

Easter 2012

This sermon will be short because Brad also has some things he would like to say prior to communion.

Take a look at a concordance or do a search on a Bible web page. Look for the words resurrect and raise or raised. You will find them used over 80 times in the New Testament in conjunction with either Christ's resurrection or the believer's resurrection. This makes the Resurrection one of the most important topics in the New Testament.

Christ said the following things predicting his Resurrection:

Luke 9:22 "The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day."

Matthew 17:23 they will kill Him, and the third day He will be raised up." And the disciples were exceedingly sorrowful.

Matthew 16:21 Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.

There are lots of quotes just like this. The resurrection was central to God's plan to save sinners. Christ came to die. But He came to do more than die. He came to also be bodily risen from the dead.

And more than that, God's plan was always to raise **His children** from the dead.

Look at what Jesus said in **John 6:39-54**

39 This is the will of the Father who sent Me,

Jesus is giving us the inside scoop on His Father's intention. This is what the Father was thinking when He sent Christ to this planet.

that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.

It is the Father's will that no one who has been given to Christ should be lost. And along with that, a logical byproduct of that truth, every one of them should be raised up at the last day.

40 And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

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44 No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day......

54 Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

In these 15 verses we are told 5 times that Christ will raise up all of those who believe in Him at the last day. And this is tied in logically to the purpose for Christ's coming. Christ came that He might rise and that he might raise every one of His children with Him. There would be none missed. At the last day every child of His will bodily rise from the dead. Some believe that scripture says that the believer's spirits will be joined to the resurrected body on that day. Some say that the spirit will be brought back to awareness at the same time as the body is resurrected. Both views have a lot of scripture backing them. I am not certain which is true, but I am certain that at the last day it won't matter.

We have been studying in Romans just how certain a salvation Christ provided for us. Here we see in John another affirmation of this fact. We see that Christ came, not only to die, but to raise again. We see that it is God's will that not a single child of God's will be left to rot in the ground. One day, on a tick of the clock that only God knows, every child of His will experience the same resurrection from the dead as Christ experienced.

And on that day, every cost that we paid for our affiliation with Christ will be a trifle. Every sacrifice that we were asked to make will seem tiny. Every pleasure we **did without** for the cause of Christ will be a nothing. Every suffering we experienced because we loved Christ will be a speck. Every temptation we forsook will be seen for what it really was, just a temptation to waste valuable time that could have been spent serving our Lord.

And on that day the resurrection will no longer be just part of very good doctrine. We will experience the ultimate power of the Resurrection of Christ. That which God did for Christ, Christ will now do for us. On that last and final day we will experience the power of the Resurrection of Christ.

That is why the Resurrection is mentioned so many times. That is why I Corinthians 15 makes the point so strongly that the resurrection of Christ is vitally important. Essentially- if Christ did not rise from the dead, if Christ did not display power over death, living for Christ is basically a complete waste of time. But if Christ did truly rise from the dead, the Christian life is the only life that makes any sense. It is the only life that is not futile and worthless. And Christ displays what no other religion exhibits. We have a bodily risen Savior. And there is historical evidence of that fact. There are records of many witnesses. It is as verifiable as a historic event as most events that we read about in history books. Jesus Christ rose from the dead.

With that said, let's take a look at Romans to see what it says about Easter, about Christ's resurrection from the dead.

We will cover 7 points

Christ's resurrection proves:

Christ is the Son of God with Power

Believers are forgiven of sin

The resurrection power exists in the lives of believers

Death no longer has dominion over Christians

Christians are no longer under the condemning power of the law

Believers will be resurrected too

And The resurrection is integral to the gospel message

Romans 1:3,4 **3 concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh,**

4 and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.

Paul here tells us that it is the resurrection of the dead that declares Christ to be the Son of God with power. All through Romans we see that regeneration is accompanied with power. It is not some creed or religion. It is a life change that only the supernatural power of God can explain. Here we see that Christ's life was the same way. We aren't expected to believe that Christ was special just because Christ told us He was. We are expected to believe the declaration that He is the Son of God because His claims were carried out with life giving, impossible power. Most religions are based on blind faith. In Christianity we have an intelligent faith. It is a faith based on evidence that would satisfy a court of law. The resurrection is proof positive that Christ was who He said He was and can do what He said He could do. Christ was declared to be the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead.

Romans 4:24,25 Here we see that Abraham's faith was not just for Him, **24 but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead,**

25 who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.

Here again we see Christ's death and resurrection connected firmly to that of every believer. The righteousness of Christ is imputed to every person for whom this is true. Those who believe in the God who delivered up Christ to death to **remove our penalty for our sin**, and raised Christ up to **prove our justification**

was complete. Here we see that Christ being risen from the dead is proof positive that God the Father received what Christ did for us as being complete and effective. It truly was finished as Christ died. And there was no reason to keep Christ in the grave any longer. His resurrection is the evidence of our being forgiven of our sin.

Romans 6:4,5

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.

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,

Here we see that Christ's resurrection, His power over death is proof of the **resurrection power** in the lives of those who follow Christ. We say in baptism that we come out of the water a new person, a person with new power, with the same power that raised Christ from the tomb. If we identify with Christ in His death, we cannot help but identify with Him in His resurrection.

The science of flesh and blood no longer fully explains a believer's life. There is a power that cannot be measured with a stethoscope or a blood pressure cuff. A believer has a power in him that has overcome death. It is a supernatural power that cannot be overcome by the natural.

Do we believe that? Or do we believe we have no more power than those without Christ. What excuses do we give ourselves for lives that are not lived according to Christ's words? Do we say things like **we can't** or **it is too hard**? Do we believe those lies? Scripture calls them lies. Scripture tells us that just as Christ rose from the dead we should walk in newness of life. Flesh and blood no longer defines us. And excuses of flesh and blood no longer apply. And this is all true because Christ rose from the dead.

Romans 6:9 (NKJV)

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

Here we see that the Resurrection is proof that death no longer has dominion over Christ, and by extension, over His children.

The principle of death had absolute power over a person apart from Christ. Everyone who is born dies. But the resurrection shows us that all of that is no longer true. Christ did the impossible. He defeated death. And by defeating

death He showed that He was the Lord over death. Death was not the lord over Him. And since we are in Christ He has won that victory for us as well.

Romans 7:4

4 Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another--to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.

Here the Resurrection is proof that we are no longer under the condemning power of the law. We are free now to be married to another. We are free now to be married to Christ and experience freedom from condemnation in Him. And not only are we freed from condemnation, not only free **from the negative**. We are now free TO the **positive**. We are free to bear fruit to God. **Now**, because of the Resurrection, **we can exhibit the evidences of this new life in Christ**.

Romans 8:11

11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

Here we see that the Resurrection of Christ proves that **we too** will be resurrected if we are in Christ. While many of the previous quotes in Romans tell us how we are now free to live with resurrection power in our lives here on earth, this verse tells us that we will most assuredly raise from the dead.

Romans 10:9

9 that 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.

Did you ever consider that believing in the Resurrection is part of the Gospel message? The resurrection is that important. If we don't believe that Christ rose from the dead, we have one of those beliefs that fit into the idea that all roads lead to God. There is nothing substantially different from a resurrection-less Christ than Buddhism or Islam or any other religion. They all lack the power to change a person from the inside out.

If you are to be a true believer, you must be stricken with the idea that you need a change that you cannot accomplish. You need forgiven of the sinner that is you. And there is nothing you can do to accomplish such a thing. You need someone to pay the death penalty for your sin, the sin that you fully deserve the death penalty for. When you get to **that** point, there is no religion of man that can help you. No amount of prayers will save you. No acts of devotion will suffice. A death is required. And only **Christ** paid that price. And even that would not have been sufficient if God had not accepted it. But the resurrection shows that God

does. Our penalty has been fully paid in Christ. And God rose Christ from the dead to show that everything Christ did was fully accepted by His Father.

Have you received what Christ did for you as your full payment for your sin debt? Has your life been reborn through what Christ did for you? Is your life more than the skin on bones in which you reside? Is there a supernatural power driving your life that there is no explanation for except the power of the resurrection?

If this is all a mystery to you, call out to God. Repent of your sinful condition and Christ will save you. Trust in what He did for you to be the payment for all of your sin and trust Him as your Savior.

If you are in Christ but you live as if you are not, repent of that hypocrisy. You have resurrection power running through you. There is no reason for excuses. You have the faith that Christ gave you. Exercise it. Believe His promises. And walk in the newness of the life in Christ that Easter day was given to assure you of.