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

The Spiritual Significance of the Resurrection, Part 2
Scripture: Romans 6:1-14
Code: 80-166

This morning we talked about the resurrection and I gave you some insight into the spiritual meaning of the resurrection. But by no means did I say all that I would like to have said and I just want to add a little bit of a post script for just a few moments tonight. I know it has been a full day and I don't want to take too long with this but just for a few moments I want to share with you some of the other features that are provided for us spiritually in the resurrection.

Because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ we have been made right with God. We talked about that briefly this morning in the book of Romans. We looked at chapter 6 primarily, but in chapter four and verses 24-25 we read this. "For our sake also, to whom it will be reckoned, as those who believe in Him, who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, He who was delivered up because of our transgressions and was raised for our justification." Just a reminder, that it is in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ that we have the substitutionary work, by which God declares us righteous. So there is that declarative, that as it is called, forensic, or that legal statement about our righteousness that comes from the resurrection. Then over in chapter 6 you'll remember this morning we said that not only does the resurrection provide for us a legal justification but it provides for us a new life. And we remember in chapter 6, down in verse 4, at the end it says that because we've been raised with Christ we too walk in newness in life. We've been united with Him in the likeness of His death and we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection. And then it is added to that down in verse 10 that as He lives to God so do we. So in the resurrection we find the accomplishing of the bearing of our sin, it was complete, and so God raised Jesus from the dead because He had completed His sacrificial work on our behalf. And therefore imputed righteousness is granted to us, He takes our sin, we get His righteousness. Also out of the resurrection comes a new kind of life because we die as it were in Christ and we rise in Him to this newness of life. Just expanding on those two things that we briefly talked about this morning.

The third thing that I would like to mention to you is that we receive eternal life. This new kind of life lasts forever. And we remember the words of Jesus Himself in John 11, familiar words to us that remind us of this great reality. John 11:25-26. Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me shall live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die." Do you believe this? And He's talking here not about physical death. He's talking about spiritual death which is separation from God and eternal death which is an eternal separation from God and a place of punishment. The promise then that Jesus makes is "if you believe in Me because I live you will live also, and you will never die." That is the promise of eternal life. You say, "What happens to a

Christian when their physical body dies?" The answer is they do not die spiritually; they do not die eternally but rather are immediately ushered into the presence of the living God in whose presence they will live forever. So we receive not only a declared righteousness, not only a real righteousness in the transformation of life, but a life of righteousness which lasts forever. Jesus said, "Because I live you will live also." And He lives eternally and we will live eternally as well. "The wages of sin," Romans 6:23 says, "is death. But the gift of God is eternal life." Eternal life.

There's another component in the book of Romans that should be added to the list of things that are granted to us in the resurrection. It's in chapter 5:10, chapter 5:10. It says if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more having been reconciled, we shall be literally, be being saved by His life. Now the point that He makes here is quite an interesting one. He says that when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by Christ's death. To say it another way, Christ in His death was able to reconcile us to God. If He could reconcile us in His death, what could He do for us in His life? And the answer in verse 10 is we are being saved by His life. What does that mean? We are being kept. So the next thing that we receive through the resurrection of Jesus Christ is security, security. We have been declared righteous, transformed, given life that is eternal, and that eternal life is secure. In His death He reconciled us, and now in His life he keeps us. We are continually being kept, being saved by His life.

Over to chapter 8. Another way to say that, by the way, is that He ever lives to make intercession for us, another way to say it is that He keeps his own. All that the Father gives to Him He keeps and will raise them up at the last day. John 6. But in Romans 8 again, staying in the book of Romans, 8:34, it says Christ Jesus is "He who died, yes rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us." Because He is raised, because He is alive, because He was resurrected, He has gone to Heaven, and He is at the right hand of the Father where He intercedes for us. That is to say He keeps holding us. He keeps interceding on our behalf so that no sin is charged against us. Back to verse 33. Who will bring a charge to God's elect? God is the one who justifies. Who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus, He's at the right hand interceding for us. God justified us and Christ intercedes for us, He keeps us. Well, somebody might say maybe somebody could come along and cause Christ to change His mind. Verse 35. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Nobody. And whom He loves He keeps. Tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword, none of those things shall separate us from the love of Christ. Verse 38. Not death or life, or angels, or principalities, or things present, or things to come, or powers, height, depth, any other created thing is able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Our risen Christ provides justification, provides transformation, provides eternal life, and provides security. He ever lives to make intercession for us; He keeps us permanently because He lives.

There it is another element to the power of Christ or I should say the benefits of Christ that come through the resurrection. And for this one I would have you look at Philippians 3 just briefly. Philippians 3:10, familiar words to any Bible student. Paul says that his desire is that he may know

Him. He's talking about Christ here as He's mentioned in verses 8 and 9. He says that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection. One of the great benefits of the resurrection of Jesus Christ is that He is alive to empower His own. He is alive to grant power to those who belong to Him. In Ephesians 1:17 we read that He's praying that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation and the knowledge of Him. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints. Then verse 19. Then, what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. And this power is in accordance it says, with the working of the strength of His might, namely, that strength which He brought about in Christ when He raised Him from the dead. Another of the great benefits of the resurrection is we have resurrection power available in our lives. Power over sin and temptation, power over darkness, and ignorance, and folly, power to enable us to serve the Lord and witness effectively, power to use our gifts, power through prayer, all of those things are granted to us through the living Christ who expresses His resurrection power in us. In Act 1:8 it says that when the Spirit came we received power, power to go into all the world as witnesses. Well the resurrection is at the heart of everything for the Christian. Justification, transformation, eternal life, eternal security, and unlimited divine power are ours because Christ lives and applies the same power which raised Him from the dead to our lives. What a tremendous reality that is. There is yet another to be added to our list of benefits from the resurrection. And for that I want you to look at 1 Peter 1 for a moment. 1 Peter 1 tells us we have something else. In a word we can call it hope. In a phrase we can call it "the hope of the inheritance" which was obtained for us by the resurrection.

1 Peter 1:3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. And what is that living hope? Verse 4. That we will obtain an inheritance, that inheritance obviously in the life to come because it is imperishable, undefiled, will not fade away, is reserved in Heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith. Through the resurrection of Jesus Christ verse 3 says, we have been given a living hope. A hope that cannot die. We don't need to say much about that to make it very clear. The world is full of people who have perishing hopes. People fill their hearts and their minds with endless hopes and dreams and ambitions that end up in ashes. But we have a hope that never dies. We have a hope that is a living hope, an eternal hope that was given to us through the resurrection, that someday in Heaven we will receive an inheritance which is imperishable, undefiled, and will not fade away; an eternal inheritance, an eternal reward. And what is that? We will be made like Christ; we will dwell with Him the Bible says, in the Father's house. We will receive eternal rewards and we will spend eternity praising and glorifying the Lord. We will forever be filled with unbounded and unmixed joy. That is our eternal inheritance and it is reserved for us in Heaven through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. We consequently focus on things above and not on things on the earth. We're more concerned about what is ahead of us in the land of glory than what is under us in this passing world.

That leads me to another component of this marvelous benefit that comes from the resurrection, and it's really associated with what I just said. But let's add it to our little list. This would be number seven in my list. The resurrection purchased for us glory, eternal glory. And I don't mean that in a vague sense, I mean that in a quite specific sense, in the sense of Philippians 3 again, but at the end of the chapter. Verse 20. Our citizenship is in Heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. Now listen to this. Verse 21. Who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory by the exertion of the power that He has, even to subject all things to Himself. What is this saying? This is saying there will be an actual physical resurrection. And, God by His power will transform our bodies into conformity with the body of the glory of Jesus Christ. And when we talk about the benefits of the resurrection, we can talk about being made right with God, we can talk about being transformed, given eternal life, being secure in that eternal life, being given the power of God over sin and for service and witnessing, we can talk about the hope of a glorious eternal inheritance, of praise an honor to be given to the Lord, of service rendered to Him, of the unmixed joy and all that will be ours in heaven. But we haven't said it all until we come to this point where we recognize that not only did Christ come out of that grave physically and literally in an visible body that could be seen and touched, but so will we. There is coming a time according to the Scriptures, when all of the godly who have died and whose spirits are with the Lord will be joined together with resurrected bodies. The Bible tells us that the rapture when the Lord comes for His own, the dead will rise first, glorious glorified bodies like the resurrection body of Jesus Christ, will come out of the grave and be joined to the spirits that have been with the Lord since death. When you die your spirit goes with the Lord, your body has to wait the resurrection. Those who are alive on the earth at that time will be caught up with them to meet the Lord in the air and we will take on the very glory of the resurrection body of Jesus Christ. 1 John 3:2 says we will be like Him when we see Him as He is. So the resurrection is the guarantee of our resurrection. There will be a resurrection. People often ask me "Well, what about the people who've been dead a long time and there's nothing left? What about the people who were cremated, and what about the people who were cremated and their ashes were scattered over the sea? How's God going to find that?" Well, that's not the point. You're going to have a new body. It will be in some way you but it'll be different. It'll be a body incorruptible not corruptible, a body celestial not terrestrial, 1 Corinthians 15 says. The best way to understand it is it'll be like the resurrection body of Jesus Christ which was different than his pre-resurrection form. His post-resurrection glory will be the model for our glorified bodies. And that is to say they recognized Him, they knew who He was, He was to some degree familiar to them, when He disclosed himself to them they could touch Him, they could see Him, they could converse with Him, He could be in their presence, and there was a real literal physical present Christ in glorious perfection. And that's the model of what we will be. You say "Well does that mean that people will recognize me?" That's exactly right. They'll recognize you. They might take awhile because they won't see the kind of behavior they're used to, to put it that way. You say "Will we know our friends in Heaven, will we know our partners, and will I still love my wife?" Yes, you will love her with perfection but so will everybody else. We'll be who we are in glorified form. The promise of 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 end of prayer, the end of learning as we'll know as we're known. There'll be nothing to ask for, we'll have it all. The glorious splendor when this body of humiliation, this poor tent becomes a body of glory fit to dwell in a radiant transparent palace that we know as the New Jerusalem made of transparent gold and diamonds as described in the book of Revelation. Everything in that New Jerusalem shines, everything in that New Jerusalem has a glow about it. The streets are transparent gold and there are diamonds everywhere and multicolored jewels indicating that the light of the glory of God will come out of the throne in the center of the new Jerusalem and it will be refracted through all of the jewels and all of the transparent golden and splatter the blazing light of God's glory to the ends of the endless universe. That is the glorious picture of Heaven. And somehow we too will reflect that glory, that blazing glory that came off of the shining face of Jesus after His resurrection. That glory that was demonstrated if ever so briefly on the face of Moses when he saw God and His glory were on his face. We are pictured in the glory as clothed in dazzling robes, dazzling blazing white robes to show that we too will radiate the shining glory of God. We will be dazzling as white snow. We will be shining, Daniel says, we will be shining as the moon and the stars, remember he says that about the righteous. Daniel also says we will shine like the brightness of the firmament. We will shine like the sun in its might. We will shine like the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. We will radiate brightness and glory. This is the grandeur for which we wait. This is the splendor that shall come to us because Christ lives. That's all in the resurrection for those who put their trust in Jesus Christ.

That is what John calls in John 5, the resurrection of life, the resurrection of life. He says that there are two resurrections. John 5:29 there is a resurrection of life and there is a resurrection of judgment, a resurrection of judgment. For all those who do not participate in the resurrection of life there is left only the resurrection of judgment. Often that is translated the resurrection of damnation. Do you realize that the bodies of all the ungodly of the all the ages will come up from the graves as well? That God will give them a new body, a new body suited to eternal punishment, a new body that can feel the pain of the gnashing of teeth and the weeping and wailing and the unquenchable fire, the terrible darkness, the loneliness, the remorse, can feel all of that, and feel it unrelentingly forever. Everybody participates in the resurrection. When a person dies if they're a Christian their spirit goes to Heaven and waits, the final culminating climactic event provided by the resurrection and that is the resurrection of that body of glory to meet that spirit to take on that eternal form to be made like Christ.

But all the ungodly who die their spirits going to punishment out of the presence of God but they too wait for the resurrection. And in the end they will receive a body. It will be raised to the resurrection of damnation and they will then be sent into the lake of fire in that form to suffer that terrible punishment.

It's in light of that that the apostle Paul stood on the mountain in the city of Athens and addressed the philosophers. He said this, "therefore, having overlooked the times of ignorance God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent. Why? Because He has fixed a day in which He will judge

the world in righteousness through a man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead." Jesus Christ being raised from the dead was affirmed as the judge of all men. And on that hill in Athens when Paul had said that and the next verse records when they heard of the resurrection of the dead some began to sneer but others said "We shall hear you again concerning this," so Paul went out of their midst. But some men joined him and believed. And that's always the way it is. You preach the resurrection, you preach the implications of the resurrection, and some sneer and some believe.

There is going to be a resurrection. Christ's resurrection guarantees it. There's a resurrection of the just unto life, the saved; a resurrection of the unjust, the lost unto damnation. All the bodies will be raised to go either to Heaven or to Hell. And certainly in the despair of the time in which we live, in the despair of the world in which we live, this is a crucial, crucial message. There are many hearts that are like these we heard tonight. Empty, searching, and you might think it could take a decade to unscramble somebody from Judaism or Hinduism or Atheism. But it's amazing isn't it, how the shining light of the gospel breaks in on a dark heart and does its work with such power and such delackrity. Don't be hesitant beloved to proclaim the great realities of the resurrection and to give the promise of a resurrection unto life and the warning of a resurrection unto damnation. Well, join me in prayer as we close.

Father again it is so powerful and profound to contemplate these great truths because of the eternal implications. Lord I pray that no one will pillow his or her head in sleep tonight who hasn't come before you and asked for the forgiveness of sin and the promise of eternal life in Jesus Christ. Oh, what can we say? We thank You Lord God for the glories of the resurrection. In it we were justified, in it we were transformed and have received eternal life and are secure in that life. Through the resurrection we have power, the very power that raised Christ and the hope of eternal inheritance and the promise of glory and splendor to come in resurrection bodies. Truly we praise You for raising Jesus Christ from the dead, for all its implications spiritually to us, we thank you. And we would ask Lord that your spirit would be merciful and gracious to many who have not yet passed from death to life with no hope of resurrection unto glory and we pray that you would bring them to the knowledge of Christ in whose name we ask these things.

Amen.

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