

Redeeming Christmas
Message 3 of 3 – Jesus: After His Resurrection (Today)

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Dear Readers,

What follows is one man's weekly attempt to know the truth of God's Word and bring it to His people for their good and ultimately for His glory. Please regard these only as notes belonging to a busy pastor uploaded as they stand (for better or for worse, complete or incomplete, almost always with grammatical errors, and always with room for refinement in content, structure, presentation...) to support the ongoing study of God's Word. I firmly believe that the community of faith which is the body of Christ can and should bring their gifts to bear for the good of the rest of the body and that any one teacher can be taught by the others with an understanding of the truth. Therefore, should you have insight that would sharpen any of the thinking expressed here, know that I would be pleased to receive it. Clearly, the input that is most welcome and most helpful is that which is more concise than verbose, Biblically grounded and expressed with the goal of displacing misunderstanding and apprehending the truth of God's Word. Your thoughts of that nature are most welcome, certainly appreciated and will be thoughtfully considered. You are invited to send those insights to me at johnny@stoneharborchurch.org.

In pursuit of truth and growing a shepherds heart,
Johnny

Transformation Card

This page provides an overview of the message and resources for individual and group study.

Date: December 27, 2009
Series: Redeeming Christmas
Section: Jesus: After His Resurrection
Topic: Jesus Today
Message Title: Jesus: After His Resurrection
Short Title: Jesus Today
Text: various
Key Words: Jesus, faith

Message Outline

Jesus: After His Resurrection (Today)

- I. The Completed Work of Jesus Affecting Us Today
Ripple, Perfect: Completed action that has ongoing effects on us today
- II. The Ongoing Work of Jesus
- III. Our Response to Him

Questions for Thought and Discussion

1. What did the Son of God do while living as Jesus that still effects us today?
2. Who is Jesus now and what role is He serving (President, savior, servant...)?
3. What is Jesus doing now?
4. How do we respond to who Jesus is and what He is doing?

Redeeming Christmas

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Homiletical Idea

Christmas, if it is to honor God, needs our redeeming; and we can do so by listening to the full story of the good news of Jesus Christ.

Goals of Message

- That we would take a season overrun by the world and redeem it for the glory of God

Service Plan

- Greeting (Johnny)
- Worship in Song (Chuck & Co.)
- Community Life Announcements (Leslie)
- Pastoral Prayer (Johnny)
- Scripture Reading
 - Reading 1: (Becky)
 - Reading 2: (Lori)
- Message (Johnny)
- Closing Prayer (Dave)
- Benediction (Johnny)

Jesus Today

Introduction

Unlike many Christmas gifts you may have given or received, the gift God gave us in Jesus has ongoing value into the future. Just like it would be a shame if you had been given a gift of a beautifully painted portrait of one of your family or friends and then put it in the garage and forgot about it, so too, on a much grander scale, the gift from God to you of Jesus was not meant to be stored away in the garage of your knowledge base, but to be brought fully front and center informing your every day life. Staying with the portrait analogy, the gift of Jesus is the finest portrait ever painted and deserves the commensurate prominence in your mind.

If we are to redeem Christmas by properly recognizing the Son of God, we must not only recognize that God had promised the Christ from the beginning and that He came in the person of Jesus to redeem and reconcile all of estranged creation into intimate communion with God, but we must also personally appropriate that redemption and reconciliation. We must hang the painting in the most prominent place in the grandest hall of our most important thoughts.

Doing this requires faith where faith is understood as the real and practical trusting in God – and specifically trusting in God who has redeemed and reconciled the people of God and all creation to Himself in the God-man Jesus. If we have faith in this God, that faith will inform our understanding of everything -- and most broadly categorized our understanding: of God (always existing Creator, Redeemer and King), ourselves (who we are according to the intentions of our Creator and Redeemer), and how we live our lives (how we live in relation to God as His created and redeemed) today.

(Jesus Christ the King of the KOG & the Head of the Church)

I. What Jesus Did that Impacts Us Today

Jesus' pre-incarnate existence, His birth, life, death and resurrection all accomplished some things that have ongoing impact on us even 2000 plus years after His death. What are those things?

A. Creation

1. He Created Everything that Has Been Created

a) What God did in Jesus Christ in Creation

I'd say that impacts us in a way that needs no great unpacking but could benefit from a thoughtful remembrance. God the Father, God the Son, God the Spirit created all that is including those in this room including you. God is Creator; we are His creatures living in His creation.

b) How that Impacts Us Today

This certainly impacts us today. It is still our fundamental and our highest our most true reality.

c) The Role of Faith

However, it is the reality that is most fully accessed only by faith.

2. He Created Us for the Purpose that we would Exercise Dominion in the Context of Communion

a) What God in Christ Purposed in Creation

(1) Communion – He created us to live in communion with Him

(2) Dominion – He created us to rule in communion with Him

b) Impact

We are created beings designed by the Creator to exercise dominion from the context of intimate communion with God. We can not help but be impacted by Him who created us. We were never intended by God to be independent autonomous self defined isolated beings living according to our own determination. Rather, at our best, we live aware of God's purposes for us and actively engaged in them at the exclusion of the competing purposes, i.e., the purposes of: the world, the enemy, or even our own selfish desires all of which are persistently and enticingly dangled in front of us.

It is a re-centering breath of fresh air and clarity of thought to remember that God exists, He has created us, and He has created us for His purposes.

c) The Role of Faith

This impacts us today whether we choose to acknowledge Him as Creator or not. But if we choose to live in the awareness of God as Creator, we can live in the fullness of His intentions, not blinded to His lovingkindness towards us but as those thankful and joyful and alive to the reality of Immanuel, God with us.

What is another name for this awareness? It is faith. If we are to realize the impact of God in Christ Jesus in regards to our created purposes, we must do so in faith believing God who so created us.

Our most distant ancestors did not live long in this blessed state of communion with God. You know their God-given freedoms included their freedom to live in autonomy from Him and that it was exercised under temptation from the enemy of something still better. What could be better? Satan dangled in front of them the right to determine good and evil for themselves, a prerogative that hindsight proved only God has the wisdom and perspective to best exercise. You know of the separation from God that resulted from Adam and Eve's disobedience and lack of contentment with the goodness God had secured for them in the garden. And you know of the redemption from that estrangement that God, who is love, then promised and portrayed and ultimately brought about in the person of Jesus. This is the second major act the Son of God did that impacts us today, the act of...

B. Redemption

1. Jesus Redeemed Us

a) Redemption Explained in Ransom, Atonement & Rescue

(1) Ransom

As those born into the state of separation from God, He ransomed us. Like a loving parent who paid the price required to get their child back from his captors, God in Christ, ransomed us.

Mark 10:45 -- "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a **ransom** for many."

(2) Atonement

If it is sin that separates, then it was Christ's death that God accepted as the actual atoning sacrifice that was pictured by all others.

We can recognize together with John the Baptist that Jesus was "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." (John 1:29) And in His death He was the once for all sacrifice who effectively atoned for sins. Heb 10:10 says, "By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ **once for all**." See also: Rom 6:10, Heb 7:27, 9:12, and 1 Peter 3:18.

(3) Rescue

(a) Galatians 1

Paul greets the Galatian church by saying, "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins that He might **rescue** us from this present evil age..." (3-4a)

2. How Redemption Impacts Us Today

a) Jesus' Redemptive Work Has Already Been Completed

(1) Galatians 2

Paul says, "I **have been** crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but **Christ lives** in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me." (20)

(2) Colossians 2

"When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, **He made you alive** together with Him, **having forgiven** us all our transgressions, **having canceled** out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which

was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, **having nailed** it to the cross.”
(13-14)

3. The Role of Faith

Once again, our response of faith is called forth. Paul says in Col 2:20, “...the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God...” If we are to apprehend the impact Jesus redemptive work has surely had on us we must do so through faith.

He did not just remove us from danger, but He has brought us to the safety of God. As an ocean rescuer who not only delivered a drowning girl from a stormy sea to the relative safety of a deserted beach but took her all the way into the arms of her waiting parents, so God in Christ Jesus, did not only ransom us from our the sea of our existence in sin, but has also brought us all the way to the arms of our awaiting heavenly Father. Jesus has rescued us by redemption unto ...

C. Reconciliation

1. He Reconciled Us to God

God delivered Israel out of Egypt across the Red Sea and brought them into the promised land under the leadership of Moses. God, in a more grand and ultimate way has, in Christ, reconciled us to Himself.

a) Rom 5:10b

Perhaps most concisely Paul says in [Romans 5:10](#), “For if while we were enemies **we were reconciled** to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.”

b) Col 1:21-23

To the Colossian believers Paul says, “And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, yet He **has now reconciled** you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach -- if indeed you continue in the **faith** firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.”

c) Eph 2:1-9

Paul says it this way in Ephesians:

¹And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, ²in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. ³Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. ⁴But **God**, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵even when we were dead in our transgressions, **made us alive** together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), ⁶and **raised us up** with Him, and **seated us** with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸For

by grace **you have been** saved **through faith**; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; ⁹not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.”

d) This Reconciliation is the Restoration of the Communion Lost at the Fall

2. Reconciliation's Impact on Us Today

Paul describes this reconciliation as something that Jesus secured in the past with ongoing impact into the future. Referring to the passages just read, note the evident **ongoing impact** of Jesus reconciling work.

That this impacts us is seen in the peace that the Prince of Peace has brought to us in His reconciling work. John 14:27 -- “**Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.**” Where we had no peace with God before we were joined by faith to God in Christ, now in Christ we have perfect peace!

3. The Role of Faith

We apprehend the benefit Jesus has secured for us by means of faith in Him who has redeemed and reconciled.

And what is faith?

Hebrews 11:1 -- Now **faith** is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

We may look around us with our natural eyes and see non-peace; but by faith in Jesus as Redeemer and Reconciler and Prince of Peace, we have peace.

D. Commissioning of His Disciples

1. Mat 28

2. Acts 1

3. Impact of Commissioning

a) Reaffirmation of God's Original Purpose for Man

(1) Dominion in the Context of Communion

God has not scrapped Plan-A and is now moving on with backup Plan-B. He was further executing His only and always plan – a plan which includes us in a huge role. In as much as we are joined by faith to Christ, we are to be the image-bearers of God making Him known to all the families of the earth and administering the rest of creation on His behalf.

b) We are Given a Mission Until His Return

(1) Be His Witnesses

(2) Make Disciples

This should have definitive impact on us!

E. Ascension

1. He Ascended to the Right Hand of God

Acts 1:9 -- ⁹And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

a) Apparent end to the story of Jesus

He was no longer with His disciples in bodily form

b) But that was not the actual end

(1) Angelic promise of His return

Acts 1:10 – 11 -- ¹⁰And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them. ¹¹They also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven."

(2) Christ's Prior Promise of His Continuing Existence with His Disciples

Mat 28:20b – Jesus promised His disciples, **"I am with you always, even to the end of the age."**

2. The Ascension's Impact

Look at that in just a bit

F. Pentecost

1. Jesus Sent the Holy Spirit to His Disciples

a) [John 14:26](#)

"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you."

b) [John 15:26](#)

"When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me,

c) [John 16:7](#)

"But 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 go, I will **send** Him to you.

d) Impact of Jesus Sending the Holy Spirit

In Acts 2 we read of Jesus sending the Spirit in the Pentecost event and we see the incredible transformation of Peter and the rest of Jesus' disciples who had all fled in the face of danger now standing firm with conviction and demonstrations of the power of God boldly proclaiming the gospel.

II. What Jesus is Doing Even Today

A. He is Sitting on the Throne of the Inaugurated Kingdom of God

1. Jesus is Seated at the Right Hand of God

- Speaking of Himself to His accusers after His arrest Jesus says, “⁶⁹”**But from now on THE SON OF MAN WILL BE SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND of the power OF GOD.**” (Lk 22:69)
- Speaking of Jesus Peter says, “ who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.” (1 Peter 3:22)
- Speaking of God's work Paul says in [Ephesians 1:20](#), “which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,”
- [Colossians 3:1](#) -- Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

2. What That Implies

That Jesus was resurrected and ascended and is seated at God's right hand speaks to ...

a) His Rest

His work of redemption and reconciliation is complete

b) His Rule

The right hand of God speaks of His authority as the King of the KOG.

c) His Intercession & Advocacy on Our Behalf

We can see that His rule is exercised for the good of His subjects by noting His activities of intercession and advocacy.

- Heb 7:25 -- Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.
- 1 John 2:1 -- My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;

B. Jesus is Being the Head of the Church

[Ephesians 5:23](#) -- For the husband is the head of the wife, as **Christ also is the head of the church**, He Himself being the Savior of the body.

[Colossians 1:18](#) -- **He is also head of the body, the church**; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.

C. Impact of Jesus as King and Head How We are to Respond to Jesus Today

1. We are to **See Ourselves Rightly...**

- a) As His Redeemed and Reconciled**
- b) As Subjects in His Kingdom**
- c) As Members in His Church**

2. We are to **Be Ourselves as He has Made Us in Christ**

a) Sons and Daughters Living in Intimate Communion with God

His Created Redeemed and Reconciled Image-Bearers Joined to Him by Faith in Christ

b) Subjects in His Kingdom

(1) Regarding Him as King

(a) He is NOT elected to the office for a term

Jesus is not a popularly and democratically elected president type of leader.

(b) He is the Eternal God-King

His authority is not granted Him by the people. His authority is inherent in His being God.

This takes some rethinking for us Americans who value freedom and autonomy from outside leadership and who only submit to leadership that we elect in and can elect out.

We like that type of control over our leaders.

But if we are to think rightly about our relationship to Jesus we are to regard Him as our King with ultimate authority over our lives. To be sure He is the best of all kings and has demonstrated His intent to use His position on our behalf. None the less, He is King!

(2) Regarding Ourselves as Loyal Subjects of the King

- (a) Letting Him Set Our Agenda**
- (b) Listening and Responding to Him**
- (c) Not Fitting Him in Around Our Plans**

c) Members of His Church

(1) Regarding Him as Head

- (a) Letting Him set the Agenda**
- (b) Following His Lead**

(2) Regarding each others as fellow members given to each other for each other

(a) Interrelatedness

Each in this room is as much a part of the same body of Christ, i.e., the church, as your physical hand is a part of your own body.

This also takes some rethinking of who we regard ourselves to be.

(b) Interdependence

We need each other!

We will not be what God has intended us to be unless we recognize our need for each other and then live as that necessary part of the whole.

This too takes some rethinking for our staunchly independent natures. We have all been burned too many times by the failures of others toward us to be naturally inclined toward interdependence.

But we will talk more along these lines in the weeks to come as we begin a new series exploring the nature of the church. For now let's try to wrap up our thoughts on Redeeming Christmas

Conclusion

To be sure if we are to redeem Christmas to the glory of God we need to do more than just remember an isolated event that happened a long time ago in a far away town of Bethlehem. We need to also take note of how Jesus still today impacts our lives. I hope we can all agree that His impact is huge and inescapable. I hope we also all agree that if we are to do more than be impacted by Him, if we are to embrace Him and live in intimate communion with God as He has enabled, we must apprehend Him by faith – that which we can not see with our natural eyes but that we know to be true by the witness of the Scriptures illumined by the Holy Spirit. May we all apprehend Him to the fullest extent of His intention. Let's pray.