason we note so many references is to drive home the point that the resurrection of Christ is discussed time and again throughout the New Testament. Thus, it warrants our study!

The resurrection of Christ on the third day means a great deal to those who are Christians. For the remainder of this article, let us consider the importance of Christ’s resurrection, and what it means to those who are Christians.

Christ Was Declared To Be The Son Of God By The Resurrection.

Paul said, “We declare unto you

glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David” (Acts 13:32-34). In Romans 1:1-4, we learn that physically, Jesus was descended from David, yet at the same time, He “*was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.*” If Christ was not raised, He would not have been declared to be the Son of God. Atheists, Modernists, Muslims, Hindus, Jews, and others deny the resurrection of Christ. By doing this, they are contradicting the Sacred Text, and denying the very plan of God in resurrecting His Son, who was never to die again.

The Prophecies Concerning Christ Were Fulfilled By The Resurrection.

Several Old Testament prophecies were fulfilled when Christ resurrected from the dead. Among those, was David’s prophecy in Psalm 16:10: “*For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.*” Peter said that this prophecy was fulfilled in Christ’s resurrection (Acts 2:31-32).

Luke 18:31-34 declares: “*Then he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to*

Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: And they shall scourge him, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again. And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.” (Parallel: Matt. 20:18-19).

Jesus Christ also prophesied concerning Himself and His crucifixion and resurrection. He said 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*” (Matt. 16:21). Mark records that after the Lord’s transfiguration, He told them not to say anything about this until after His resurrection from the dead (Mk. 9:2-10). He told them that they would be scattered because of Him, but He would see them after His resurrection (Mk. 14:27-28). John records that Christ told the people, “*Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up.*” In saying this, He had reference to the resurrection of His body on the third day after His crucifixion (Jn. 2:18-22). After His resurrection, Christ then “*opened [the apostles’] understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures*” and see what it meant for Christ to suffer, die and resurrect the third day (Lk. 24:45-46).

When we read of Christ’s resurrection, and the apostles’ proclaiming the resurrection to be a true event, we see the fulfillment of a great prophecy promised by the Old Testament prophets, and Christ Himself (Matt. 28:1-6, Mk. 16:1-8, Lk. 24:1-9, Jn. 20:1-10)! Without the resurrection of Christ, nothing else matters!

“Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk

What It Means If Christ Did Not Resurrect From The Dead.

The best explanation of what it means if Christ did not resurrect is seen in I Corinthians 15:12-20. There, Paul says that if Christ did not resurrect the third day, then the apostles' preaching was vain, our faith is vain, the apostles were false witnesses in saying that Christ resurrected, we are yet in our sins, and all who have died have perished!!

What a terrible picture painted by the apostle! But thanks be to God that Christ is risen and that we do not have to live in our sins, our faith is not vain, the apostles were not liars, and that their preaching was not in vain! Yet, let us not forget how terrible life would be if Christ was crucified and never came out of the grave!!

We Have The Forgiveness Of Sins By The Resurrection.

I Corinthians 15:17 says, "*if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.*" Since we know that Christ resurrected from the dead, then we know we can have the forgiveness of sins! When Paul wrote about Christ, he said Christ "*was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification*" (Rom. 4:25). The Bible teaches that as a result, the only way to have that justification is through following God's plan of Salvation (Mk. 16:16; Acts 22:16; I Pet. 3:21).

Christ's Resurrection Means One Day We Will Resurrect, Too!

Paul said there will be "*a resurrection*" of the dead, both of the just and the unjust (Acts 24:15). Jesus taught this, and said that "*the hour is coming*" when "*all who are in the graves shall hear his voice*" and will be resurrected to go to either eternal

life or eternal damnation (Jn. 5:28-29). Paul taught the same thing in his epistles (I Thess 4:13-18; II Thess. 1:6-9). I Corinthians 15:20 says Christ has "*become the firstfruits of them the slept.*" Christ's resurrection declares that one day we will resurrect to receive our eternal rewards (Jn. 5:28-29)!! Are you ready for the resurrection?

Something Is Wrong!

Yes, something is wrong when members do not attend all the services of the church.

- ♦ If a person is too sick to go, something is wrong with his health.
- ♦ If he thinks he does not need the help that comes from Bible study classes, something is wrong with his thinking. He doesn't know enough to know what he needs the most.
- ♦ If he sleeps too late, he is lazy.
- ♦ If he does not have the interest to go, something is dangerously wrong with his attitude. Indifference causes people to be lost.
- ♦ If he is too busy to go, something is wrong with his schedule. The person who is too busy to serve the Lord is too busy to go to Heaven.
- ♦ If his clothes are not good enough to go, something is wrong with his pride.
- ♦ If he lets company keep him away,

something is wrong with his courage. He should have courage to serve the Lord even if his company gets offended and goes home. — However, they may decide to go to services with you, hear the gospel, obey and be saved. There is certainly nothing wrong with that!

— *Selected and Adapted*

What We Know Is Right

Benjamin Franklin (1812-1878)

We *know* it is right to "Let the word of Christ dwell in us rightly; and with all wisdom *teach* and *admonish* each other by *psalms* and *hymns* and *spiritual songs*; *singing* with gratitude in our hearts to the Lord" — to be "filled with the Spirit; *speaking* to one another in *psalms* and *hymns* and *spiritual songs*; *singing* and making melody in our hearts to the Lord." This *can* be done, and we *know* it is right; but that a man can make melody in his heart to the Lord "with an organ," a fiddle, banjo, clarinet, lute, fife, or jew's-harp, we do not know, nor do we believe it. We want to do what is written, and enjoin it on others, to do it. What is not written we do not want to do. When the Lord so minutely describes *how* we are to do anything, we want to do it in that *way*. The *way* he prescribes will do the thing commanded; some other *way* might not do what is commanded at all.

(From: Book of Gems, p. 107)

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