

A group of 4-year-olds was gathered in a Sunday School class in Chattanooga. The teacher looked at the class and asked this question: "Does anyone know what today is?" A little girl held up her hand and said, "Yes, today is Palm Sunday." The teacher exclaimed, "That's fantastic, that's wonderful. Now does anyone know what next Sunday is?" The same little girl held up her hand and said, "Yes, next Sunday is Easter Sunday."

Once again the teacher said "That's fantastic. Now does anyone know what makes next Sunday "Easter"?"

The same little girl responded and said, "Yes, next Sunday is Easter because Jesus rose from the grave" and before the teacher could congratulate her, she kept on talking and said, "but if He sees his shadow... He has to go back in for six more weeks of basketball."

Well just in case we have someone here who doesn't know why today is Easter Sunday we are going to let you know.

What is the Resurrection?

Today is Easter Sunday. It is the day when Christians all over the world celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave. The Bible teaches that Jesus has been resurrected; He has risen from the dead!

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came back to life three days after He had died on a Roman cross, having been crucified for the sins of the world.

The Resurrection had been foreshadowed thousands of years before it actually happened.

Mat 12:38 Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered (Jesus), saying, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You."

Mat 12:39 But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah."

Mat 12:40 "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

Mat 12:41 "The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here."

Why is the Resurrection important?

The Resurrection is the linchpin of the Christian faith. The Apostle Paul makes this point in 1 Corinthians chapter 15, verses 13-19. Let's briefly examine these verses:

(1 Cor 15:13 NKJV) But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen.

There were those who at the time of this writing believed that there was no such thing as a resurrection (the Sadducees – Acts 23:38). There were others, who while believing in a resurrection, did not believe that anyone would be resurrected in bodily form like Jesus did.

But there is such a thing as a resurrection and Jesus was raised from the dead.

When Jesus was mercilessly crucified on the Cross, His disciples out of terror and fear, scattered and hid themselves in a room and locked the door. Three days later the resurrected Jesus appeared to them. This account is recorded in Luke chapter 24:

Luke 24:36 ... Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace to you."

Luke 24:37 But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit.

Luke 24:38 And He said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts?"

Luke 24:39 "Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have."

Luke 24:40 When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet.

Luke 24:41 But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, "Have you any food here?"

Luke 24:42 So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb.

Luke 24:43 And He took it and ate in their presence.

Jesus had risen from the dead—they were shocked to see Him—having seen Him crucified. Paul says, "... *if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen.*" But as we have seen, He is risen!

(1 Cor 15:14 NKJV) And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty.

If Christ is not raised from the dead, we don't have anything to preach about. We can all go home—preaching is empty, and our faith is empty.

(1 Cor 15:15-16 NKJV) Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up; if in fact the dead do not rise. For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen.

If Christ is not risen, you are a liar if you have been a faithful witness to the Gospel.

In Matthew 28:19-20, Jesus says, "*Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.*"

In Acts 1:8, he says to His followers, "...*you shall be My witnesses...*" In 2 Corinthians 5:20, Paul says, "*we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.*"

If Jesus did not rise from the grave—if the stone was not rolled away, then everything you've ever told others about Jesus is a lie. Everything you've ever told others about Heaven and salvation is a lie. All the "good news" that you have told trying to persuade others about Jesus and His peace, power and love a lie.

(1 Cor 15:17 NKJV) And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!

If Christ is not raised then we are still in our sins. The Resurrection is proof that God accepted the death of Christ as payment-in-full for our sin.

Paying a price is one thing, but paying the price that satisfies is another. You try going around the corner to Koon's Ford and offer them twenty dollars to buy a new Escalade, but the car will never leave the showroom...for twenty dollars is not the satisfactory payment.

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Romans 3:25 tells us that "*God hath set forth Jesus Christ to be a propitiation through faith in His blood.*" Propitiation means to render favorable; to *satisfy*.

For example, suppose someone vandalizes your new Cadillac. He smashes the windows, he spray paints it pink, shreds the leather seats and pours water in the engine. Would you be angry? Would you have the right to prosecute? What would it take to propitiate or to *satisfy* you?

Will candy do it? What if the vandal handed you a Milky Way bar? How about a pizza? A nice hot sausage and pepperoni pizza—freshly delivered from Pizza Hut.

Will a simple, "*I'm sorry and I won't do it again*" be enough? Or will it take full restitution by putting your car back into mint condition?

Our sin has offended God and damaged His Name, glory and creatures. Psalm 7:11 tells us that He is "*angry with the wicked*". *Whatever* is offered to God for our sin must satisfy *Him*. *He* must accept it for it is *His* wrath that must be decreased.

It doesn't matter if you or the church is satisfied with the sacrifice of Christ. It only matters if God accepts the sacrifice as a real and valid payment first. Propitiation lets us know that God is satisfied. The Resurrection lets us know that the death of Jesus Christ was accepted as a sacrifice for sin because it satisfied God as payment in full.

As 1 John 4:10 says, "*Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*"

When a price is paid, what assures you that what you paid has been accepted so that you now own the product? A receipt. A receipt is your proof that the seller is truly satisfied with your payment.

God has graphically demonstrated that He has fully accepted His Son's sacrifice. He raised Him from the dead to sit at His own right hand. And the resurrection is the *receipt*. The resurrection is our assurance that the payment of Christ is enough. Acts 17:31 tells us that "... *He hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised Him from the dead*".

- Our good works and deeds do not satisfy God as payment in full for our sins.
- Our church attendance does not satisfy God as payment in full for our sins.
- Our tithes and offerings do not satisfy God as payment in full for our sins.
- Singing on the choir, serving on the board and ushering do not satisfy God as payment in full for our sins.
- Being a deacon, reverend, minister, pastor, bishop and archbishop does not satisfy God as payment in full for our sins.

Some of you are attempting to give God Milky Ways and pizzas hoping to appease His wrath for your sin. It is only the death of Jesus Christ that qualifies as payment in full for your sin and God

has fully accepted His Son's sacrifice and demonstrated His acceptance by raising Him from the dead!

BUT if Christ is not risen, you and I are still in our sins; we are on our way (not to heaven) but to a Christ-less eternity in hell where we will burn forever in the lake of fire—that is Paul's point in 1 Corinthians 15:17.

(1 Cor 15:18-19 NKJV) Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.

If Jesus didn't rise from the dead then our loved ones in Christ, those who have died in the Lord, are not in heaven.

If Jesus is not raised from the grave, all those who have professed to be followers of Jesus are in hell paying for their own sins—certainly, Christ didn't pay for them if He hasn't risen.

If there is no resurrection then we will never see our loved ones who have gone on before us.

Paul says, if Christ hasn't been raised from the dead then this life is all we have; this existence is all we must be concerned with.

So don't come to church. Don't waste your time serving in the church. Don't give your tithes and offerings to the Lord—you'd be better off putting them into the sinking stock market. Let's just sell this building and land and divvy out the proceeds—if Christ has not been raised.

If Christ has not been raised it is all a sham—it's all a fraud. If Christ has not been raised from the dead you have been a victim of the biggest con in history. You have been deceived. You have been duped.

The Apostle says, *"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all people the most miserable and to be pitied by everyone."* Christians may as well be treated like the crazy person who hears voices and claims to have been abducted by space people.

If Jesus Christ did not rise from the dead, "followers of this Way," along with everyone else may as well say with everyone else, *"Let's eat, drink and party hearty for tomorrow we die."*

But Christ is risen! He is alive! Jesus is risen!

Now the Resurrection has certain repercussions—it leaves a mark on those who are touched by it.

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead has spiritual, psychological (mind, will, emotions) and physical ramifications.

We are going to end this message with a summary of the effects of the Resurrection and next Sunday we are look at them with more detail—so we hope you will return for the sequel.

The Spiritual Effects of the Resurrection

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead has spiritual implications on those who have bowed their hearts to the Savior. The Bible lets us know that there is such a thing as *"resurrection power."*

Romans 1:4 tells us that Jesus Christ our Lord “*was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead...*”

In 1 Corinthians 6:14 we are told that “*God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power.*”

In Philippians 3:10 Paul wrote of the “*power of His resurrection.*”

We have already seen the spiritual results of the resurrection—our sins have been dealt with at the Cross of Calvary. Christ has given Himself as a sin offering for us—this is why He allowed Himself to be crucified.

Paul argues this point in the Book of Romans chapters five and six. Let’s look here for a moment.

Romans 5:12-14, “*Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned; ...death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.*”

The first man, Adam, disobeyed God’s command in the Garden of Eden—he sinned and he spiritually died—being separated from His Creator. No more fellowship. Death was the penalty for his sin and this spiritual death passed on to all of his descendants. It passed on down through the generations even to us today.

Men and women are born as sinners, under the sentence of spiritual death—separated from God. Even those who did not sin like Adam sinned are still included because we all choose to sin.

Paul goes on to let us know that through one man’s offense, many died but it was through one Man, Jesus Christ, the gift of salvation came.

Rom 5:18 Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life.

Rom 5:19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.

In chapter six of the book of Romans, Paul shows his readers the spiritual effects that the Resurrection of Jesus Christ has on those who believe on Him:

Rom 6:4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Rom 6:5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,

Rom 6:6 knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.

Rom 6:7 For he who has died has been freed from sin.

Rom 6:8 Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,

Rom 6:9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him.

Rom 6:10 For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.

Rom 6:11 Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

To sum it up, Paul is letting us know that because of the Resurrection, those who are followers of Jesus Christ, have power over sin. The Christian is no longer a slave to sin. The unsaved person is like a puppet on a string to sin but the Christian has been emancipated from sin.

We are going to explore this further next Sunday.

The Psychological Effects of the Resurrection

There are psychological effects of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Like God whose image we are made in (Genesis 1:26), human beings are tripartite beings composed of spirit, soul and body.

We just learned that our spirits are set free from sin but our soul and body also need to be saved and set free and the power of the Resurrection will do just that!

Your soul needs to be raised to new life because it is the seat of your mind, will and emotions.

Even after a person is saved, there is much work that needs to be done in their *mind*. Our minds consist of values, attitudes, fears, hopes, ambitions, patterns of behavior, prejudices and perceptions. Our minds are inclined to process information the old way before it did before Christ saved us. There is garbage that needs to be clean out of our minds—Paul says in Romans 12 that our minds need to be renewed.

The *will* or volition also needs to be raised from the dead. Before a person surrenders their life to the Lordship or authority of Jesus Christ, they lived unto themselves. Some of us lived many years before becoming a Christian.

Whether you lived many years or a few years before you became a Christian—now you have a new Master—Jesus Christ. You need to move over and let Jesus take the wheel. Some of us don't like to let go of the wheel but the power of the resurrection will help you.

The *emotions* also need to be raised from the dead. Some of us wrestle with fear and anxiety on a daily basis. Many fret and worry; some can't even make it through the day without something to artificially lift the emotions up or calm them down.

The fear and anxiety you once wrestled with before becoming a Christian is to become a thing of the past. There are certain promises that are guaranteed the Christian. One such promise is found in Philippians chapter 4:

Phil 4:6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

Phil 4:7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Phil 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy; meditate on these things.

Phil 4:9 The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

This peace is given to the Christian who subjects his or her emotions to the power of the Resurrection.

This truth is expressed in a song by Nicol Sponberg.

Resurrection

*I'm at a loss for words, there's nothing to say
I sit in silence wondering what led me to this place
How did my heart become so lifeless and cold
Where did the passion go?*

*When all my efforts seem like chasing wind
I've used up all my strength and there's nothing left to give
I've lost the feeling and I'm down to the core
Can't fake it anymore*

*Here I am at the end I'm in need of resurrection
Only you can take this empty shell and raise it from the dead
What I've lost to the world what seems far beyond redemption
You can take the pieces in your hand and make me whole again*

Need CD

*I'm at a loss for words, there's nothing to say
I've used up all my strength and there's nothing left to give
How did my heart become so lifeless and cold
Can't fake it anymore*

*Here I am once again I'm in need of resurrection
Only you can take this empty shell and raise it from the dead
What I've lost to the world what seems far beyond redemption
You can take the pieces in your hand and make me whole again*

You can take the pieces in your hand and make me whole again

Our minds need to be resurrected—sometimes we just don't think right
Our wills need to be resurrected—sometimes we just don't do right.
Our emotions need to be resurrected—sometimes we just don't feel right.

We will explore this further next Sunday.

The Physical Effects of the Resurrection

In the New Testament book of the Gospel of John, chapter 11, we find the account where Jesus is being summoned by one of His closest friends to help her sick brother.

John 11:1 Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.

John 11:2 It was that Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.

John 11:3 Therefore the sisters sent to Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick."

John 11:4 When Jesus heard that, He said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it."

John 11:5 Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

John 11:6 So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was.

John 11:11 ... "Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up."

John 11:12 Then His disciples said, "Lord, if he sleeps he will get well."

John 11:13 However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep.

John 11:14 Then Jesus said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead."

John 11:15 "And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Nevertheless let us go to him."

John 11:16 Then Thomas, who is called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with Him."

John 11:17 So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days.

John 11:18 Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles away.

John 11:19 And many of the Jews had joined the women around Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.

John 11:20 Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him, but Mary was sitting in the house.

John 11:21 Then Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died."

John 11:22 "But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You."

John 11:23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

John 11:24 Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

The next few verses are what we need to focus on...

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live."

John 11:26 "And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

John 11:27 She said to Him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."

There is a physical repercussion or effect of the Resurrection. It is mainly this, that "*Whomever believes in Jesus Christ, though he may die physically, he shall live and whoever lives and believes in Jesus shall never die.*"

The Apostle Paul puts it this way in Romans 8:10-11, "*But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness. And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.*"

This promise is given to the Christian, not for this life, but for the life to come. These bodies we live in are still under the curse and are destined for the grave. Someone needs to tell Michael Jackson that.

These bodies are nothing more than shells that house our spirit and soul. They are destined to return to the earth but because of the resurrection God has promised the Christian a new body!

*1 Cor 15:51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed;
1 Cor 15:52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will
sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*

*1 Cor 15:53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on
immortality.*

*1 Cor 15:54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on
immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in
victory."*

1 Cor 15:55 "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?"

Because of the Resurrection, the Christian lives spiritually—our sins have been forgiven, paid in full!
The Resurrection is the receipt that is proof that the price has been paid!

Because of the Resurrection, the Christian lives emotionally—

*God sent His Son - they called Him Jesus,
He came to love, heal and forgive;
He lived and died to buy my pardon,
An empty grave is there to prove my Savior lives.*

*Because He lives I can face tomorrow,
Because He lives all fear is gone;
Because I know He holds the future
And life is worth the living just because He lives.*

The Resurrection gives our hearts reason to rejoice!

*Christ, the Lord, is risen today, Alleluia!
Sons of men and angels say, Alleluia!
Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia!
Sing, ye heavens, and earth, reply, Alleluia*

Because of the Resurrection, the Christian lives physically—the Christian looks forward to life after the
grave. Because He lives, we live!

*I've got a home in glory land that outshines the sun,
I've got a home in glory land that outshines the sun,
I've got a home in glory land that outshines the sun,
Way beyond the blue.*

Do you know Him today? Are you are recipient of His resurrection power? The Resurrection is the
receipt that the price for your sin has been paid. Do you want your receipt?

In Romans 10:9-10 the Bible tells you how to get your receipt. It says, *"if you confess with your
mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be
saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made
unto salvation."*