

WORSHIPING ON THE LORD'S DAY

April 5, 2015

Worship, as God intended, is a supernatural event. As we enter into this service of worship, we cross the threshold of the secular to the sacred, from the common to the uncommon, from the profane to the holy. Prepare yourself therefore for this most holy convocation!

Prelude

Worship Theme

Christ is the Resurrection

Romans 6:4-5: "Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with *Him* in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also *in the likeness* of His resurrection."

God Calls us to Worship Before the Cross Zeph. 3:14-15, 17a
+We Adore Him
Hymn #277, "Christ The Lord Is Risen Today"

We Confess Our Sin

O Lord, Your eyes are on all of our ways, our sins are not hidden from You. We sadly acknowledge that we have not always lived for Your glory- we have, at times, sought our own glory. We sorrowfully admit that we have not always lived according to Your promises and precepts- we have, at times, disbelieved and disobeyed You. We humbly confess that we have not always lived by Your love- we have, at times, tolerated hate in our hearts. Therefore we have not pursued Your glory, Your Word, or Your love with all our being.

Furthermore, we confess that we have failed to put You first in our lives; in terms of our trust, our talents, and our time. Nor have we put others ahead of ourselves: in terms of commitment to family, love, purity, property, truth, and contentment. For our failures and sins- both conscious and unconscious, we humbly ask for forgiveness. O, let Your grace reign through righteousness in our lives, as Your Spirit applies the blood of Christ to our consciences, and gives us resurrection power for new obedience. May You continue to rebuild us in Your image. And we humbly thank You for mercy and forgiveness received in Christ. Amen.

We Thank Him For His Forgiveness
Hymn #254, "Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed"

God Calls us to Worship Thru Dedication Jn. 15:15-16
We Give Him Our Offering & Concerns

We Give Him Ourselves
Hymn #691, "When Peace, Like A River"

God Calls us to Worship Thru Fellowship Jn. 5:39-40
We Read His Word

Sermon

*We Partake Of The Lord's Supper
Hymn #598, "Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah"

God Blesses us in the Benediction

Welcome and Announcements

Postlude

(Containers have been placed at the front for communion cups and small trash)

+You are invited to raise your hands during the prayer of adoration.

*Visitors, please see note below on the Lord's Supper.

The Message of Easter

1 Corinthians 15:20-22

I. Introduction

Buried Treasures in Lake Tapps

John Locke, the 18th-century British philosopher, said, “[Christ’s] resurrection is truly of great importance in Christianity, so great that His being or not being the Messiah stands or falls with it.”

II. The Message of Easter, 1 Cor. 15:20-22.

A. A Message of Folly, v. 20a.

At the time of the writing of this epistle, the church in Corinth had been infiltrated by self-designated “super-apostles” (cf. 2 Cor. 11:1-15). Not only did they mock Paul, but they also mocked many things in the kingdom of God... including the doctrine of the resurrection...

This is where many in the US are today...

Even in Paul’s day the resurrection met with unbelief...

Mt. 22:23

Acts 17:32a

1 Cor. 15:12

1 Cor. 1:18a

1 Cor. 2:14

And so again, we ought not to be surprised that there might be some this day who doubt. The first Easter brought many doubters! Why should our day be any different? Yet the Message of Easter also is...

B. A Message of Certainty, v. 20b.

In light of the context, this is a bold statement. The “Super-Apostles” at Corinth had shot down much of what Paul already had said on prior occasions. How is it then that Paul could speak with such certainty? Paul has two lines of reasoning for this claim in this chapter: One based on Logic, the other based on History...

1. The Logical Proof of the Resurrection, 1 Cor. 15:13, 17-19.

- a. You can’t claim to be a Christian and reject the resurrection of Christ. If Christ has not risen from the dead, then according to Paul we are still in our sins... all who have died before us are in hell... and everyone in this church is a fool!...
- b. An Explanation: The Redemptive Context
 1. In the beginning, God deigned to enter into a relationship with man... called a covenant.
 2. This Covenant brought with it a grave responsibility (Gen. 2:16-17).
 3. Mankind failed with the expectation of death (Rom. 6:23).
 4. But herein is the amazing message of the Bible...

2. The Historical Proof of the Resurrection, 1 Cor. 15:3-8.

- a. Scientific proof verses Historical proof...
- b. Paul is appealing to the Historical Method here. When he says that the resurrection of Christ was witnessed by over "500 people"- most of whom were alive at the writing of this epistle- he is giving the Corinthians the fuel to prove the validity of his claim!
- c. The point is that you don't make a claim like this in a letter that was going to be copied and circulated among thousands and expect people to believe it unless what you are saying is true! For Paul to claim that something was true, and then use that truth-claim as the foundation for his teaching, is to commit philosophical suicide if his premise is not true...

A lawyer, by the name of Edward Clarke, in a letter to the Rev. E. L. Macassey wrote, "As a lawyer I have made a prolonged study of the evidences for the events of the first Easter day. For me, the evidence is conclusive, and over and over again in the high court I have secured the verdict on evidence not nearly so compelling. Inference follows on evidence, and a truthful witness is always artless and disdains effect; the gospel evidence for the resurrection is of this class, and as a lawyer I accept it unreservedly as the testimony of truthful men to facts they were able to substantiate." (*The Times Law Reports*, Vol. 12, p. 595)

B. F. Westcott, one of the ablest of New Testament textual scholars in his day, wrote, "Taking all the evidence together, it is not too much to say that there is no single historical incident better or more variously supported than the resurrection." (*The Gospel of the Resurrection*, p. 137)

The historian, Thomas Arnold of Oxford, speaking about the evidence for the death and resurrection of Christ wrote, "Thousands and tens of thousands of persons have gone through it piece by piece as carefully as every judge summing tip on an important case. I have myself done it many times over, not to persuade others but to satisfy myself... I know of no one fact in the history of mankind which is better proved by fuller evidence than the great sign that God has given as that Christ died and rose again from the dead." (*Christian Thought*, Vol. 6, p. 289)

C. A Message of Hope, vv. 20c-22.

1. Our Propensity to "Fake it till we Make it"
2. The Glorious Message of Easter: It is NOT simply that Christ rose from the dead. RATHER, it is that He rose "as the first fruits!" This means that Christ was the first of many more to come!...

Where We Live

1. God is a God of love and Easter is God's first step in reclaiming this world!

Romans 6:23

John 11:25-26

2. The question of the hour is: Do you believe this? Will you trust Christ to raise you from the dead? Will you entrust your soul to the Lord? Will you follow Him no matter where He leads- whether it be a banqueting hall... or the valley of the shadow of death?