Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Reasons for the Resurrection
Scripture: Selected Scriptures
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I wanna speak to you this morning on the subject the reason for the resurrection. The reason for the resurrection. Of the ministry of Jesus, Luke said, "He came preaching." Of the ministry of John the Baptist, Matthew said, "He came preaching," and it was so in the early church, great and gifted men of God came preaching. Men like Peter and Paul and Apollos and Stephen and Philip and others came preaching with passion and compassion. With a divine kind of boldness and fearlessness, they spoke the truth of God, and such preaching from Jesus through the apostles and right on down through the history of the church has been at the very heart of the church's life. Men of God, whose lives were given over totally to Jesus Christ, whose minds were saturated in the Word of God, have been the spokesmen in every age for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They said that George Whitefield, for example, used to preach in Bristol to 20,000 people regularly, and often many as 40,000 people, and near Glasgow, he preached to between 50 and 100,000, and every morning to 10,000 in the morning devotion...At 70 years of age, George Mueller preached regularly to 5,000 people, and there were the great preachers of history. Savannah Rollaand John Huss and many others, Calvin and Luther. More modern times, Moody and Spurgeon and Edwards and Finney and Sunday, and even Billy Graham; and throughout all of the history of the church, at the very heart of the proclamation has been the man of God who speaks the Gospel of God...

Nothing has ever been able to take the place of the uniqueness of preaching...even in the day today of radio and television and books and recordings and tapes and films and musicals and everything. The clear enunciation of the divine truth in the mouth of a man whose heart burns with the fire of God's Word is still the center of the ministry; and the center of all great historic preaching is none other than the resurrection of Jesus Christ; and so I stand before you today as one in a long line of preachers who has had the inestimable privilege of articulating to you the meaning of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. If there is, in any sense in my life, the privilege in any way in which I could take a place in a line that began with Jesus and John and Paul and Peter and others, you can't imagine the thrill and the joy in my heart to be able to stand in the pulpit and to preach the same resurrection that these great men throughout the ages have preached. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the cornerstone of Christianity, the heart of the Gospel, mentioned at least 104 times in the New Testament...

From the Book of Acts until the present day, it is the preaching of the resurrection that is the absolute necessity of Christianity. So, for me, this is a wonderful and a thrilling privilege and opportunity today; and I trust that God will speak as He has spoken in centuries past through those who have

endeavored to proclaim the meaning of the resurrection...

I suppose most people accept Easter. There's certainly a lot to do about it. I suppose most people even accept that Jesus rose from the dead. It's just that it doesn't really mean that much. It...it just doesn't have any implications. There just aren't any ramifications. It just doesn't make any impact on their life; but it must. It must. We...we can't stop with just saying, "Jesus rose." We've got to also say, "So what? What does it mean? What does it have to do with me? What are the results? For what reason did He rise? What was its intention? What was its purpose? What did it accomplish?" And that's precisely what we wanna talk about this morning.

Why did He rise? The reason for the resurrection, and I wanna share with you four dimensions of the significance of the resurrection. Four dimensions of the significance of the resurrection. And I pray God that it'll open to your mind some new understanding of the absolute urgency of the resurrection. I don't wanna say just what you already know. I want you to see it in a whole new light. The resurrection is everything, absolutely everything at the very heart of Christianity; and, by the way, I'm gonna use a lotta Scripture, so get your Bible handy.

This week, I was asking the Lord what I should speak on, and so I decided that I would study the great sermons in the Book of Acts on the resurrection and see how they did it; and I found out as I studied those great sermons that they were all basically expositions of certain Scriptures. And I decided, "Then, that's what I'll do." We'll just go into the Word of God and see what the Bible says about the meaning of the resurrection.

Dimension No. 1 that I want you to see this morning is this. The significance of the resurrection in relation to His Father. How did Jesus view the resurrection in relation to His Father? You see, the resurrection doesn't just have implications for us. It had implications within the Trinity. First of all, Jesus arose in relation to His Father. Look with me at the 17th chapter of John...the 17th of John, and let me show you two statements. First of all in verse 11. Jesus is anticipating His work on earth is done. Only one thing remains, and that's His death and then His resurrection; and He will return at that point to the Father; and it'll be all over; and He will go back to that which He knew before. The humiliation will end; and, in that anticipation, verse 11 says, as Jesus talks with the Father, "And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to Thee, Holy Father." Now stop right there. Jesus looked at the resurrection as the avenue back to God.

Now, look at verse 13. "And now come I to Thee." And stop again. Just those two times does Jesus in His high priestly prayer to the Father say, "Father, as I see the cross and the resurrection, and as I realize that I near the end, that I'm near the end, My soul is filled with anticipation, because I'm coming home." You see, the resurrection had implications in relation to the Father. Jesus was coming home. He was gonna go back to the Father. You say, "Of what significance is that?" Three things. No. 1, He was returning to the Father's fellowship. He was returning to the Father's

fellowship. Listen, John 1:1 says this, "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was...what?...with God." In the Greek text says that in this sense, "And the Word was face-to-face with God." There was an equivalence. There was a union there. There was an interchange of Trinitarian fellowship inconceivable to the human mind. There was a face-to-face relationship. There was an equivalent glory. They were there face-to-face...and then Jesus came into the world; and the hymn writer said it this way. "Out of the ivory palaces into a world of woe."

Jesus left that face-to-face relationship. The Apostle Paul discusses it in these words. "Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought it not something to hold onto." Philippians 2 says, "To be equal with God or held not to that equivalency, held not onto that relationship, that face-to-face relationship, but made Himself of no reputation, took upon Him the form of a servant, was made in the likeness of men, and being found and fashioned as a Man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

Here is Jesus in this face-to-face glory relationship with the Father, an intimate fellowship, but He thought it not something to hold onto; and so He gave it up and took upon Himself the form of a servant and came into the world to die in humiliation and pain and to bear the sins of the whole world in His own body. Now, listen, that was a big step for God, the second person of the Trinity. That was a big, big step to leave the Father's fellowship, to take the role of a servant. Night after night, when Jesus was on the earth, the Bible records for us that when the evening came and the people in Jerusalem made their way to their homes, Jesus, who had no home, made His way to the Mount of Olives; and somewhere among the olive trees, He would rest and sleep, but mostly He would talk to the Father. And I'm sure in the interchange of what must be a inconceivable communion between God the Son and God the Father, there was the longing in the heart of the Son to restore Himself to the fellowship of the Father that He had once known. And then, of course, when He came to the cross, He was hanging on that cross; He felt the fai...the fact that God had turned away from Him, and He cried in a sense of desperation which gives us the ultimate, ultimate understanding of the incarnation; and He said, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

You see, fellowship at that point was separated. That's part of the incarnation. Jesus gave up something of that intimate fellowship. In the 14th chapter of John in the 28th verse, listen to these beautiful words. Jesus is telling the disciples that He's gonna leave, and they're so broken up about their own sorrow, they don't even think about He...how He feels. They're moping around and moaning and croan...groaning and crying and weeping. They can't imagine being without Jesus Christ. It's just too painful to think about. So they're all very sad, and their hearts are troubled. And in verse 28, He said, "You have heard how I said unto you, 'I go away and come again unto you.' If ye loved Me, ye would rejoice...now listen...because I said, 'I go unto the Father.'"

Now stop right there. He said, "If you really saw it from My side and not your side, you'd be happy, because My humiliation is over." The selfish disciples could only think of what Jesus' death meant to

them. They couldn't think of what it meant to Him. They couldn't think of what it meant to Him to go back to the Father. The humiliation had been bitter. The humiliation had been undeserved. It had been hard, and it had been long, and He had suffered so much at the hands of those He loved so totally; and now it was almost over; and He could begin to feel in His heart the anticipation of being back in the fellowship of the Father in the fullness of what He'd known before the incarnation; and He says to them, "If you'd have only seen it from My side, you'd have rejoiced."

Look at John 17 again in verse 4; and here our Lord says to the Father in this beautiful prayer anticipating His return to the Father after His resurrection. He says, "I have glorified Thee on the earth; I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do...Now watch...And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own Self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world began. Take Me back to the face-to-face glory. Take Me back to that equivalent, that equality that I knew. Just give Me back the glory that I had." Now notice this. Jesus doesn't ask for any more glory than He had before, because He couldn't have any more, because He was God, and God is always all glorious. He just says, "Restore Me to what it was before."

In His heart, there was perfect obedience; and as He sensed the obedience coming to its climax in the cross and the resurrection, He could feel the fellowship of the Father pulling His heart...So listen, beloved. The resurrection of Jesus Christ had meaning in relation to His Father, because it meant that He could return to the Father's fellowship. No resurrection, no return. No return to the Father, Jesus never had any fellowship again with God; and when He came into this world and died, that fellowship was ended forever, if there's no resurrection; and all of His hopes and His prayer in John 17 went unanswered if there's no resurrection.

Secondly, not only did He wanna go back to the Father for this...the reason of the Father's fellowship, but, secondly, for the Father's exaltation. The Father's exaltation. Listen, verse 5, He said it. "Glorify Thou Me with Thine own Self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world began." In John 14:28, He says, as I read to you, "If you looked at it from My side, you would rejoice because I said, 'I go to My Father,' for My Father is greater than I. Don't you realize this means exaltation? Not greater in essence, greater in assignment. At this moment, the Father sits in a greater glory than the humiliated Son, but I'm going back to that equivalent greatness, and you should rejoice." He saw it in not only the Father's fellowship, but the Father's exaltation; and the Apostle Paul picked that up. In the same passage I read to you earlier in Philippians 2 when He said after His humiliation, when it was done, this is what it says, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow."

Listen, He wanted the resurrection for the sake of the return to the Father's fellowship and for the sake of the Father's exaltation; and God highly exalted Him and gave Him a name above every name. Jesus had come all the way down to the depths of humiliation. He was born in a stable. His life gave Him no shelter. He had no place to lay His head. "The foxes have holes. The birds of the air have

nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head," He said. He...He took the abuse and the hatred and the jeers and the slurs of evil men. He was mocked and cursed and spit upon and, finally, He was crucified. A bitter cup, but He drank it willingly. And now, as He begins to see the garb of lowliness falling off of Him, He begins to sense the glory that is going to be His. In anticipation, He cries out to be glorified in the way that He was.

Listen, the resurrection was important to Him in relation to the Father. It meant the Father's fellowship; and it meant the Father's exaltation. The Father would only exalt one of whom the Father approved. So the resurrection had meaning in relation to the Father. And, lastly, under that point, not only to return to the Father's fellowship and to experience the Father's exaltation, but to verify the Father's Word. You know, that Christ wants to hold up the Father. The Bible teaches us the Spirit wants to point to Christ; and that Jesus came to show us the Father. Jesus wants to put God on display. That's why He came; and so He always wants to fulfill God's Word; and do you know what God's Word said? Listen, in Psalm 2, God said this about the Son, "I will declare the decree...verse 7...The Lord hath said unto Me, 'Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee.'"

In other words, the Father made a prophecy about the Son. "This day have I begotten Thee." Now listen to me. That is not a prophecy of the virgin birth of the Son. That is a prophecy of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, that He would be begotten again from the dead. You say, "How do you know it's the resurrection?" Because in Acts chapter 13, that is precisely what it says. The sermon of Paul, "And we declare unto you...verse 32...glad tidings, how the promise which was made to the fathers: God hath fulfilled the same unto 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 I have begotten Thee.'" That was a resurrection prophecy; and Jesus rose from the dead to verify the Father's Word. No resurrection, you can't trust God's Word...

In Psalm 16 further, verse...10, God the Holy Spirit through David said this of the Messiah, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in Sheol; neither wilt Thou permit Thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt show Me the path of life." Verse 9, "My flesh shall rest in hope." There is the prophecy of resurrection. The flesh would rest in hope. It would never know corruption and would be going through to the path of life. That is a prophecy that the New Testament says was fulfilled in Jesus Christ, the same text, Acts 13:35, "Wherefore He saith also in another Psalm: 'Thou shalt not allow Thine Holy One to see corruption.'"

The early preachers got the message. God had promised. God had predicted the resurrection in these Psalms. There is yet another Psalm, Psalm 110 and verse 1, a beautiful word. Listen to what it says. "The Lord said unto my Lord...now here you've got inter-Trinitarian conversation...The Lord the Father said unto my Lord the Son, 'Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool.'" Now listen. If He's gonna exalt Him to His right hand and make His enemies His footstool, then He must overcome what His enemies did to Him on the cross. Right? And that could only

happen through resurrection. That, too, is a prophecy of resurrection; and that was part and parcel of Peter's sermon in Acts chapter 2. Peter says in verse 34, "For David is not ascended into the heavens, but he saith himself, 'The Lord said to my Lord, 'Sit Thou on My right hand until I make Thy foes Thy footstool.'"

Now, you can see just from three Psalms and the prophecy...the three prophecies, rather, in the Psalms. From...we could mention also Isaiah 55:3, which is used in the 13th chapter of Acts also, that the Father had said the Son would rise; and for the Son to rise was to verify the Father's Word. Listen, if you and I weren't even around to be considered in the thought, Jesus would've risen from the dead in order that He might be restored to the Father's fellowship, that He might be exalted by the Father, and that He might verify the Father's Word. So the resurrection had great significance in relation to the Father.

Secondly, the resurrection had great significance in relation to the Spirit...Christ saw the resurrection in relation to His Spirit, the Holy Spirit. Look at Acts 2:32. Acts 2:32, and listen to these great words. Peter is preaching on the day of Pentecost, "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted...now watch...and having received from the Father the promise of the Spirit, He hath shed forth this, which you now see and hear." And what had they just seen and heard? They had just seen the coming of the Spirit of God, hadn't they? And they had just heard the manifestation, the mighty rushing wind, as it were, and the...and the languages that were spoken. They had seen and heard the arrival of the Spirit, and he says, "This has happened because God has raised Jesus, and He sent the Spirit."

Now listen. It is essential that Jesus comes out of the grave in order that He may send the Spirit. So the resurrection has implication in relation to the Spirit. Look at John 16 verse 7. John's Gospel 16th chapter 7th verse. "Nevertheless...Jesus said, talking that last night before His death with His disciples...I tell you the truth. It is expedient for you that I go away...now listen...for I got not away, the Comforter...who is the Holy Spirit...will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you." In other words, the coming of the Holy Spirit is contingent on the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ...

Jesus said in Acts chapter 1, "Wait for the promise of the Father, that He will send the Holy Spirit." And they waited, and they had to wait until Jesus risen, ascended, been exalted, and then sent the Spirit. Now, beloved, listen. No resurrection, no ascension. No ascension, no exaltation. No exaltation, no Holy Spirit. What were the specifics of the Spirit's coming? Listen. First of all, the Spirit has come to empower the witness of Jesus Christ. The Spirit has come for the purpose of witnessing. Look at John 15:26, right in the same area of your Bible. John 15:26. "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth who proceeds from the Father, He shall testify of Me." Okay, listen there. The number one witness to Jesus Christ in the world is the Spirit, and in Acts 1:8, Jesus said it this way. "You will receive power after the Holy

Spirit is come upon you, and then you will be witnesses unto me." Right?

Listen, beloved, if Jesus didn't rise, then the Holy Spirit didn't come; and if the Holy Spirit didn't come, we can't be witnesses, because we can't do it in our own flesh, can we? Can't be done...And so the Holy Spirit came, first of all, to empower the witness, to empower the testimony to Jesus Christ. Secondly, He has come to convict the unbelieving. Look at John 16:8, "And when He is come He will reprove the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment." In other words, He is gonna convict men's hearts. He is going to reprove them of sin, because they believe not on Me. The first thing the Holy Spirit really tackles in the heart of an individual is the terrible sin of rejecting Christ. That's the sin of verse 9, the sin of "not believing on Me." And, secondly, He convicts men of righteousness; and he means by that the righteousness of Jesus Christ. "Because I go to My Father," Jesus means this, "Look, the Holy Spirit is gonna show people that if God, a holy, just, and righteous God accepted and exalted Me, then I am righteous." And so the Spirit of God will confirm the righteousness of Christ and the sinfulness of a non-belief in Him.

And then, thirdly, the Holy Spirit will convict men of judgment because the prince of this world is judged. In other words, if Satan is judged, then who are you to think that you could possibly escape? If God is going to judge one of the power of Satan, there's no way you will ever escape. So the Spirit of God is gonna come, not only to empower the one doing the witnessing, but to convict the one receiving the witness. You see?

Now, listen, evangelism is totally dependent upon the Holy Spirit. The coming of the Holy Spirit is totally dependent upon the ascension of Jesus Christ. The ascension of Jesus Christ is totally dependent upon His resurrection. No resurrection, no testimony, no conviction...and so it is that the resurrection of Jesus Christ has implications in relation to His Spirit for the power of testimony and the conviction of sin.

Another thing that the Spirit's come to do, I think is so vital, is to instruct the apostles. When Jesus went back to Heaven and sent the Spirit, the Spirit came to instruct the apostles. Listen, the Holy Spirit is the author of the Bible. Second Peter 1:21 says that men of God, as they were moved along by the Holy Spirit, wrote the Old Testament. Same is true of the New Testament. Holy men of God moved along by the Holy Spirit have written the New Testament.

Now, lemme tell you something. If Jesus never rose, then He never ascended; and if He never ascended, He never sent His Spirit; and if He never sent His Spirit, there is no Holy Spirit to inspire the writers of the New Testament; and you can't believe it. It isn't trustworthy. It's man's work. Now listen to this, John 14:25. "These things have I spoken unto you, being present with you. But the Comforter, who is the Holy Spirit...now listen...whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatever I have said unto you." Now, this is not primarily a general promise to all believers. This is a promise to the apostles and those who

wrote the New Testament. That is its primary significance; and He says, "The Holy Spirit will teach you all things, bring all things to your recall, whatever I have said to you." In other words, He will enable you to rightly and accurately put down the Word of God.

Look at the 16th of John, again in the 13th verse, and Jesus says, "I have a lot to say you, but I can't say it now. You can't bear it." But verse 13, "Nevertheless, when He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth." And this was a gilt-edged guarantee of authority and inerrancy and inspiration for the writers of the New Testament. "He will tell you what it is that God says. Thus shall He speak." Beloved, there is a secondary application. I think the Holy Spirit does work in our hearts to help us to understand the Word of God, doesn't He?

I think 1 John 2:20 and 27 says we have an anointing from God so that we don't have to depend upon human teachers, because the Holy Spirit shows us the things of God and the Word of God. Listen to me, if there was no resurrection, there was no Holy Spirit. If there's no Holy Spirit, there was no guarantee that the New Testament is true, and there's no resident truth-teacher in our hearts to help us to understand what it means. We are not only without hope, we are without the Word of God; because the Spirit is the author; and if Jesus didn't rise, then He didn't come and inspire the writers. And never again will it ever be said of anyone, as it was of those on the road to Emmaus, "Oh, how our hearts burned within us as He talked with us in the way." This is not the Word of God if Jesus didn't rise. And so you can see that the resurrection has implications to the Spirit, because He must come to be the witness, to be the convicter, to be the inspiration for the New Testament writers, as well as the illuminator for those who study it.

Fourthly, the relationship of the resurrection to the Holy Spirit is important, because He comes to abide in the church. He comes to abide in the church. John 14:16, the greatest legacy Jesus gave us...He says, "I'll pray the Father, and He'll give you another Comforter." The word another is allas, another exactly like Myself. "'That He may abide with you forever,' even the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it sees Him not, neither knows Him. But ye know Him, for He dwelleth with you, and shall be...where?...in you."

Listen, beloved, the Holy Spirit came to dwell in the church to empower the church, to instruct the church; and if Jesus didn't rise, He didn't come; and we don't have the Holy Spirit; and our bodies are not the temple of the Holy Spirit; and we are not built together as a habitation of the Spirit. There is no Holy Spirit here if Jesus didn't rise...No resurrection, no Spirit. No Spirit, no church...So the resurrection had a central relationship to the Father and the Spirit.

Third major point, I think you have to understand how Jesus saw His resurrection in relation to His people; and this comes down to us. You say, "I'm so glad for the part about the Father. I'm so glad that Jesus saw His resurrection in relation to the Father as restoring fellowship, as bringing exaltation, as verifying the Father's Word; and I'm so glad that He saw it in relation to the Spirit, as sending the

Spirit who would help us to witness, who would convict of sin, who would instruct the apostles to write, and who would dwell in the church. That's great, but what about His relation...His resurrection in relation to us?

Well, these are the things we know the best, but let's look at Romans 4:24 and 25 as a starting point; and I'm just gonna suggest these very briefly. What does it mean to us that Jesus rose? We've seen the implications of it already in the Spirit, but let's be specific. Romans 4:24 talks about "believing on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead...now watch...who...verse 25...was delivered for our offenses...now watch this...and was raised again for our justification." Now do you see here is the implication of the resurrection for us. He was raised not only for fellowship with the Father. He was raised not only for exaltation, not only to honor the Father's Word, not only to send the Spirit to do the things the Spirit does. He was raised for us, as well, for our justification, for our righteousness. Justification means to declare us just, to declare us righteous. He was raised as the one who bore our sins, paid the price...for our salvation. He was raised that we might be declared just; and the only way God could ever declare us just is when the penalty was paid. We come into the court, God says, "You're guilty." Jesus says, "All right, they're guilty. I've paid the penalty." That settles the case, and God says, "On the basis that the penalty is paid, I declare that you're just." And He goes a step beyond that. He takes the...the righteousness of Jesus Christ like a...like a huge curtain and just drapes it over us, so that we're covered in His righteousness. He sees us one in Christ, so that we're inseparable. When the Father looks at us now, He doesn't see us. He sees Jesus Christ.

It's like Paul said, "Nevertheless, I live, yet not I, but...what?...Christ lives in me." By virtue of our union with Jesus Christ, God says we're just. Now, listen, listen to this. We are just...by the resurrection. If Jesus died and didn't rise, then His penalty paid wasn't adequate, didn't make it. It wasn't sufficient. He couldn't conquer death. He didn't gain the victory. But if He did rise, then we're made just.

Lemme show you some specifics. What does it mean to us? First of all, it means He delivered us from sin. That's what we're saying. He delivered us from sin. Listen, in 1 Corinthians 15:17 it says this. "If Christ is still dead, you are still in your sins. But if He's alive, then your sins are gone."...Now, listen to this. I'll help you understand how this works. How are we righteous? We are righteous, not only because of the historical act of Christ on the cross, but watch this. We are righteous only, I say this again, righteous only because we are in Him, right? "God made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin...2 Corinthians 5:21...that we might be made the righteousness of God...and what are the last two words?...in Him."

If, listen, we can only be righteous in Him. If He's dead, we can't be in Him. We can't be righteous. You got it? It is only a living Christ who can be united with a living human. It is only a living Christ who can transmit His living righteousness. If Jesus doesn't rise, we're in our sin. There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ. But if there's no Christ, we can't be in Him, and there's no

freedom from condemnation. But because He's alive, and because He's righteous, and by faith in His death and resurrection, we are one in Him. His righteousness is ours. So in relation to His people, Christ's resurrection means deliverance from sin, and the granting of Christ's own righteousness.

Secondly, His resurrection in relation to us means He gives us life. He gives us life. Jesus said at the home of Lazarus, "I am the resurrection and the life." John 11:25, "He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." Do you believe this? And in John 14:19, He said these marvelous words, unequaled. He said, "Because I live, ye, too, shall live also." And He was promising not only abundant life, but eternal life. In Hebrews 2:14, it says that "He destroyed him that had the power of death, even the devil." In 1 Corinthians 15, it says, "He rose from the grave, not alone, but as the first fruits of all those that slept."...

So it is that Jesus, by rising from the dead, gives us life. In Romans 6, the Apostle Paul says, "We were buried with Him by our faith, and we rose again to walk in newness of life, dead to sin, alive to God. A new life, sensitive to God, with a heavenly citizenship, possessing divine resources, delivered from the power of death with a physical resurrection and an eternal relationship with God in life in His presence."

So it is that the resurrection means for us a deliverance from sin, the gift of life, and, thirdly, it means for us that He's preparing a place for us. When the disciples were crying and moaning around in the 14th chapter of John, Jesus said to them, "Stop letting your hearts be troubled. Believe in God. Believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, I would've told you. I have to go...for what purpose?...to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I'll come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." He says, "Look...he says...I'm going so I can get it ready for you to come." The resurrection of Jesus Christ means deliverance from sin. It means life, and it means a place that's being prepared for us.

Listen to me, beloved, if there's no resurrection, then there's no deliverance from sin, and there's no life, and there's no Heaven...because it's the resurrected Christ who's getting it ready. Jesus prayed in John 17, "Father...I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am. Father, I wanna bring 'em where I am." Was that a wistful dream? I think not. That was a confident hope. He is preparing a place. Listen, there's no Kingdom without Christ; and there's no Heaven. Why, in Revelation 21 it says, "He's the Lamp of Heaven." If there's no Lamp there, then Heaven isn't Heaven...

So the resurrection of Jesus Christ in relation to His people meant deliverance from sin, the gift of life, a prepared place. Fourthly, it means power for life. It isn't easy to live in this world, and so we have power; and you know what kind of power it is? Ephesians 1 tells us what kind it is. He says, "I want you to understand the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe." And what kind of

power is it? It's the power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead. Listen, the promise of God to the believer is resurrection power. The Apostle Paul in Philippians 3:10 said, "O that I may know Him and the power of His...what?...resurrection."...Power that enables us to do exceeding, abundantly, above all we could ask or think. Power that enables us if we be raised with Christ to set our affections on things above and not on things of the earth. Colossians 3:1 and 2. Listen, beloved, if there's no resurrection, then there's no power. We are impotent; but if Christ is raised, then we posses that very resurrection power for the matter of living victoriously.

And then, fifthly, in relation to His people, He rose in order to intercede. His resurrection secures for us deliverance from sin, life, a prepared place, power, and an intercessor. Boy, it's great to know that. He is seated at the right hand of the Father, and "He ever liveth to make intercession for us." Hebrews 7:25. Hebrews 9:24, they tell us that He is the one interceding for us. Hebrews 4 says, "He's made the way for us to come boldly to the throne of grace in time of need."...

He is there, according to Romans 8, defending us against the accusations of anybody; and it says, "Who will lay...lay any charge to God's elect?" Christ is there as our advocate. The accuser of the brother in Satan come as he will can lay no charge on us. Christ is the lawyer for the defense, and He always wins His case. He is the one who secures us forever. What shall separate us from the love of Christ? Nothing, nothing, nothing, Paul says at the end of Romans 8. He is constantly cleansing us from sin. If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and 1:9 says, "Who keeps on cleansing us from all sin." He is there making the way for us to come into the Father's presence. He is there throwing aside the accusations. He is there interceding on our behalf, constantly cleansing us from sin.

And, by the way, beloved, Romans 5:10, one of the greatest verses in the Bible says, "If His death could do as much as it did for us, what must His life at the right hand of the Father be able to do for us?" If a Christ dead on a cross can redeem us unto eternal life, what must a living Christ be able to do for us? We've been saved by His death. How much more shall we be being saved by His life? Incredible thought.

What does the resurrection mean to us? Deliverance from sin; eternal, abundant life; a place in heaven; present power; an intercessor and an advocate; and one more thing. It means a returning King. Someday He's gonna come back for us; and, by the way, if He didn't rise, He'll never be back; and if He'll never be back, there'll never be a resolution to history. It'll never be made right. Everything's gonna go on just like it's going now. But if Jesus rose, then He's coming again. In Philippians wonderful text, chapter 3 verse 20 reminds us of these words. "Our citizenship is in Heaven from which we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our lowly body that it may be fashioned like His glorious body." Listen, beloved, if He's not alive, then that isn't gonna happen, 'cause He doesn't have a glorious body. But if He's alive and glorified in His resurrection form, then someday He's gonna come and make us like Himself.

So Christ's resurrection was...was vital. In relation to the Father, the fellowship, exaltation, verification of the Father's Word. For the Spirit, that He might come to witness and to convict and to inspire and to indwell; and for the church, that we might have all these wondrous things.

But there's a last category...Christ's resurrection in relation to His rejecters. What does resurrection mean to you that don't believe? To you that don't name Christ as Savior? To you that are not a part of His body, the church. What does it mean to you? Oh, it has great significance. Oh, my, yes. He came back because He's got business to do with you. He didn't stay dead. He rose, because He was yet to get the last word in relation to His rejecters. Revelation 1:18, hear the words of Jesus. "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen, and have the keys of Hades and death." The implication of one who has the keys of Hades and death is a jail keeper. Somebody who's about to lock up somebody.

You know, Satan and the world of rejecters may think that the crucifixion was the last laugh, that the crucifixion was the last word on Jesus Christ. Mark it. The last book of the Bible, Revelation says He'll be back, and He's the one who has the keys; and He's the one who makes the ultimate determination of destiny. In 2 Thessalonians 1 and verse 7, it says this. "And to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power."

Listen, He is alive because He will return to judge. He'll have the last word...The Apostle Paul fearlessly stood on Mars Hill. In the 17th chapter of Acts, faced the pagan philosophers and said this, "God now commandeth all men everywhere to repent, because He hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He had ordained, concerning which He give...He has given assurance unto all men in that He hath...what?...raised Him from the dead." When God raised Jesus, it was to enable Him to be the judge of the world. That's Acts 17:31, and He'll come back in judgment...

The risen, living Christ...will be the judge of all men. Listen, the resurrection is the most profound event in history. It is not an isolated religious event. It touches the history of the world and the destiny of every single human being who ever lived...Where do you find yourself this morning?...Are you like me? Do you rejoice? Do you say, "Oh, how wonderful it is that the humiliated and suffering Son was able to go back to the Father's fellowship and the Father's exaltation, having verified the Father's Word as an obedient Son. Oh, how wonderful it is that He went back and sent the Spirit to give us power to witness. To convict the hearts of unbelieving people that they would come to Christ. To inspire the Word of God, and to indwell the church. Oh, how wonderful that He has come to deliver from sin, to give life, to be our intercessor, to empower us, to prepare a place for us to come,

to return and get us again." Are you one of those who stands in great joy and exaltation because of what the resurrection means?

Or do you find yourself in category four? Do you find yourself waiting in fear as one who has never received Jesus Christ for the time He comes in judgment? It's inevitable. It's inevitable. Beloved, do you understand one thing? Do you understand that without the resurrection you've got nothing? Nothing. The Trinity is ruined. The work of the Spirit is ruined. The work of salvation is a myth, and the history of the world doesn't ever end in judgment or resolution. It just goes on in some kind of craziness as it is now. Everything is wrong...if there's no resurrection. That's why I said at the beginning, and I say it again. The cornerstone of Christianity is the resurrection, and that's why, from the apostles till today, the great preachers of the Word of God, the great preachers of the Gospel of God have always heralded the resurrection of Jesus Christ...

And so Paul said these words, "Thou shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, and confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord. Thou shalt be...what?...saved." The first sermon ever preached on the resurrection...was preached by Peter in Acts 2; and when it was all done, and he closed his sermon, the Bible says, "And they were pricked in their hearts, and the people looked at each other and they said, 'Men and brethren, what must we do?' And Peter said, 'Repent and be baptized because of the forgiveness of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'" And 3,000 people did that, and their lives were transformed that day. So can yours be. Let's pray together.

Blessed Lord, we thank You that You're alive. We've sensed Your presence this morning moving through our fellowship. We know You love everybody here...and that You hold back no good thing to the willing heart. I pray that Your Holy Spirit will do the work of conviction, even as He has done the work of energizing the testimony today. Oh, Holy Spirit, touch hearts. Convict of sin, righteousness, and judgment...And I pray, Lord, that no one would leave this morning...without committing himself to the fact that Jesus is alive and offers salvation to any who take it.

While your heads are bowed, just prayerfully, don't move, and no one leaving for just a moment. Between you and the Lord, you can settle an eternal issue this morning. If you don't know the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, you have no hope. You are in category four awaiting His return for judgment. On the other hand, all the rest can be yours by faith in Him. And if the desire of your heart is to know Jesus Christ, why don't you just tell Him that in your heart right now?...Why don't you just say, "I wanna believe these things. I want Christ to come into my life...I admit I'm a sinner, and I need His salvation." I hope you did that.

Father, we thank You this morning for what You've done through Your Word, through Your Spirit. Give us a great day. We so...we're so thankful that You're alive; and because You live, we live. Help us to pass it on in the energy of the Spirit. We will praise You in Jesus' name.

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