

The Power of the Resurrection

Notes

“We minimize the power of the resurrection when we reduce it to a Christian doctrine that is just part of our belief system. Doctrines are not something we should worship. They are not sources of the power we need to be the champions God has called us to be. The only true source of power we have is the one whom the doctrine is based upon... and this is only true if we are speaking of Jesus. Our doctrines and beliefs are in the only King of Kings and Lord of Lords who was, is or will be. His name is Jesus.

John 11:25-26 (NKJV)

“I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. {26} And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?”

The Bible tells us that Jesus’ dear friend Lazarus had died; and it was three days before Jesus came to Martha and Mary, Lazarus’s sisters. When the Lord arrived at their home in Bethany, Martha came to meet him. She said, “*Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.*” (John 11:21) Her deep disappointment and sorrow were understandably evident. Both Martha and Mary previously had seen Jesus perform miracles. They had hoped He would have come and healed Lazarus. Now, it seemed too late.

Jesus replied to Martha, “*I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. {26} And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?*” This was a statement of divine identification. Christ did not say, “Trust in a doctrine about Me.” He identified Himself as the “*the resurrection and the life.*” This was an announcement of divine personal identity from the only One who not only has never lied, and according to the Scriptures, cannot lie. It is a statement that says, “Look to Me. Serve Me. Trust in My faithfulness. Trust in My ability to do whatever I will, because I truly am God.”

I want to encourage you to embrace Christ as the Lord, Savior, Master and King in your life. In doing so, you will maximize His resurrection power. In doing so, you will be walking in the truth and it will continue to keep you free to be all He calls you to be. Reflect on what it means for you to be following the only Person who is completely dependable, fully powerful and forever faithful. Of course, we're talking about the Lord Jesus Christ."¹

The Importance of the Resurrection

Every Easter, as Christians, we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. He died for our sins and rose again to life. We celebrate this because through Jesus' death, burial and resurrection, we can be saved from a life of sin-filled darkness and an eternity of death. In Christ, we are reconciled to God, and assured of an eternity in heaven - forever in His presence. This study will explore the impact of this greatest of gifts from God; and look into what happened next, after Jesus rose from the dead. Here's the Apostle Paul's account to the Corinthian Church of what happened when Jesus rose from the dead.

1 Corinthians 15:3-7 (NLT)

"I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me. Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. {4} He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said. {5} He was seen by Peter and then by the Twelve {6} After that, he was seen by more than 500 of his followers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. {7} Then he was seen by James and later by all the apostles."

After His resurrection, Jesus knew how important it was to prove to the disciples that He had been resurrected. The Lord understood that people would try to say it never happened. They would make

¹ The beginning of this study was based on - "A Mentoring Minute - The Power of the Resurrection" by Dr. Bob Abramson - www.mentoringministry.com.

excuses and lie about what happened to His body. Therefore, it was vital for the disciples to be absolutely certain that He was resurrected from the dead. The Gospel depended on it. So, Jesus walked about and showed people beyond any doubt, that He had come back from the dead and was alive again. He appeared to the women who came to His tomb and to the disciples. Jesus even told Thomas to put his hand into His side so he would no longer doubt. Then, Jesus appeared to more than five hundred of His followers. This and many other witnesses personally would confirm, over and over, that Jesus had been brought back to life. All four of the Gospels confirm His resurrection (Matthew 28, Mark 16, Luke 24, John 20).

Luke, a traveling companion of the Apostle Paul and author of the Books of Luke and Acts, gave us a summary of what happened during the first forty days following Christ's resurrection. He wrote to a believer whose name was Theophilus. His letter was inspired by the Holy Spirit, and became the Book of Acts.

Acts 1:1-3 (TPT)

"To Theophilus, the lover of God. I write to you again, my dear friend, to give you further details about the life of our Lord Jesus and all the things that he did and taught. {2} Just before he ascended into heaven, he left instructions for the apostles he had chosen by the Holy Spirit. {3} After the sufferings of his cross, Jesus appeared alive many times to these same apostles over a forty-day period. Jesus proved to them with many convincing signs that he had been resurrected. During these encounters, he taught them the truths of God's kingdom realm."

Jesus spent those forty days after His resurrection doing two things. First, He proved, with many convincing signs, that He was raised from the dead. Second, He taught the apostles about the Kingdom of God. Now, they had understanding that only the Lord's death, burial and resurrection could have given them.

Jesus erased any potential for doubt in the life of the disciples and for every Christian from that point forward. This was all recorded for us, so that we would *“believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.”* (John 20:31 NKJV)

There was however, one more thing to happen once and for all to solidify our faith and guarantee our eternal inheritance in Christ. After forty days had passed, Jesus gave his disciples one final instruction before He ascended into heaven to take His place at the right hand of God the Father. His final words to His disciples are found in Acts 1:4-5, 8.

Acts 1:4-5, 8 (TPT)

“Don’t leave Jerusalem, but wait here until you receive the gift I told you about, the gift the Father has promised. {5} For John baptized you in water, but in a few days from now you will be baptized in the Holy Spirit!... {8} I promise you this—the Holy Spirit will come upon you and you will be filled with power. And you will be my messengers to Jerusalem, throughout Judea, the distant provinces—even to the remotest places on earth!”

Jesus had made this same promise to the disciples before He was crucified. Here’s what Jesus previously told the disciples in the book of John.

John 16:7-8; 13-15 (NKJV)

“Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. {8} And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment... {13} However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. {14} He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. {15} All things that the Father has

are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.”

After the Last Supper, just before He was arrested, Jesus told the disciples He was going away; and it was a good thing for them that He was going, so that the Holy Spirit could come and be with them. But at the time, the disciples had not understood what He meant. Verse (17) says, “...some of his disciples said to one another, “What does he mean...?” They did not have a clue what Jesus was talking about at that point.

The Promise of the Resurrection

Now, after His resurrection, Jesus reminds them of what He had told them in the past about the Holy Spirit. He tells them to stay in Jerusalem and to wait for the gift “*the Father has promised you*” (Acts 1:4) – the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus’ final instruction to the disciples before He ascended to heaven was to wait for the arrival of the Holy Spirit. He would bring the power they would need to fulfill God’s plan. Verse 9 tells us what happens next.

Acts 1:9 (TPT)

“Right after he spoke these words [to wait for the Holy Spirit] the disciples saw Jesus lifted into the sky and disappear into a cloud.”

The disciples saw Jesus miraculously ascend into heaven and then they did exactly what Jesus told them to do. They waited in Jerusalem for the coming of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit would fill them with power and be their Helper, Teacher and “*Divine Encourager*” (TPT). Ten days later, on the Day of Pentecost, Jesus’ promise was fulfilled.

Acts 2:1-4 (NKJV)

“When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. {2} And suddenly there came

a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. {3} Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. {4} And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

It happened just as Jesus promised. When Jesus departed this earth, God sent the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity. In Acts 2 we read that the Spirit made His presence known. He filled the house where the disciples were waiting with a roaring wind and engulfed them with tongues of fire. Verse 4 says *“and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.”* Because of these experiences after the resurrection, the disciples were transformed into men who were willing to go to the ends of the earth to make disciples, and if necessary, die for their beliefs. The Holy Spirit *“filled and equipped”* (TPT) them to do what Jesus commanded them to do.

The same Holy Spirit touched and convicted you and me of our sin so we could be saved. Then, when we accepted Jesus as our Lord and Savior, the Holy Spirit came to live in each of us. Romans 8:11 says, *“The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you.”* What does that mean for us today? Why is having the Holy Spirit in our lives so important?

Ephesians 1:13-14 (NLT)

“And now you Gentiles have also heard the truth, the Good News that God saves you. And when you believed in Christ, he identified you as his own by giving you the Holy Spirit, whom he promised long ago. {14} The Spirit is God’s guarantee that he will give us the inheritance he promised and that he has purchased us to be his own people. He did this so we would praise and glorify him.”

Jesus’ promise continues today. The Holy Spirit makes it possible for us to have that same unshakeable belief and obedience to do what Jesus asks of us, both inwardly for life and outwardly for

ministry. The Holy Spirit resides in us. He guarantees all the promises of God. He makes it possible for every one of us to live a Spirit-led life.

John 16:13-14 (NKJV)

"...when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; ...He will tell you things to come. {14} ...He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you."

A Spirit-Led Life

When we accepted Christ into our hearts, a completely new world opened up to us. Our spirits were born-again. The Holy Spirit came to live inside of us. We no longer are left to figure things out exclusively by our own thinking or to solve our problems alone. We now have direct access to our almighty, all-knowing, all-powerful, ever-present, all-loving God, through the Holy Spirit inside of us. We are given the privilege of getting wisdom and understanding from God to help us navigate through life.

Anytime, day or night, we can come to God and ask Him for His help, His guidance, and His direction. We no longer have to be dominated and controlled by our own sinful nature. As children of God, we can now be led by the Holy Spirit in every area of our lives.

Romans 8:5,12-14 (NLT)

"Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit.... {12} So, dear Christian friends, you have no obligation whatsoever to do what your sinful nature urges you to do. {13} For if you keep on following it, you will perish. But if through the power of the Holy Spirit you turn from it and its evil deeds, you will live. {14} For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God."

The Bible makes a clear distinction between living a life controlled by our sinful selves, and living a life being controlled by the Spirit of

God. Every day we must make a decision - are we going to do things God's way or are we going to do things our own way?

How do we to start living lives that are more and more being led by the Spirit and not by our own desires or the standards of the world around us? The answer lies in building a relationship with the Holy Spirit. It is through the Holy Spirit that we first met with God; and it is in the spirit realm that we grow to know Him more. As we build a strong, on-going, daily relationship with the Holy Spirit, we become more and more sensitive to His voice speaking to our heart and giving us instruction and direction. We learn to listen for, and hear the voice of the Holy Spirit.

The power, importance and promise of the resurrection of Christ is on-going through the Holy Spirit, who dwells in us. He is available to all who believe and call on the name of Jesus.

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