

## **The Impact of the Resurrection**

Scripture: Selected Scriptures

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As we look to the Word of God this morning for what the Spirit of God would teach regarding the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, I want to read for you, in initially, a passage of Scripture in the first chapter of Ephesians. It is a prayer of Paul for the Ephesians that is equally my prayer for you as we share together in God's Word today.

He writes in chapter 1 verse 15, "Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling and what 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 wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead."

That great prayer is the prayer that I have for you, that the eyes of your understand would be enlightened; that you would know what is the hope of His calling and what is the riches of the inheritance in the saints; and the exceeding greatness of His power according to the resurrection of Jesus Christ. That you would understand the meaning, the extent, the impact, the centrality of resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Christianity, more than it is anything else, is a belief about resurrection. You must view the Christian faith through the eyes of resurrection. It has absolutely no ultimate value or meaning apart from the resurrection of Jesus Christ. And if I can, in our time today, I want us to be able to understand, if not in whole, certainly in part, that the most far-reaching, the most comprehensive, the most all-encompassing truth in the universe is the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave. You cannot have the Christian faith without it. You cannot just eliminate the resurrection as if it were one small part of a whole. If you take the resurrection of Christ away, the entire house falls down; everything comes apart.

Now, in order to help us to understand the impact and the extent and meaning of the resurrection, I want us to look at it from the vantage point of three categories. First, it's impact on God; second, it's impact on angels; thirdly, it's impact on men. In thinking about the impact of the resurrection on God, we want to look at, first of all, God the Father, and then God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

The Psalmist said it in Psalm 33:11 when he said, "The counsel of the Lord standeth forever."

The New Testament says it this way, "God who cannot lie."

And so the testimony of the Old Testament and the testimony of the New Testament is that God is a God of truth. When God speaks, He means what He says. That's a very important backdrop to our understanding of the impact of the resurrection on the character of God.

Look with me at the second chapter of the book of Acts. And this passage, I believe, will open to our understanding how the resurrection impacts God the Father. In Acts chapter 2, Peter stands up in Jerusalem to preach a sermon and his sermon begins with a text. The text comes from Joel chapter 2. And then he begins to discuss the person of Jesus Christ, beginning in verse 22. "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; 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, as you 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."

Now, there Peter indicts the people for the execution of Jesus Christ. But the story didn't end there. Verse 24 says, "Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the birth pains of death." Very interesting word, the word birth pains. It's used of that experience of pain that a mother endures prior to giving birth to a child. And anyone who knows that, knows that it is the pain before the greatest bliss of life. And so the pain of death for Christ was not the pain of doom, but it was the pain of anticipation. It was the pain of resurrection, birth and glory. And that's why the writer of Hebrews said He endured the pain of the cross for the joy that was set before Him.'

And then it says in verse 24, "Because it was not possible that He should be held by it." Death couldn't hold Him. God raised Him up. The pain He suffered was not the pain of anticipating death and doom as it is for so many who die without God. But it was the pain of anticipating joy and glory, and death could not hold Him.

Now, we ask the question why. And the answer comes to us in marvelous terms in verse 25 and following. Listen to it. "Because David speaketh concerning Him." Now wait a minute. You mean to tell me that God raised Jesus from the dead because of something David said? That's right. Because when David spoke, it wasn't just David, it was God. And when God said what He said, God had to raise Jesus to affirm His truthfulness. The character of God is at stake. You see, in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, God is on trial. "For David speaketh concerning Him."

And here we have a quote from Psalm 16, "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 not leave my soul in Hades. Neither wilt thou allow thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the way of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance."

You know what David said? David said there would be a resurrection. David said flesh would rest in hope; the soul would not be left in Hades; the Holy One would never see corruption; He would know the way through death to light and be filled with joy when He saw the face of God. In other words, David spoke about resurrection. Of whom did David speak? Verse 29, "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried and his sepulcher is with us unto this day."

So whoever David was speaking about, it wasn't him. Because his flesh did see corruption, and his body was still in the grave, whatever there may have been left of it. And the tomb was still there, sealed and never opened. So it was not of himself of whom he spoke.

Verse 30, "Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God hath sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne." Now stop there. David was prophesying about Christ. David was prophesying about the Messiah. And God had sworn with an oath that out of the fruit of the loins of David would come a Messiah who would be raised up to sit on the throne.

And so verse 31 says, "David, seeing this beforehand, spoke of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in Hades, neither his flesh did see corruption." I'll say it again, why did God raise Jesus from the dead? Why does it say that three times in this passage? The second time is in verse 30, and the third in verse 32. Why does it say God raised up Jesus? Because God had promised a king, and God had affirmed that that king would rise out of the grave to sit on the eternal throne of his father David. And it was the Word of God that caused God to raise Christ from the dead.

In other words, God's trustworthiness was at stake. God's faithfulness. So if you take the resurrection out of Christianity, you have just stripped God of His faithfulness. You have just turned God into something less than He is. You cannot gently extract the resurrection. You will rip the very heart out of the Christian faith because the character of God is at stake.

In verse 32, it says, "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses." And Peter says myself and all the apostles are those who proclaim that God raised up Jesus and God is a trustworthy God who keeps His promise. That's how it impacts God.

1 Corinthians 15 sums up our thinking; a great resurrection chapter. Verse 15, Paul says this, "Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ whom He raised not up if so be that the dead rise not." In other words, if God didn't raise Jesus from

the dead, all that we've said about God adds up to a lie. God is not a keeper of His word. God is not one who fulfills His promise. God does not have the power He claims He has, and all the apostles are false witnesses and liars. You see the voracity of God's word? The character of God is at stake in the resurrection.

Secondly, not only God the Father, but God the Son is impacted by the resurrection. Jesus predicted His death many times. He said He had to die. He said the son of man is not come to be ministered unto but to minister and give His life a ransom for many, Mark 10:45. He told His disciples over and over that He was going to die. He said, "Except a corn of wheat fall unto the ground and die, abideth alone." And He talked of His being lifted up on the cross and drawing all men to Himself. So much did He talk of His death, the disciples were distraught and would have wished that it not be so.

He was born to die. It was goal of His life to die. It was the mission of His ministry to die. But though it was the goal, and though it was the mission, and though it was the objective that He die, it was not the end. And that is why Mark 8:31 he said that He would be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed. And after three days, rise again. That is why in Mark 9:31, he said, "The Son of man, when He is killed, after three days, He will rise."

That is why He said in John 2, "Destroy this temple and in three days, I'll build it again." He repeatedly predicted His own resurrection. And so the very truthfulness of Jesus Christ is at stake. If He did not rise from the dead, then He, like God, is a liar and cannot be trusted any more than God can. For not only can He not fulfill His promise in the sense of being trustworthy, but He can't fulfill it either because of impotence. If God cannot raise Christ, then God is not God and Christ is not Christ.

To see this in its truest sense, look at Colossians chapter 1. And here we find a marvelous description of Jesus Christ. It says in verse 15 that He is the image of the invisible God; it's the word Icon. It means the replica, the exact representation, the perfect picture. And then it's the firstborn of all creation, that He is called. Firstborn prototecas doesn't mean that He was born. That's a poor English translation. It means the chief one, the supreme one, the primary one, the ranking one, the honored one, the highest one, the one in authority. It has to do with rank. It is not that He is a created being. It is to say that of all creation, He ranks above them. He is supreme above them.

So the one who is the exact photograph of God, the replica of God, the one who is the prototecas, the primary one over all creation, is so because, verse 16, "By Him are all things created, that are in heaven and earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers." And that discusses angelic beings. "All things were created by Him and for Him; and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the prototecas." Again, "The firstborn from the dead."

And that's it, folks. The reason that He is the ranking one, the reason that He is the supreme one is because He is risen from the dead. In order that, in all these things, He might have the preeminence. You see, the preeminent position of Jesus Christ is utterly dependent upon His resurrection. It was the resurrection that affirmed his Son-ship.

In Romans 1, it says, "He was declared," in verse 4, "to be the Son of God with power." How? "By the resurrection from the dead." It was in the resurrection that God declared Him to be His Son, his Deity, His Messiahship, all bound up in the resurrection.

There's a marvelous note also back in Acts 2 in that same sermon by Peter. "Therefore," it says, "let all the house of Israel know," and here's the word, "assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom you have crucified, both Lord and Christ." The word assuredly means without doubts, with perfect certainty, by the resurrection, He is made Lord and Christ.

And Romans 1:4 says that He has declared Him to be the Son of God by power of the resurrection. The word declare is marvelous. It's the word horidzo in the Greek, from which we get horizon. The horizon is the clear line that marks earth and sky; it is the point of clear marking, clear definition. And Jesus was clearly marked out as distinct from all others in the universe by the resurrection from the dead. That was the marking out of Jesus Christ as the supreme one, the prototecas, the preeminent one in whom the Father says, "Dwells all fullness, for so it pleased the Father."

In fact, in Revelation 1:18 in the great vision of Jesus Christ that we have there, He sums up His own identification in this way. "I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive forevermore, amen, and have the keys of hell and death." The reason He controls hell, the reason He controls death, is because He conquered in his resurrection.

It says in Philippians chapter 2 that He died, took upon Him the form of a servant and suffered death. And then it says God highly exalted Him, gave Him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow. And He became the supreme ruler of all. As I read in Matthew 28, "All authority is given unto Him in heaven and in earth." You see, the supremacy, the preeminence of Jesus Christ came as a result of His resurrection. If there is no resurrection, then Christ is the loser; sin is the winner; death is the winner; hell is the winner; the grave is the winner. And He is not the sovereign over death. And He does not have the keys to the grave and to hell; Satan does.

So you see, in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the credibility of the Son of God is at stake, both in His word and His work. If He does not rise, then He does not keep His word. If He does not rise, He cannot do His work. He is not the exalted sovereign Lord Christ.

Again, we turn to 1 Corinthians 15 for a summary of this thought. In verse 17, Paul writes, "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain. You are yet in your sins." There is no salvation, my friend, if Christ

doesn't rise. And even those who have fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If only in this life, we have hope in Christ, we are all men most miserable. If He can't do anything in the life to come, it's all misery. You see, we need a Savior. And there is no other Savior. It says in Acts 4:12, "Neither is there salvation in any other name than Christ." So if He couldn't do it, no one can. And if He did not rise, then there is no salvation, there is no forgiveness, there was no penalty paid, there was no reconciliation to God purchased. And we're all damned along with Christ to come under the control of Satan who wielded a power that God could not break.

Seaman, in ancient times, used to like to have among their crew members, a very courageous and strong swimmer because it was not uncommon for them to be approaching a shore. And because of the storm seas, find it unable to be reached. And they would stay as far away from the crashing waves that they could and they would tie a rope around the waist of that strong swimmer. And he would dive into the sea and swim with all his might for the shore, hoping to reach the shore, take the end of the rope, tie it around a tree or a rock, that it might be anchored as a lifeline.

And then on that rope, clinging to it for life itself, the people would come from the ship to the shore. Christ was such a seaman, such an arkay, such a leader, such a pioneer, such a trailblazer, that He dove into the waters of sin and death and hell. And if He drowned there then, folks, we are all drowned, we are all perished. We are all miserable. Our faith is vain. We have no hope. But if Jesus Christ conquered death and hell and sin reached the shore and anchored the lifeline, then there is hope for those who follow Him. And so the resurrection impacts God the Father and God the Son, and then thirdly, God the Holy Spirit.

John chapter 16 tells us how the resurrection affects the Holy Spirit. Jesus is speaking of the fact that He must die and He wants the disciples not to be sorry about it. And so He says in verse 7, "Nevertheless, I tell you the truth. It is expedient," in other words, it is better, it is profitable, "for you that I go away. For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you. But if I depart, I will send Him unto you. And when He's come, He'll reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness and of judgment."

And then verse 13, "Nevertheless, when He, the Spirit of Truth is come, He will guide you into all truth for He shall not speak of Himself but whatever He shall hear, that shall He speak and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify Me for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you."

Now, Jesus says, "I'm gonna go. And because I go, I'll send the Spirit."

Listen, "The coming of the Holy Spirit for a two-fold work." Verse 8 convicting of sin; verse 13 and 14, guiding and leading the believer. The two-fold work of the Spirit in the unbeliever and the believer was dependent on the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ. If Christ does not rise and return to heaven, He cannot send the Spirit. If the Spirit does not come, there can be no energizing of the

gospel message, no energizing of the message of conviction. And there can be no direction and no leading in the life of the believer. The coming of the Spirit is dependent on the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

That is why, again, we return to Acts chapter 2, and we hear Peter say with such great impact now, "Therefore," verse 33, "being by the right hand of God exalted," that is after His resurrection, "and having received from the Father, the promise of the Holy Spirit, He hath shed forth this which you now see in here." Now, they had just seen the Holy Spirit come. They had just seen the marvelous phenomenon of the coming of the Holy Spirit. And Peter said it is because of the resurrection. It is because Jesus was raised and descended into heaven that the Father gave Him the promise of the Holy Spirit and He shed the Spirit forth, and you're now seeing the result of the resurrection and the coming and ministering of the Holy Spirit. No resurrection, no ministry of the Holy Spirit.

The whole plan of God, the whole functioning of the Trinity is dependent on the coming to pass of the promise of God, the resurrection. No resurrection, no Holy Spirit. No resurrection, no exalted Son of God. No resurrection, no God, as He claims to be.

In Romans 8:11, it says, "But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also give life to your mortal bodies by His spirit that dwells in you." If the spirit doesn't come, if the spirit doesn't get here and dwell in us, then we have no hope of resurrection either.

Now, let's come down a notch. The resurrection impacts God; secondly, it impacts angels. Look back at Ephesians 1 where we started reading this morning. And I want you to see how the resurrection of Jesus Christ affects angels. In verse 20, it says that God raised Him from the dead that is Christ. And set Him at His own right hand in the heavens. When God lifted Him up, He exalted Him. He raised Him up.

And when He exalted Him, verse 21 says He exalted Him, "Far above all principality and power and might and dominion." Now, those are angels. Those are titles of angelic beings. Principality has to do with the first ones, primary ones, leader types. Powers exusiai the word, it refers to delegated authorities. And then dominion and might, these are just titles of the ranks of angels. And so when Christ was raised from the dead, He was lifted up, set on the right hand of God, far above all the angels. And every name that is named, not only in this age but in that which is to come. He put all things under His feet. Everything is subject to Him, including angels.

Now, in order to understand this, we have to understand that there are two kinds of angels. There are holy angels and there are fallen angels known as demons. Let's talk about the holy angels for a moment. Look at Hebrews chapter 1 and see how the resurrection of Christ impacted the holy angels. In verse 3, discussing the Son of God, who is the brightness of His glory and the express

image of His person, much like the Colossians 1 description, who is the creator and the sustainer, holding all things by the word of His power. It says of Him that by Himself, He purged our sins. That is the cross, Christ went to the cross and died. And then He sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high. So you have His humiliation in being the sin-bearer, you have His exaltation and seated at the right hand, in between, you have to have the resurrection. And though it's not stated, it's certainly implied.

He bears our sin in death. He rises to the right hand of the majesty on high and the resurrection has to occur in between. So you have the resurrected Christ as a result of that. Look at verse 4, "Through that, He is made so much better than the angels as he hath, my inheritance, obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels did God ever say, 'Thou art my Son. This day have I begotten thee.'" And that, beloved, is a reference to the resurrection, not the incarnation. To what angel did God ever say, "I raised you from the dead. Be exalted on my right hand." And the answer is to no angel, to no angel, He is superior to angels. And the holy angels must worship Him.

Look at the end of the verse 6. When He brought Him into the world, He said, "All the angels of God, worship Him." You see, the holy angels are bound to worship Him because He rose from the dead and is seated at the right hand of God. If He doesn't rise, they don't have a sovereign, you understand? The angels are at loose ends. They're lost. They have no leader. They have no sovereign. They have no monarch. They have no one to worship.

It throws all of angelic beings into chaos because, you see, in verse 7 it says of the angels, "Who maketh His angels, wins and His servants a flame of fire." Angels are called servants; they need a leader; they need a master; they need a sovereign; they need an authority. And if Christ is not risen from the dead, they have no such authority.

They're only servants. Verse 8 says, "But unto the Son, He says, 'Thy throne oh God is forever and ever a scepter of righteousness and a scepter of thy kingdom.'" There He calls the Savior God, and he says you have a throne, you have a scepter, you have a kingdom. He is a monarch. He is a ruler.

Look at verse 13. To which of the angels said He at any time, "Sit on my right hand 'til I make thine enemies thy footstool." The answer is, to no angel did He ever say that. No angel ever heard God say that. In fact, Satan tried to get that role and he had to be a usurper and get thrown out of heaven in the process. God never said to any angel, "I'll put everything under your control." But He did say it to Christ.

Verse 14, "Angels are simply serving spirits sent forth to serve them who are the heirs of salvation." Now listen carefully. If there is no resurrection of Christ from the grave, the angels have no



sovereign, the angels have no leader, the angels have no authority. Secondly, they have ministry either because they are sent to serve the saints. And if there is no salvation, there are no saints, there are no saints.

What about the fallen angels? Does the resurrection affect them? Yes, it does. It affects the demons. Let me tell you how. Colossians chapter 2. And we're letting the word of God speak for itself. Verse 14 ends with the word cross, and it takes us to the cross, His cross. And that's all we want to draw from that prior text. We're at the cross in verse 14. And verse 15 tells us what happened at the cross. At the cross, "He, Christ, spoiled principalities in powers." And there we are back to those angelic titles again. They, by themselves, don't tell us whether they're holy or fallen, but we'll find out about it.

"He spoiled the principalities in powers." The word spoiled indicates there was something to be gained by overpowering them, so these must be the fallen ones. And He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Whoever these principalities and powers are, they were trying to triumph over Christ. They were trying to destroy Christ. They were trying to win the victory over Christ, so we know who they are. They are Satan and his demons, who wanted more than anything else, that Christ should die on the cross, who wanted that He should never come out of the grave, who wanted that in the bearing of sin, He would be crushed beyond all possibility of resurrection. And then Satan and His hosts would be able to terrorize the universe forever.

But in the cross, Jesus triumphed over there, he triumphed over them. How did he do that? Well, Hebrews 2 tells us basically. It says that He destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil. You see, the primary power that Satan and his demons have is the power of death, but Christ destroyed that. Christ devastated that. When He came out of the grave, He showed that He could conquer death. And so Satan's arsenal was diffused.

I want you to look at 1 Peter chapter 3, and I want to show you what Christ did at the very moment of His death. It says in verse 18, the end of the verse, and, again, we're at the cross. That He was put to death in the flesh but He was alive in the spirit. In other words, when Christ died on the cross, His body died and was put into the grave but His spirit wasn't done; His spirit is eternal. And so we wonder sometimes what was His spirit doing while His body was in the grave.

This tells us by which spirit He went - He went somewhere. The spirit went somewhere; where'd it go? It proclaimed, the word preaches karuso, a proclamation, made an announcement, heralded an announcement unto the spirits in the prison. Who are the spirits in prison? Bound demons. And it even tells us which ones. The ones who were bound because of the terrible sin they committed prior to the time of the flood. When they committed the terrible sin of cohabitating with civilization in those days, God sent them into a place, made them captive, bound them in a prison. And there they were bound.

When Jesus died, His body was in the grave but His spirit descended into the place where the demons were bound. And when He got there, what did He do? He proclaimed to them. What did He proclaim? You go back to Colossians 2. He triumphed. He went down there to say, "You may think this is a defeat; it is, in fact, a victory." And I believe He proclaimed His triumph to those demons. And I believe He did it at the end, showing it fully at the end of verse 21, "By the resurrection of Jesus Christ who has gone into heaven. And on the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him." And I believe they are the same ones, including the same ones he mentions in verse 19, and then adding all other fallen demons as well. They're all under His authority.

You see, the demons, along with Satan who is just a demon himself, wanted to crush the life of Christ out so He could never rise from the dead to be the sovereign over them. But they couldn't do it. And even while they were having their carnival celebrating His dying, His spirit came into their presence, announced His victory and His triumph. And when He came out of the grave, it solidified that and He ascended into heaven at the right hand of the Father and He now reigns over all angels, fallen or unfallen.

And that's why in Romans, it says, oh what a marvelous truth. Chapter 8, you remember it? Listen. "What shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sore? For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." You know why they can't do that? You know why the demons can't do that? Because Christ has conquered them and reigns over them and is their sovereign Lord, whether they're holy or unholy.

And, again, I draw you to 1 Corinthians 15. Paul says it in verse 24, "Then comes the end when He, Christ, shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father, when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet, the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." In other words, Paul says, in the resurrection, He destroyed the enemy death, the only weapon hell had.

So you see, the resurrection impacts angels as well as God. And if you just try to reach into the midst of the Christian faith and pull out the resurrection, you just destroy everything. Not only do the holy angels have no sovereign and no master, and not only are they eliminated from the ministry they've been designed for, but you have just left fallen demons in control of everything.

Let's drop down one final notch, from God, to angels, to men. What is the impact of the resurrection on men? And this is just a brief word, but listen, very important. There are two kinds of men, two kinds of men. In John 5, Jesus said the Father gave Him all authority, and the Father has life and has given the Son to have life in Himself. And some day, the Son's ability to make life a reality is gonna

take place. And He is going to speak someday, it says in John 5. And He's gonna cause all in the graves to rise. And everybody will rise, whether you believe in a resurrection or not, you're gonna rise. You're gonna rise, it says in John 5:29, "Some to a resurrection of life, and some to a resurrection of damnation." Some of you are gonna be raised to live; some of you are gonna be raised to damnation. So we have to look at both categories.

What does the resurrection mean to redeemed men, to those in the resurrection of life? Oh my. We can't even begin to discuss this. The New Testament is just filled with it. What does it mean that Jesus Christ rose from the dead to those of us who know Christ? Let me just suggest some things quickly.

First, it means we have been made right with God. What a great truth. We've learned that in Romans, haven't we? Romans 4:25 says, "He was raised for our justification." It means He was raised to make us right with God. What a great thought.

Not only that, not only does the resurrection of Christ make us right with God, but it gives us a new principle of life. We aren't the same. We live a new kind of life. Romans 6 says, "As we were buried with Him in baptism, so we have been raised together with Him to walk in newness of life." So we are right with God and we have a new life principle. We walk in a new life reality, a new life pulses through us.

Thirdly, because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we have eternal life. Jesus said, "Because I live, you shall live also." And Jesus said, "He that believeth in me shall never die," John 11 says. Not only that, because He rose from the grave, we have security. If we were saved by His death, Romans 5:10 says we will be kept by His life. "Because He is alive now, Hebrew 7:25, "and ever lives to make intercession for us." Just to keep us in the right relationship to God, security.

And because He rose from the grave, we know power. The power to live the Christian life, the power to be used of God. And that was Paul's prayer in Ephesians 1 that you may know the power, "The working of His mighty power which ye wrought in Christ."

And I think that's what Paul meant in Philippians 3:10 when he says that, "I may know Him and the power of his resurrection." And the resurrection also gives the believer hope in the future.

"For if we have been risen together with Christ," Colossians 3 says, "then when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we shall also appear with Him in glory." So we have hope not only in this life but in the life to come.

What does the resurrection mean to the redeemed? Everything. It means you're right with God. It means we have a new life principle. It means we have eternal life. It means we're secure in Him. It

means we have power. It means we have hope. It means we are gonna be raised to glory someday. And the Bible says, "We shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is when these vile bodies fall away and we receive a glorious new body like unto His body," Paul said to the Philippians. Then we'll enter into the glory that we await.

No wonder the songwriter said, "Heaven above is softer blue, earth around is sweeter green. Something lives in every hue. Christless eyes have never seen." And, oh, the resurrection is the key to everything. The exaltation, the end of sickness, the end of pain, the end of disease, the end of death, the end of sorrow, the end of hunger, the end of thirst, the end of crying, the end of weakness.

The splendor of the sons of God that someday will be ours in which the Bible says the righteous shall shine forth in their father's kingdom. We shall be as dazzling white snow. Isaiah said we'd be as transparent dew. Daniel said as the moon and the stars, the brightness in the firmament, the sun in its strength will be like the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. This is the grandeur for which we wait. This is the hope we anticipate. This is the glory we long for. And then we have to add that because we believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and because we see this in the future, it gives us purity. For John says, "He that hath this hope in Him," 1 John 3:3, "purifies himself."

And so, from an individual standpoint, the resurrection means everything to us. I mean, if you eliminate the resurrection, then everything falls apart, everything. We're not right with God. We don't have a new kind of life. We don't have eternal life. We don't have security. We don't have power. We don't have hope. We don't have glory. We can't have purity. We don't have anything. And think about the church collectively. If Jesus, it says in Ephesians 4, rose from the grave and led captivity captive and gave gifts to men, if he didn't do that, then we don't have any gifts.

And what are those gifts? It says in the same passage. He gave some apostles, some prophets, teaching pastors, evangelists. In other words, the resurrection of Christ was where he purchased the gift of men that He gave back to His church. If He didn't rise from the dead, He isn't the head of His church. He isn't the fullness that fills all in all. The church has nothing. Individual Christians have nothing. And so the resurrection impacts redeemed man like nothing else.

Finally, what about unredeemed men? You say, "Well, surely the resurrection has nothing to do with them?" Oh, but it does. Whether you believe it or not, it has everything to do with you. Because it says in John 5:29, you will either be raised to the resurrection of life or you will be raised to the resurrection of damnation. You will be raised from the dead because Christ will raise you from the dead. That's the testimony of John 5.

Look with me at Acts chapter 17. And just briefly, I want to show you this great truth of how the resurrection impacts the unbeliever, the unredeemed person, the non-Christian. The end of verse 30 says, "God commands all men everywhere to repent." There was a time that God didn't bring

immediate judgment, but He does now. And He promises judgment and He commands all men everywhere to repent, why? In verse 31, "Because He hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world, in righteousness."

By whom? By that man. Who's that man? Who is the one to whom all judgment and authority was given? Jesus Christ. "Whom He ordained or set apart." How did He do that? He did it when He gave assurance in that He raised Him from the dead. In other words, believe me, folks, there will be a judgment and a resurrection and a damnation and the reality of it is bound up in the fact that God raised the judge from the dead. If the judge is still in the grave, there can't be any judgment. But the judge is alive and He has been raised from the dead, not only to give glory to His own, but to give judgment on those who reject.

And if you look at Revelation chapter 20, you can read all about it, how Jesus Christ will ascend the Great White Throne to judge.

And, again, this is all summed up in 1 Corinthians 15 verse 20, "Now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead for as an animal, all die. Even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in His own order." In other words, Christ is gonna deal with Adam's sons and He's gonna deal with His own children in their order. So the resurrection effects everybody, everybody: God, angels, men.

I didn't have time but it also effects the created world. Did you know that? Because Jesus is alive, He's gonna create a new heaven and a new earth. And the whole creation waits for that redemption. When it becomes for all eternity what God intended creation in the beginning to be. It not only effects beings such as God, angels and men, but even the created world and the created universe, because He lives, will be restored to its place of intended glory.

So what's the message to you? This is the message: Romans 10:9 and 10, listen to what it says. "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth, the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart, man believeth utter righteousness and with the mouth, confession is made unto salvation." What is the resurrection message? Believe.

Listen, because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ - listen carefully - the whole scale of human values is changed. That's right, the whole scale's changed. If Jesus doesn't rise, do you know what the right human value system is? Here it is: eat, drink, be merry, for tomorrow, what? We die. That is the right value system if Jesus doesn't rise. But He did rise. And our value has translated from earth to heaven. "And we set our affection," says Paul to the Colossians, "on things above and not on things on the earth." All our values change. What are you living for? What is your value system? That's

the question.

Let's bow in prayer. Oh God of our exodus, we think of the great joy of Israel's sons when Egypt died on the shore. But far greater is the joy when the Redeemer folaycrushed in the dust in the victory of the open grave. When Jesus strode forth as the victor, conqueror of death hell, and all opposition, when he burst the bands of death and trampled the powers of darkness to live forever.

Oh, Father. Help us to understand the message that in Christ I died, in Him I rise. In His life, I live. In His victory, I triumph. In His ascension, I am glorified. We pray, Father, that we were Christians, would understand the significance of the resurrection and have hearts of thanks and praise for those who are still dead in their sins, may they come alive in Christ.

Father, we are, of all people, most privileged for we understand the eyes of our understanding have been enlightened. And by the Holy Spirit we have received the spirit of wisdom and revelation and the knowledge of Him. And we understand the hope of His calling. And we understand the riches of the inheritance of the saints. And we understand the working of His mighty power which works in us. And we understand it all by the resurrection.

Thank You for such understanding that fills our hearts with trust and confidence and hope and joy and security and faith and love. And may we be as eager to proclaim as we are to receive it. Pray for those who are yet dead in their sins, that this may be the day of life for them.

Be glorified in all things, Father. Accept our praise and worship today. Bring us together tonight as we hear the testimony of those who have experienced Your power. And we thank you in Christ's name. Amen.

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