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

What If Christ Didn't Rise?
Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:12-20
Code: 80-284

In recent months, of course, we have all been subject to the emphasis on the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, and a fitting emphasis it is. We are grateful for those who have turned their attention toward the suffering and the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, as the One who bore in His own body our sins on the cross. But it seems to me a...a somewhat obvious reality that consideration for the resurrection is not even a footnote in all of these discussions. At least in the public sector. Even in the film, The Passion of the Christ, the resurrection came and went in just a matter of moments. It was there, and I was glad for that, but it certainly was but a footnote after and agonizingly long time of focus upon His suffering.

And I think for many people the resurrection is something of a footnote, something to be considered, perhaps, as what Christians believe, but, perhaps, not noteworthy. Certainly not apparently as fascinating or interesting as the horrific and agonizing suffering of Jesus Christ. But the resurrection is no footnote. The resurrection is, in fact, the main issue. The resurrection is the high point. Everything in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, everything connected to our salvation, every promise that we hold in time and eternity is linked inextricably to the resurrection. What happened to Jesus before His death is not nearly as important as what happened to Jesus after His death. That He was scourged is a fact. That He suffered rejection and mockery and scorn and indignity and pain and insult and slander and then died is a fact.

But what is far more important than what happened before He died is what happened after. In fact, the world seems, to me, a little more open to looking at the cross than they are the open tomb. Because perhaps they do understand the implications of resurrection. And so while few, apart from perhaps, collectively, the Muslims, would deny that Jesus actually died, most would probably question that He actually rose.

The resurrection has massive implications. Everybody dies. But only One had the power to raise Himself from the dead. It is obvious to the enemy of our souls that the resurrection is critical. It is the linchpin that holds everything together. It is the cornerstone without which the building collapses. And that is why I think the resurrection is often mocked, scorned, denied, and sometimes just ignored, as if it were not of such importance to warrant a deep consideration. But the resurrection of Jesus Christ is absolutely critical. I want you to open your Bible for a moment to 1 Corinthians chapter 15. This is the chapter in the Bible that is known as the resurrection chapter, more than any other single chapter. This embraces the great realities of Christ's resurrection and our resurrection because of

His. It is a lengthy chapter of 58 verses and gives to us the theology of resurrection.

But I wanna approach it the way that the Apostle Paul, who wrote this chapter under the Holy Spirit's inspiration did, in a somewhat backward fashion. There are, always are people who deny the resurrection or doubt the resurrection or mock the resurrection or are indifferent to the resurrection, as if it did not matter. And, apparently, some of these people were in Corinth, the city to which Paul wrote this letter. Because in verse 12 of 1 Corinthians 15, he says, "How do some among you say there is not resurrection of the dead?" It had come to Paul's attention that there were people who denied the resurrection. In fact, they denied resurrection as a reality.

Perhaps they were influenced by the sort of current Greek philosophy, that basically was dualistic. The idea was that anything physical or material was evil. Anything spiritual was good. And...and so here we were, these good, spiritual creatures incarcerated in this evil, material, physical world and body and, if we were ever gonna be truly good and reach our great potential, we had to be divested of our physicality. And so the next life promised to be a netherworld of free-floating spirits without anything material. Couldn't have material existence in the next world, because to have material existence in the next world would be to have evil in the next world. And we wanted a next world that was free of evil. Maybe they had imbibed that, and so they concluded that we're gonna exist in the future as floating spirits, as spirits that are not in a body, and, therefore, they denied or doubted resurrection.

Whatever it was that they were buying into, they were saying that the resurrection was not to be believed. Well, the implications of this are absolutely staggering. You know, it's amazing how you can come up with an idea that seems to you reasonable at some point in time, but if you're not careful, you...you've just pulled the rug out from under everything. You've chopped the legs out from under everything that you believe. And that had happened to these people, who, in the Corinthian church, may have concluded that the resurrection was not a fact and not a reality.

Notice verse 12, 1 Corinthians 15, "Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain. Moreover, we are even found to be false witnesses of God, because we witnessed concerning God, that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, in fact, if the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied."

This is a somewhat strange approach. This is coming at the resurrection backwards. This is coming at it from a skeptical viewpoint. This is simply looking at the resurrection and saying it didn't happen, and then having to deal with all of the implications of that denial. And I...I will say to you that this is

not an easy approach for me to take, because the resurrection is true, because the resurrection is glorious, because the resurrection is so critical and essential to our faith, because the resurrection is the high point of the Gospel, because everything we believe and everything we hope is bound up in the resurrection, to come at this from the skeptics' viewpoint is somewhat painful. I would rather be glorifying the resurrection than playing the devil's advocate. But this is what Paul does, and I think it's instructive for us. Because it emphasizes how critical it is for us to hold to the resurrection.

If there is no resurrection, and we simply float away in some ethereal form, if there is no resurrection, and we get recycled as a cow or as somebody else in this endless reincarnation, if there is no resurrection in the future, if people are not physically, bodily, literally raised from the dead, then we have a huge problem. And it's this: if there is no resurrection, then Christ wasn't raised. Then Christ was not raised. If men and women do not rise, if human beings do not rise from the dead, physically, bodily, and literally coming back from the grave in physical form, as well as eternal life, if there is not a resurrection, then Christ did not rise...

This, again, is an affirmation of His humanity. If men don't rise, Christ doesn't rise, which affirms that He is fully human, as well as fully divine. And if Christ does not rise, we have the end of everything. Lemme show you how that flows. Back to verse 13. "If there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised." Implication number one, verse 14, "And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain."

First of all, Gospel preaching is useless. Gospel preaching is useless. And what is Gospel preaching? Well, Gospel means Good News. Preaching the Good News is useless. Well, what is the Good News? The Good News...let's go back to chapter 15 verse 1. Let's pick it up. "I make known to you, brethren, the Gospel, the Good News. It's the Good News which I preach to you, which you received, in which you stand, by which you are saved from sin and death and hell. It's that Good News that you hold fast to, which I preach to you. And here it is. That Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. That He was buried, and He was raised on the third day, according to the Scriptures." The Good News is Christ died for our sins, and the satisfaction for our sins was made in full, and God was pleased, and, therefore, God raised Him from the dead to show that He had sufficiently provided the atonement for sin. That's the Good News.

He is alive, and the evidence for that reality: "He appeared to Cephas, or Peter. Then He appeared to the twelve. Then He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time. Then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles. And last of all, as it were, to one untimely born." Another apostle who came later, namely Paul. "He appeared to me, also."

And then verse 11, "Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed." And if Jesus did not come back from the grave, then this preaching is useless. The whole Gospel is subverted. If Jesus did not rise, then our message is pointless. Silence all the preachers. Shut down all the

churches. End all Gospel proclamation, 'cause it's all pointless. Jesus said, "Destroy this body, this temple, and in three days, I'll raise it up." Jesus said, "I...I'm gonna suffer and die and rise again." He said it on numbers of occasions. The apostles heard Him. They saw Him dead. They knew He was buried. They went to the tomb. He wasn't there. He appeared to them that evening. He appeared again a week later. He appeared to them and spent time with them in Galilee. He ate with them, walked with them, talked with them, taught them. They heard Him. They touched Him.

And so they preached that Jesus died, was buried, and rose again. It is what the Scripture said, and it is what happened. But if He didn't rise, then there is no Good News. Then God did not validate His atoning work. Then He did not provide a satisfaction for sin. There is no Good News. The news is bad.
"He was declared to be the Son of God...Romans 1:4 says...by the resurrection from the dead." He Himself, in Revelation chapter 1 says, "I am the living One who was dead and am alive forevermore." In Romans 14:9, it says, "He died and rose that He might be the Lord of the living and the dead." That is to say that He had the power of life extended even over death. Of course. His Lordship was secured by the resurrection. His atonement was secured by the resurrection.

If He didn't rise, then we have no Good News. He's not Lord. He didn't provide a sufficient sacrifice for sin. All Gospel preaching is a sham. We are the worst charlatans. We're no different than all the rest of the false teachers in the world. If He didn't conquer death, then He didn't conquer sin, and He didn't conquer hell, and the angels who said, "Behold, I bring you Good News of great joy, which shall be to all people," lied. There is no Good News. The news is all bad. Another good man failed. Another good man died.

So if there's no resurrection, then Christ didn't rise. And if Christ didn't rise, then all Gospel preaching is useless. Secondly, back to verse 14, "Your faith also is vain or useless or void. Your faith is empty." Go down to verse 17, "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless. You are trusting in a lie. You have put your trust in a delusion, in an empty, vain hope. You have reached out to grasp nothing." This is an inevitable consequence. Because the apostles preached a risen Lord. They preached a living Savior. And they said that, to be saved, you must confess Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead.

The Gospel is the Gospel of believing in a risen Christ. But if Christ did not rise, then you're believing is pointless, empty, useless, worthless. And you could say what it says in Psalm 73:13. "Truly I have cleansed my heart for nothing." All this repentance and all this faith is absolutely meaningless. Or you could feel like Isaiah, who said in Isaiah 49:4, "I have labored in vain. I have spent my strength for nothing. It's all a waste." In fact, not only is your faith in vain, but the faith of every person who's ever lived and trusted in God. Even the people before Christ who were trusting in God to provide a sacrifice yet in the future. Who were looking ahead to a...a real sacrifice that would finally take away sin depicted and pictured in the sacrificial system of the Old Testament. All who ever believed God,

that He would provide a sufficient atonement, all who ever believed God to provide a lamb, to provide a sacrifice, as He did in the case of Abraham. All of them were fools also.

Abel was a fool to believe God. Enoch was a fool to believe God. Noah was a fool to, a real fool, to spend 120 years building a boat. All he did was get saved from a watery death, not from eternal judgment. If Christ is not raised, they're all fools. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, you name it. Moses, David, all the prophets, Gideon, Sampson, the judges, Barak, Jephthah, Samuel, Elijah, Elisha, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and on we go. And you can go to the 11th chapter of the book of Hebrews. You can read all the heroes of faith yourself. All those who stopped the mouths of lions, all those who were slain by the sword, or those who were sawn in half for their faith. That great, heroic chapter of the faithful. Those who died as martyrs for the faith. They lived by faith. It goes through that chapter by faith, by faith, by faith, by faith, by faith, by faith. They all, because they believed in God, because they believed in God, and they trusted God to provide a sacrifice for their sins, they gave their lives.

But if Christ has not been raised, then He was not a sufficient sacrifice, and all their faith is absolutely useless. Absolutely useless. They are heroes of folly. They are a fool's parade. You see, you can't just tamper with the resurrection. If you tamper with the resurrection, you start to see the crumbling of everything.

Lemme take to a third point that the apostle makes in this inverted look at the resurrection. First of all, if Christ has not been raised, verse 14, our preaching is useless. Secondly, your faith is useless. Then look at verse 15. "Moreover, in addition, following the flow, we are even found to be false witnesses of God, because we witnessed concerning God about God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised."

So here's the third conclusion. The Gospel is useless. Faith is empty. And the apostles are liars. False witnesses. "We, all of us who have affirmed this, have been found false witnesses." The word found is taken out of the legal vocabulary. "We've been drawn into court. We've given testimony, and we have been found out to have perjured ourselves. We have lied. We said we saw the risen Christ. We didn't see Him." If the preaching is a lie, then the preachers are liars. Is that not true? You can't really come up with any sort of patronizing stuff about, "Well, they were well-intentioned, honest guys. You know, they wanted Jesus to come out of the grave so strongly that they actually sort of materialized Him in their imagination, and it was so vivid that it seemed as if it was real." They just were well-intentioned, really sincere people. Paul understand that's bunk.

If you say you've seen a risen Christ, then you haven't seen Him. You're a liar. They're false witnesses. They are saying something that is not true. Now this has immense implications, folks. Because the apostles...the apostles and those associated with apostles, who were the preachers of the resurrection, if they are liars, they are also the writers of the New Testament. So now the New

Testament is written by liars. I don't feel real comfortable about that idea.

If I can't believe them about the resurrection, which is the key to everything, why would I believe them about anything else? And now, all of a sudden, now all is lost. And not only that, they say that the Old Testament Scriptures prophesied the resurrection, verse 4, "He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures." Where is that in the Old Testament? Psalm 16. "God would not allow His holy One to see corruption, but would show Him the path of life. He go right through the grave and out the other side." And if Jesus didn't rise from the dead, then not only are the writers of the New Testament liars, but the writers of the Old Testament are liars.

And now we have some profound implications. The whole of the Bible is starting to disintegrate before our very eyes. We have an untrustworthy book. And we could conclude then that, since God cannot lie, if the Bible is written by liars, it is not the book of God at all. See, you just can't pull out the resurrection. Everything collapses.

Paul says, "Admittedly, if the dead don't rise, Christ didn't rise. If the Christ didn't rise, our preaching is useless. Your faith is useless, and we are found to have perjured ourselves. We are liars." This whole thing is a unit, the resurrection, the resurrection of Christ, the preaching of the apostles, the faith of the people who believe, and the testimony of the apostles, that all forms a unit. It either stands or falls together. You can't just say, "Well, they were good-intentioned, spiritual men who had a lot of spiritual insight. We oughta follow their ethical standards." That's what the liberals all say. "Well, you know, we don't believe the Bible's really the Word of God. We...we don't know that Jesus really rose from the dead. But these are good, spiritual men who show us a certain way to live an ethical life." No, they're not. They're absolute, outright liars. They said they saw a risen Christ, and they didn't see Him, and they're telling you a lie.

Furthermore, the Old Testament said He would rise, and, therefore, it's written by liars. Here's one. Jesus said He would rise, therefore, He's a liar. Everything comes down. Everything. Jesus said He would come out of the grave. If He didn't, He lied. They said they saw Him. If they didn't, they lied. They wrote down their testimony that He had appeared to Peter and to the twelve and to five hundred brethren, and then to James, and then to the apostles, and then to Paul. And they're all liars. It's one massive collection of fabricators. The whole thing is a big hoax. And everything from the beginning to the end of the Bible is untrustworthy.

You see, that's what John was saying when he said, "If we believe not, we make Him a liar." As soon as you impose upon anything in the Bible, your unbelief, you've just turned God into a liar. Understand the seriousness of that? To deny resurrection is to deny the authenticity and the integrity and the authority of the Bible. And to impugn God. So if you're gonna tamper with the resurrection, everything comes crashing down. Paul anchors that point in verse 16 by repeating, essentially, what he said in verse 13. "For if the dead are not raised, then not even Christ has been raised." You have

to understand, you can't deny bodily, physical resurrection without, therefore, denying Christ. And once you've denied Christ, everything comes down.

There are more disastrous results. I want you to look at verse 17. "And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins." It's not just that you've been believing the wrong thing. Too bad. You kinda set your course in the wrong direction. As one person said to me, "I spent my whole life climbing a ladder, only to find out at the end it was leaning against the wrong building." It's not just that. It's not just, "Oops, too bad. I wish I could do that again." It's you are still in your sins. You are still in your sins. Engulfed in, plunged in, captive to, incarcerated within the sphere, the deadly sphere where sin rules and sin dominates. You're surrounded by your sins, which accuse you before God like so many wolves about to tear you to shreds.

You see, you need a Savior. You need a sacrifice. You need somebody to pay your penalty. You need somebody to be your substitute, to die in your place. And there's only One who can. And if He didn't succeed, there isn't anywhere else to go. There is neither any salvation in any other name than the name of Jesus. There's only one mediator between God and man. Christ and Christ alone, and if He went to the cross and did not rise, then that means God did not authenticate His satisfaction. God did not affirm His atonement. God did not commend His work. God was not satisfied. If there's no resurrection, then there's no satisfaction. God's still holding the sinners guilty. There is no forgiveness. There is no penalty paid. No reconciliation. No justification. No salvation, and no eternal life, and you are still in your sins.

If Christ is still dead, then every person who has been believing in God and in God's provision in Christ is still dead. And Moses is in hell, and David's in hell, and all those people we mentioned are in hell. Abel and Enoch and Noah and all the righteous of the past are in hell. All the prophets are in hell, and almost unthinkable to say it, but Peter, James, and John are in hell, and Paul's in hell, and Philip's in hell, and they're all in hell. Luther's in hell, and Calvin's there, and Spurgeon's there, and your parents and grandparents who brought you up to believe in Christ, they're in hell, too, because they were part of the same big delusion. If there is no resurrection, all those who put their trust in Christ...are without an appropriate redemption.

Only when He conquers death, only when He comes out of the grave, can He be to us wisdom and sanctification and righteousness and redemption. It is only when we are united in His death, burial, and resurrection...as Romans 6 puts it...only when we are buried with Him and rise to walk in newness of life, is sin conquered." If Christ does not rise, Satan wins, sin wins, and hell takes everybody.

And that leads to one more really staggering fact, and it is this. Look at verse 18. "Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished." That's what I was just saying. They're all in hell. They...they made the worst possible mistake. They trusted in a Savior who couldn't save them, and

they're all in hell. Just an absolutely unthinkable reality. They're all gone, perished forever under the fury and the wrath of God.

You see, if you start tampering with resurrection, Christ doesn't rise. If Christ doesn't rise, Gospel preaching is useless, faith is empty, apostles are liars, sin is unforgiven, and all those who have died, trusting that God would provide a sacrifice, or on this side of the cross, knowing that He had provided One in Christ, all those are perishing forever in eternal damnation. Satan wins, God loses.

And that leads the Apostle Paul down to what is the climactic point in verse 19. This is a verse with which many are familiar. Verse 19, he sums it up, the implications. "If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied. If we have hoped in Christ in this life only." If this is it, folks, if we have put all our eggs in this one Easter basket, if we have put all our hope in Christ, and it's only gonna work in this life, it's only for this life, of all the people in the world, we are the most pitiful. That is...that is pitiful. We should be pitied above everybody. We put all our hope in Christ, thinking that it secured our eternal future when, in fact, it's only for this life, that's all.

So when we were repenting of our sin and going through the heart wrenching conviction of the Holy Spirit and feeling guilty and feeling hammered and beaten by our own iniquities, and we came crawling, as it were, to Calvary, and we put our faith in Jesus Christ, and we denied ourselves, and we took up our cross, and we followed Christ, and all these years, we've been battling temptation and fighting against sin and disciplining ourselves and reading the Bible and praying and fellowshipping and...and sitting under the teaching of the Word of God and endeavoring to live lives that...that honor the Lord, and we have made sacrifice after sacrifice. We've waged war against temptation. Struggled against sin. Sought to please Christ. Obeyed the Scripture. Borne the cross. Suffered reproach. Taken the Gospel. Been rejected by the Gospel. Made sacrifices for the sake of evangelism. We've done all this, and this life, we find out, this is it. That is pitiful.

I mean, look, if all I am as a Christian ends with this life, I don't know if I can carry this thing off...I live my Christian life under the promise that there's a life to come in which all the sacrifices, all the endeavors, all the disciplines, all the work that Christ has done in my life, all the effort that's been made is gonna reap an eternal reward, right? If that's not there, I...I don't know if I can do this.

I could understand the man who said, "Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we"...What?...Hey, if it's over tomorrow, you gotta reevaluate whether you wanna do it this way, right? Certainly, you don't wanna sit very much longer and hear any more boring sermons about a future that isn't gonna exist. You don't wanna make anymore unnecessary sacrifices. You want your money back from the mission field. From the church plate. You've been a fool. You've played the fool from start to finish.

If Christ didn't rise, then this Christian life is only for here. It's all been pointless. If you think that's a stretch, just think of this. Every other religion in the world is living out that very reality. Every other

one, 'cause they all believe a lie. But we would be, of all people, most to be pitied, because we think someone has atoned for our sins when He hasn't if He didn't rise.

Jesus said in John 8:21 to the Jewish leaders, "You'll die in your sins. You'll die in your sins." That would be true of us. We are a miserable group. That takes me to verse 20, but...we always welcome the but in the flow, huh? "But now Christ has been raised from the dead. He has been raised from the dead." The Old Testament said it, and it's trustworthy. The New Testament said it, and it's trustworthy. Jesus promised it, and He can be believed. The apostles preached it, and they told the truth. The empty tomb proves it. The grave clothes lying there, not thrown into a corner by somebody who unwrapped His body, but lying exactly where they were when the body was in them. He just went through them without moving them. The angels, the stone rolled away, the Jewish leaders trying to cover up. The disciples who were scattered and fearful and panicked, all of a sudden transformed into world changers. The existence of the church, all of our transformed lives, all speak of a risen living Christ.

So Paul says in verse 20, "But now Christ has been raised from the dead. And He is but the first fruits. The primary one for all those who are asleep." In other words, He guarantees our resurrection. He did pay the penalty for sin. God was satisfied. God did raise Him from the dead. Because He lives, we shall live also who put our trust in Him. That's why in Act 5, He is called a Prince and a Savior. A Prince and a Savior. It's interesting, the word prince. Archegas. A number of ways to interpret that word. Forerunner, frontrunner.

In the seafaring world of Biblical times, ships had one of their sailors, who was designated as the archegas. He had to be a very strong swimmer, because he had a very formidable task should the ship have run aground somewhere, on a reef or on rocks, offshore. As ships would then be battered and breaking up such as the occasion in Acts 27 where Paul and 276 people were in that circumstance. There needed to be somebody who could save everybody. And this is the way it was done. The strongest swimmer would have a rope attached to his waist. And he would dive into the troubled, churning waters, and swim with all his might to shore. If he could make it to shore, he could then pull a larger rope and anchor it. Tie it to a tree or to a rock. And once that line was tied to the shore, all the people could come down the rope to safety.

And Acts 5 says that Jesus is our archegas. He dove into the depths of the waters of death. If He had drowned, we'd have no way to shore. But He didn't. He made it through the dark waters of death, and He anchored the line in Heaven. He anchored it around the throne of God. Hebrews says that. We have an anchor there, and we all make it safely to the heavenly haven on the rope that Jesus secured for us...while the world is being broken to bits underneath us.

There is no Christianity without the resurrection. There is no Bible without the resurrection. There is no hope without the resurrection. I wanna show you one other passage as we conclude, Acts 17.

This was a day in Paul's life when he was preaching in Athens. I have preached on the very spot where he preached that day several times. And he was preaching about what the apostles always preached about. The resurrection. And verse 32 of Acts 17 says, "Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead...this was the message...When they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some began to sneer. Others said, 'We shall hear you again concerning this.' So Paul went out of their midst. But some men joined him and believed, among whom also was Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris and others with them."

Just this in conclusion, those are the only possible three responses. You either mock, postpone, or believe. You either sneer at the resurrection, or you delay your response, and that always reminds me of that old poem by Edgar Guest, which I remember from years ago. Goes like this. "He was going to be all that a mortal should be, tomorrow. No one should kinder or braver than he, tomorrow. Each morning he stacked up the letters he'd write, tomorrow. The greatest of workers this man would have been, tomorrow. The world would've known him had he ever seen tomorrow. But the fact is he died, and he faded from view, and all that he left here when living was through was a mountain of things he intended to do, tomorrow."

Or you could believe in the glory of the resurrection. And if you confessed Jesus as Lord and believed that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved from sin and death and hell.

Going to close in a word of prayer followed by time of silence in which you can search your own heart as to your relationship to the risen Christ. Father, we thank You for Your Word. We thank You even for this inside out, backwards approach, which shows us how important the resurrection is by telling us what would happen if it is denied. We affirm it. Now Christ has been raised from the dead, and He lives. And because He lives, our hope is secure. The Gospel is true. Our faith is purposeful. The apostles tell the truth. Those who have died in hope of salvation through Christ are in Heaven, and we are, of all people, most to be envied, because we have eternal life. I pray, Lord, today that any who do not have that life would open their hearts, confess Jesus as Lord. Give them the faith to believe in His resurrection, as the satisfaction that He had indeed paid in full the penalty for their sins. May we rejoice in the life that is granted us by grace through the risen Christ. We pray in His name.

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