

What the Resurrection Proves

Selected Scriptures

1282

The famous Sir Walter Raleigh was beheaded in the tower...and after his execution, his Bible was found, and in it some notes that he had written the night before his execution. Among the notes were these striking lines. "Even such is time that takes in trust our youth. Our joys are all we have, and pays us but with age and dust to win the dark and silent grave. When we have wandered all our ways, shuts up the story of our days, but from this earth, this grave, this dust, my God shall raise me up, I trust."

Was he right? Could he have that confidence? Is there a resurrection?...The world hopes so. It's amazing to me that in the midst of their insistent and persistent sinning, the world stops every year at this time to celebrate...hope, life after death, resurrection; and even though it is only a token...of religion offered to Christ, it nonetheless manifests that from deep within the human heart there is that hope. That as Sir Walter Raleigh put it, "My God shall raise me up, I trust."

Some even more religious souls feel that you sort of have to work your way up to resurrection Sunday, and so they celebrate what has become known as Lent. Forty days of eating no meat and, supposedly, expressing penitence for sin. I suppose its, in most cases, hypocritical, since penitence for sin is not accomplished by some self-directed abstinence or some self-motivated plea toward God, and its hypocrisy is also seen, I think, in the fact that before Lent, people tend to really pile up the sinning since they have to do without for a while...

In fact, there are two words that come to mind when you think of the pre-Lenten season. One is the term Mardi Gras, and the other is carnival. In our country, we're familiar with Mardi Gras. In other parts of the world, they celebrate carnival. It is a time of unbridled sinning, of drunkenness, rioting, sexual misbehavior, getting ready for penitence...in view of Easter. In fact, Mardi Gras comes from two French words. If you know French, you know that the French word Mardi means Tuesday, and gras means fat. Fat Tuesday is the last day before Lent, and you better get fat now, because you're gonna go without for a while. Carnival comes from words that we're familiar with. Carne, we know from chili con carne, means meat. Val, we know from high school days when somebody was the valedictorian and gave a farewell speech, means farewell. Carnival means farewell to meat. So you have a big party before you get spiritual just to make sure you don't miss anything; and then you hope against hope that it'll all turn out in the end if you're penitent enough and abstain from enough, maybe someday God will raise you up.

By the way, as a footnote, Lent is not from the Bible. There is no such thing in the Bible. It comes from the mystery religions of the cults of Babylon and was connected with the supposed killing of Baal by a wild boar; and for forty days and forty nights, the priestesses and the followers of Baal mourned his death until, supposedly, he rose from the dead on the 40th day, and that is where Lent came from, and it has been superimposed on Christianity...

The world rather confuses the issue further by throwing into the already hashed up situation eggs, rabbits, candy, rites of spring, new clothes, and hopes the mix will solve their destiny...So for most people Easter is simply an event, a break in the sinning. But for the Christian, every day is resurrection day; because we walk and talk with the living Christ every day; because His living is through us every day. We do not celebrate an event. We do not remember a dead Savior. We are not attracted by painfully distorted crucifixes. We worship, we love, we live every day in the presence of a risen, living Lord Jesus Christ.

So every day is an Easter celebration for us. Every day is resurrection day. That doesn't mean it's wrong to focus on this in a special way. While the world's attention is brought to Christ, we wanna take every opportunity to speak of our Lord's resurrection, for that is ever and always our message; and for a brief time today, I want us to look at the resurrection. I suppose most times we are drawn to deal with the skeptics, and we're drawn to ask the question, "What proves the resurrection?" But I don't wanna deal with that question today. I think that question has been answered already myriad of times. The proof of the resurrection is so complete that only willful unbelief is still asking for more. I'm not interested today in the question, "What proves the resurrection?" I'm interested in the question, "What does the resurrection prove?"

Give that Jesus rose from the dead, and it's hard...hard, by the way, to argue with an empty tomb...and 500 eyewitnesses. Given that He did rise from the dead, so what? What does that prove? What does that mean? What does that guarantee? What does that provide? What does that do? Why is that valuable? Why is it important?

And so think of the question then, "What does the resurrection prove?" Let me give you some key answers. First of all, it proves the truthfulness of the Word of God. The truthfulness of the Word of God. The Bible claims to be the Word of God. The Bible claims to speak the truth, authoritatively, inerrantly. Is that claim justified? Perhaps the greatest of all proofs that it is, is the resurrection. Lemme show you why. Turn in your Bible for a moment to Acts chapter 2 verse 22. Acts chapter 2 verse 22. Peter is preaching the first apostolic sermon. The Lord has ascended into Heaven and sent the Holy Spirit. Peter stands up now to fulfill the calling of his apostleship, and he preaches, "Ye men of Israel, hear these words...Acts 2:22...Jesus of Nazareth, a Man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, and ye yourselves also know - Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." And he indicts with those words the populace for the death of Christ.

Then verse 24, "Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it." God raised Him up, and then Peter immediately proceeds to explain the meaning of Psalm 16 verses 8 to 11, written by David. Verse 25 begins, "For David speaks concerning Him." And he picks up this prophecy of the Old Testament, and he quotes it. "I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for He is on my right hand, that I should not be moved. Therefore did my heart rejoice and my tongue was glad; moreover my flesh also shall rest in hope, because Thou wilt not leave my soul in Hades, neither wilt Thou allow Thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou has made known to me the path of life; Thou shalt make me full of joy with Thy countenance."

And there Peter quotes Psalm 16, and he says, "David was speaking, and David was speaking

concerning Him when he said that His flesh would rest in hope." Verse 27, "That His soul would not be left in a waiting place, that His body would never see corruption; but, rather, He would go into the grave and find there the path of life, and go right back into the joyous presence of the face of God." It is a prophecy of resurrection, clearly, and it is understood to be a prophecy of resurrection. But to whom does it apply?

Verse 29, "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day." Point No. 1, it can't refer to David. He's still dead. But David, verse 30, "Being a prophet and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh He would raise up Christ or Messiah to sit on his throne. He, seeing this before, spoke of the resurrection of Christ that, 'His soul was not left in Hades, neither His flesh did see corruption.'" In other words, David was speaking of the One who would be from his loins, the Messiah; and, by the way, the key to that is in verse 27. He calls Him the Holy One. "Thou wilt not suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption." David knew that that was not a reference to him. Everyone knew the Holy One was Messiah, even the demons knew that; and in Mark 1:24, the demons cried out and said, "Art Thou come to destroy us? I know Thee who Thou art - the Holy One of God." Even the demons knew that that was a Messianic title.

So Psalm 16 then predicts the resurrection of the Messiah from the dead. Now, when the Bible makes a prediction, if it does not come to pass, then the Bible shows that it is invalid, so that the truthfulness of the Word of God is dependent on the resurrection of Jesus Christ; and when He came out of the grave, the prophecy of Psalm 16 was vindicated and verified, proven to be true, and that stands as evidence for the veracity of the Scripture.

Go with me to another passage in the 13th chapter of Acts, verse 30. Not Peter this time, but Paul, and Paul speaking of the resurrection. It says in verse 30, "God raised Him from the dead," and then Paul goes on, "And He was seen many days by them who came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are His witnesses unto the people. And we declare unto you glad tidings...now watch this...how the promise which was made unto the fathers: God hath fulfilled." In other words, Paul says, "This is fulfilled prophecy," and where is the promise? Verse 33. "It is written in the second Psalm." Psalm 2 verse 7, "Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee." Not only was He begotten once in His incarnation, He was begotten secondly and manifested His Sonship in His resurrection. Psalm 2:7 fulfilled.

Verse 34 speaks of Isaiah 55 and verse 3, "And as concerning that He raised Him from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, He said in this way: 'Will give you the sure mercies of David.'" Now, how can He give Him the Davidic throne? How can He give Him the promised mercy to David? How can He give Him the Kingdom if He's dead? He can't, so the promise of Isaiah 55:3 to give Him the sure mercies of David is a promise of resurrection. For Isaiah 53 speaks of His death. Isaiah 55 of His inheritance, and, therefore, between His death and His inheritance, there must be a resurrection.

And then in verse 35, he refers to Psalm 16. He says, "Also in another Psalm: 'Thou shalt not allow Thine Holy One to see corruption.' For David after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell asleep was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption." It couldn't be David. "But He whom God raised again saw no corruption." It always interested me that Christ was in the grave three days, and the Jewish tradition even was that decay began the fourth day...and so even the tradition was

accommodated in the resurrection.

In Luke chapter 24, Jesus on the road to Emmaus walks alongside two disciples, and He speaks to them and says they are slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken. In other words, if you'd have understood the prophets, you'd have understood the resurrection. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and implied then to enter into His glory? And he began at Moses and all the prophets, and expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. He explained His death and resurrection in every manner possible through the Old Testament. It was prophesied.

Not only was it prophesied in the Old Testament, but it was prophesied, as well, in a sense, in the new, in John chapter 2 verse 19. "Jesus said this, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.'" Now that's a prophecy of resurrection. "The Jews said, "Why, forty-two...or rather... forty-six years we've been building this temple. How You gonna raise it in three days?' But He spoke of the temple of His body." They never did understand what He was saying.

"And when therefore he was risen from the dead, His disciples remembered He had said this unto them...now, listen to this...and they believed the Scripture, even the Word which Jesus has said." The Old Testament Scripture, the New Testament Scripture predicts the resurrection of Jesus Christ. When He rises from the dead, then, what does it prove? It proves the truthfulness of the Word of God. You can trust it, and of all of the things that the Word of God predicted, that is the most marvelous that has yet happened, that one would die and, in death, have the power to raise Himself from the dead...It proves the truthfulness of the Word of God.

Secondly, what does the resurrection prove? It proves the deity of the Son of God. It proves the deity of the Son of God. In fact, there's no greater proof in existence for the divine nature of Jesus Christ than His rising from the grave. There are many witnesses in the Bible to the deity of Christ, many of them. The demons in Mark 5 say, "Jesus, Son of the Most High God." The demon in Mark 1, "We know You, the Holy One of God." Even the demons affirm His deity. A man born blind in John 9, who was given sight, affirmed the deity of Jesus Christ when he gave his testimony to the skeptical Jews who were unconvinced because of the hardness of their own hearts. The disciples, Peter, James, John, all acknowledge the deity of Christ. Thomas, "My Lord and my God." Nathaniel, "Thou art the Son of God." Matthew, "He is God with us." Mark, "Jesus Christ, the Son of God." Luke, "He is the Son of God."...And His close friends, people like Martha, "I believe that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God," said Martha. John the Baptist, His cousin, "And I saw and bear record that this is the Son of God." A Roman soldier, "Truly this Man is the Son of God."

But, unquestionably, the greatest testimony to the fact of His deity came from the mouth of the Father who said, "This is My beloved Son," and confirmed that in the resurrection, and that is why Romans 1 is so important. It says in verse 3, "Jesus Christ our Lord was made of the seed of David according to the flesh." And listen to this, "Declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead." In other words, the resurrection of Christ from the dead was a monumental declaration of the Sonship of Christ. God declared Him deity in resurrection. God raised Him from the dead as an affirmation that He was the second member of the Trinity. The resurrection was the declaration of His deity. Peter, in that great sermon that we just read in the Book of Acts, in a later portion, verse 36, says, "That the resurrection of Christ...listen...proves that He is both Lord and Messiah." ...Acts 2:36...

The Bible tells us that Jesus came as a prophet, and the prophetic ministry of Christ, though largely

fulfilled on earth prior to His death, needed the authentication of the resurrection. Why would we believe His words if He died like any other man and never came from the grave, when He had promised to rise? We would not trust His Word. If His Word couldn't be trusted in that, how do we know it could be trusted anywhere else? The authentication of His prophetic office is dependent on His rising from the grave. If He doesn't rise from the dead, He's a false prophet, and all of His ministry is subject to question.

Take His priestly office. The Bible says He came as a priest, and that as a priest, He is to intercede before God on the behalf of men; but if He is dead, how can He be a priest? How can He be a priest, as the writer of Hebrews says, after the order of Melchizedek with an eternal unending priesthood? How can He be a priest forever, as it says in Hebrews? How can He ever live to make intercession for us? He cannot fulfill a prophetic office, because He cannot authenticate His Word. He cannot fulfill a priestly office, because He isn't around to intercede, and the Bible also says He has the office of a king; and how can He be a king if He's dead? How can He inherit a throne if He's not here to take a throne? The kingship of Christ, the priesthood of Christ, the prophetic office of Christ are all utterly dependent upon His resurrection; and His deity is all bound up in the fact that He rose from the grave. So the resurrection proves the truthfulness of the Word of God. It proves the deity of Christ. No man could do that. No man could do that. Only God can conquer death. Only God can prophesy the future and have it come to pass with absolute accuracy.

Thirdly, what does the resurrection prove? I believe it proves the completion of the salvation of God. The completion of the salvation of God. The Bible tells us that God designs to save sinners, that Christ came into the world, He said, to save sinners, to seek and to save the ones that were lost. He over and over said He was gonna go to a cross, because sin demanded death, and He would die that death and pay that price. He would be the sacrifice. He would save men from their sins; but if he had gone to the cross and died...and stayed dead, He would have been Jesus Christ Superstar, nothing more. His death would... would have been the death of an ordinary man. The death of Christ would have been a nice effort with no value and no efficacy.

In 1 Corinthians, Paul says, "If Christ is not risen, then our faith is in vain. We are yet in our sins, and we are of all men most miserable." There is no hope, none at all; but Christ did rise, and when He rose from that grave, He proved that He had completed salvation. He had paid the price. He had conquered the enemy, which is sin. He had broken the bands of its executor death, and He was free. And then when God lifted Him to His right hand and exalted Him, God accepted His death. God accepted His substitution. God said, "It is efficacious. It is of high value. He is to be exalted to My right hand for having utterly accomplished the task." And so in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, you have the obvious picture that sin and death was destroyed, and the obvious consummation that the Father was pleased. Jesus was raised to assure us that His sacrifice did work, and the Father exalted Him to show us the extent to which it worked. It was ultimately successful, so that He could be exalted to the very right hand of God.

I might hasten to add that it is significant that those who deny the bodily resurrection of Christ always deny His substitutionary atonement for our sin also. Because if you're gonna deny that He rose, then you're gonna have to deny that His sacrifice was efficacious, because only if He shattered death did He prove the value of His dying for our sins. Every element of salvation is dependent on the resurrection. Every one of 'em. If He didn't rise, He didn't accomplish anything. For example, salvation means God granting us eternal life. He can't give us life if He doesn't have it. He can't give us life if He can't conquer death, but it says in 1 Corinthians 15:22, "As in Adam all died, even so in

Christ shall all be made alive." In John 14:19, he said, "Because I live, ye shall live also." And He said in John 11 to Martha that tremendous statement, in verse 25, "I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." And it was His ability to conquer death that gave Him the ability to give us that same life. Our eternal life is dependent, then, on the resurrection. If He can't rise, then He has no life to give.

Secondly...our having a Holy Spirit is dependent on the resurrection. In John 14:26 and John 15:26 both, the Lord said, "When I go back into Heaven, I will send the Holy Spirit," and it wasn't until the Holy Spirit came that they could preach with power. It wasn't until the Holy Spirit came that they could be regenerated and placed into the body, for we are born of the Spirit. It wasn't until the Holy Spirit came that we could be filled with His power. It wasn't until the Holy Spirit came that the world was convicted of sin and righteousness and judgment. The work of the Spirit is essential to salvation. If Christ doesn't rise, He doesn't ascend; and if He doesn't ascend, He doesn't send the Spirit.

Thirdly, if Christ doesn't rise, there is no forgiveness, because 1 John says, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He is our advocate in regard to our sin." And if He didn't rise, He isn't advocating for us. He isn't interceding for us, and there is no intercession on our behalf; and, therefore, there can be no forgiving of sin...if He's not our advocate, then we have nobody on our side in the presence of the Father.

Fourthly, His work of intercession. His work of advocacy takes care of our sin. His work of intercession takes care of God's perfect work in our lives; and in a sense, they're two sides of the same thing. One negative, one positive. I believe He intercedes for us. The Bible says, "He ever lives to make intercession for us." I believe He seeks the Father's best for us, and He can't do that if He is not alive. So if He's not alive, there's no salvation. There's no eternal life. There's no Holy Spirit. There's no forgiveness. There's no interceding. You can go on and on. There are no spiritual gifts given to us, because it was when He died, Ephesians 4, and led captivity captive that He gave gifts to men. There would be no spiritual power, because it was in resurrection that He said, "All power is given unto Me." And Paul in Ephesians says, "We have that resurrection power." If there's no resurrection, there's no power. We're impotent. There's no position. He has raised us up together with Christ to sit in the heavenlies. If there's no resurrection, we're not there. You see, nothing happens apart from resurrection; but where there is a resurrection, there is the absolute completion of salvation. The resurrection then is the heart of the Christian faith. It means the truthfulness of the Word of God. It means the deity of the Son of God. It means the completion of the salvation of God.

Fourthly, the resurrection proves the establishing of the church of God...What does it prove? It proves that the church is the church. It isn't an earthly organization. It isn't a human club. It isn't some kind of religious exercise. It isn't a satanic counterfeit. The church is the church, the body of Christ, who is the head. Our Lord said in Matthew 16, "I will build My church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it." That is a very specific statement. "I'll build My church, and hell won't be able to hold it in."

If He had not risen, that never would've happened; because the church was born on Pentecost when the Spirit came; and there would have been no Spirit; and there would have been no regathering of the apostles. They would've remained scattered. So whoever would've preached, and what would have been their message with no resurrection? There would have been no church. There would have been no filling Jerusalem with resurrection truth. There would have been no turning the world upside down. You wouldn't be here and neither would I, for this cult of a would-be Messiah Jesus

would long ago have died out with so many like it...

But because he did arise, He became, as Peter calls Him, "A living stone," and He became the head of His church. In Ephesians 1, it says, "That God raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenlies, far above all principality and power and might and dominion in every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in that which is to come, and has put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body." In other words, the church, the body, its head, Christ, was born in the resurrection, established in the resurrection. The apostles, they were transformed from scattered, fearful, faithless doubters and cowards into world-changing apostles. The little band of followers in addition to the apostles, who had been so maligned and so persecuted, grew to fill Jerusalem. They grew by the thousands immediately, and their doctrine covered that city, and soon it turned the world upside down.

Jews who had met all their life and for centuries on Saturday, instantly began to meet on Sunday. Something had happened of a monumental consequence in history, and the church has since marched through time triumphant in the power of the risen Christ. The church lives today despite its constantly being attacked, its constantly being corrupted, beset...in spite of its counterfeiting, which goes on all the time. It has fought off false teachers, false doctrine, false representation. It has fought off sin and worldliness, and it is still alive, and it is still changing the world. The reason is because resurrection power has sustained the church. Because He lives, His church lives, and it still lives.

I mean what regathered the scattered sheep? What transformed them? What took a little sect of followers of Jesus and made it a worldwide reality that has done more to preserve truth, justice, and benevolence in human history than everything else put together?...What did it? One event. The resurrection, and it proves, beloved, the establishment of the church of God. No resurrection, no church, but there was a resurrection, and there is a church. Death couldn't hold Him. The hymn writer said, "Death cannot keep its prey. Jesus my Savior. He tore the bars away, Jesus my Lord. Up from the grave He arose with a mighty triumph for His foes. He arose a victor o'er the dark domain, and He lives forever with His saints to reign."

Yes, we His saints live with Him, because He arose, and this is not a human institution. This is not a manmade organization. This is a living church, and Christ is the head. Now you can see that those are very essential truths in the Christian faith that the resurrection proves. The truthfulness of the Word of God. The deity of the Son of God. The completion of the salvation of God, and the establishment of the church of God.

Now, lemme speak of two more and see if I can personalize them as we close. Fifthly, the resurrection proves the inevitability of the judgment of God. The inevitability of the judgment of God. When our Lord first came into the world...He was hated, maligned, mocked, scorned, despised, and murdered. He was humbled. He allowed Himself to be treated more terribly than we can ever imagine. The prophet says He was a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. They even said He was from hell... They battered Him and they spit on Him. They shoved thorns deep into His brow, rammed a spear into His side after they had nailed Him to a cross, naked; and, while He hung in display, they laughed. That's how it was when He came, but all along the time that He was here, He warned them that it would not always be that way. They would not always be judging Him. One day, He would judge them...He would judge them.

The New Testament presents to us that Christ is to be the judge of every human being who ever lives. That's right. Every human being who has ever lived on the face of this earth will someday stand face-to-face with Jesus Christ in regard to eternal destiny. In 2 Corinthians 5:10 and 11, it says, "Every Christian will be there." In Matthew 24, it tells us Israel will be there. In Matthew 25, it says the nations will be there. In 2 Peter 2 and Jude 6, it tells us even the angels face Him in judgment...The Bible says that all of the wicked dead of all time will someday face Christ. It's an incredible thought; and, you know, it must have shattered to pieces the people who heard Peter preach on Pentecost; because he preached that Jesus rose from the dead; and he said at the end of his sermon, "Now, let all the house of Israel know this for sure, that God has made the same Jesus whom you crucified both Lord and Christ. He is alive, and He is the Lord." And when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart. It was as if a knife went into their heart, and they said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

What was that? What were they saying? They realized that if Christ was alive, and if He was the Lord, that they were going to have to face Him, and so are you. Look with me for a moment at John chapter 5...In Revelation 20, it pictures the great white throne, and at the great white throne, Christ is seated there in judgment on all men; and we see something of that here in John 5 verse...22. "For the Father judges no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." In other words, the Son Himself, the Lord Jesus Christ, will render the verdict. Verse 25, let's look at it. "Verily, verily I say unto you, the hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in Himself."

Now, as the Son of God, He has the ability to give life, and it's talking about spiritual life. He has the power to give spiritual life. The spiritually dead shall be given life. The only one living in the world of death and desolation who can do it is Christ, so those who hear...the voice of the Son of God shall live. They receive life. That is the promise of spiritual life, and He has it to give, verse 26, "For the Father has given it to Him."

Now, we move in verse 27 to physical life. "He has also given Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man." Now, in His divine office, He gives eternal life. In His office as Son of Man, He renders the verdicts on men who are not possessors of divine life. That's why the difference between Son of God and Son of Man. As Son of Man, He doesn't need really to function in deity, because men will simply have rendered the judgment by their own works; and it can be obvious no miracle is needed. As Son of God, it takes miraculous divine power to give life, but Son of Man, He gives them nothing miraculously, but rather the consequence of their own sin; and He says, "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, come forth. The ones who've done good to the resurrection of life, and those that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation." Every person will face Jesus Christ.

Now, listen, that couldn't happen if He didn't rise from the dead, right?...Listen, don't think of the resurrection only as a positive thing. It's a negative thing. If you reject Jesus Christ, if you trample underfoot His blood, if you ignore Him and refuse Him, then someday you will face Him...In Acts 17:29, this is what Paul says..."Don't think that God is gold and silver and stone, carved by art and man's device. Don't...don't think that God is an idol. Don't think that...and don't be lulled because God has been patient in the past and overlooked some things...before the Gospel came, but now God commands all men everywhere to repent...Why?...because He has appointed a Day in which he will judge the world in righteousness." In other words, He'll judge the world rightly by the proper divine

standard, and He'll do it by the Man whom He has ordained." Who's that? John 5, Christ. "And He has given assurance of this unto all men, in that He hath...what?...raised Him from the dead."

The resurrection was a guarantee that everyone would face the very Christ they had refused; and that's why those people in Acts 2 were so shocked, and why a knife went into their hearts, because they knew they were gonna stand before the very Christ they had despised...And so the resurrection proves the inevitability of judgment from God. What a solemn truth. If you don't come to the cross of Christ to take the redemption offered to you by Jesus Christ, then someday you will face Him, and you won't be rendering a verdict on Him. He'll be rendering a verdict on you...with infinite and eternal consequence. The resurrection guarantees that every man will be raised to face Jesus Christ; and if you do not know Him and love Him, you will be condemned to an eternal hell without Him.

Dr. Donald Barnhouse says, "This resurrection is a combination of power and holiness. Do not think that you can escape it. Holiness will demand to be satisfied, and power will be able to reach you where you are and silence your proud lips forever." End quote.

But, if your name is written in the Book of Life, because you have put your faith in Jesus Christ and confessed with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believed in your heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, you will be saved from that judgment. Other than that, there's no way to escape. In Terwyn Churchyard, which is a short distance from Kings Cross Station in England, stands a four-trunked tree. Massive thing growing out of a grave. Its presence has given rise to much speculation among the residents of the section, and the grave from which the tree grows is that of Lady Anne Grimston. It's a very interesting story... Lady Anne Grimston didn't believe in life after death. When she lay dying in her palatial home, she was very wealthy. She said to a friend, "I will live again as surely as a tree will grow out of my body." She was buried in a marble tomb. The grave was marked by a large marble slab and surrounded by an iron railing. Years later, the marble slab was found to be moved a little. Then it cracked, and through the crack, a small tree grew. The tree continued to grow tilting the stone, breaking the marble masonry, until today it has totally surrounded the tomb with its roots, has torn the railing out of the ground with its massive trunks, and the tree at Lady Anne Grimston's grave is one of the largest in England. Maybe God took her challenge as an illustration. But believe it, because He rose, judgment is inevitable.

Finally, the resurrection of Jesus proves, not only the truthfulness of the Word of God, the deity of the Son of God, the completion of the salvation of God, the establishment of the church of God, the inevitability of the judgment of God, but, wonderfully, the eternal bliss of the people of God. "For those who believe, resurrection proves that we, too, shall live," John 14:19; and John 11:25, "Because I am the resurrection and the life. Therefore he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." Because he rose, we have the hope of eternal life, and nothing can take that hope from us. Oh, what a glorious truth...

A Methodist missionary was visiting the Ryukyu Islands in Japan, and he came across a huge grave on the island of Amakusa, and it was marked with a very interesting headstone. It said, in Japanese, "This grave contains the heads of 11,111 Christians." The date of the grave is 1637. That was the very year the Japanese government ordered all Christians exterminated...Further insight found that this grave contained only 11,111 heads. The bodies were taken and buried somewhere far away and unmarked. This was done to prevent the Christians...from rising from the grave, because God wouldn't know which head went with which Christian...The silliness of paganism...The folly of such thought. We will rise, because we have already risen in Christ to newness of life; and someday we'll

know the fullness of that in Heaven with Him. Let's pray...

I want you to just have your head bowed for a moment. No one moving...We've tried in a very simple way this morning to just give you the real message of resurrection. To sum up all that is there, so that you'll understand its meaning. Those who are Christians, we oughta be grateful and thankful, filled with praise. Those who are not, I trust you see both the value and the virtue of the resurrection, and the fearfulness of it...We don't want you to leave today without knowing our risen Christ. You have all the world and eternity to gain and nothing to lose...and if you refuse, you have everything to lose.

Father, bring those that You would have to come...Make this a very special day...By Your Spirit, bring many to life in Christ. Bring us together again tonight as we see those who have come to Christ and hear the marvel of their testimony. And behold, again, the miracle of resurrection in their lives, and we'll thank You for all that You're doing this day in Christ's name. Amen.

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