

Romans 1:1-4

"The Revelation Of The Resurrection"

The resurrection of J.C. There are many ways to look at it, think *through* it or perhaps *approach* it as it pertains to a service like this. A day in which we set aside time to intentionally & specifically consider its truth, its impact, its affect upon our lives *personally* as well as its ramifications upon all of mankind throughout human *history*.

Today, I want to draw your attention to this small section of scripture that though perhaps commonly considered, maybe not as readily reviewed w/regard to an "Easter (or Resurrection Sunday) Service." I hope that's ok w/you, but it's just a Vs that's been swimming around in the back of my mind as I've (over the last several weeks) turned my thoughts/prayers toward this day.

Because though (as believers) we can often times take the resurrection for granted; (meaning we don't really take the time think *about* it or really even focus the attention of our hearts/minds *on* it) it seems to me that we would do well to give some consideration *to* it. We live in an age of great ignorance as it pertains to the gospel. The vast majority of people don't know the gospel & of those who would say that they do, many don't. So it got me thinking: what *does* the resurrection signify? & Why *is* what it signifies important?

& Even in that, there are many different angles from which we could approach the significance of the resurrection because it testifies *to* & touches *on* a number of things. However, we're going to stay *our* attention upon the topic of the text at hand.

Vs 1-4

As we turn our attention back to Vs 1, for the sake of our time & our topic let's just say that Paul wants us to know, straight out of the gate that he's a man on a mission. God has called him (as an apostle) to broadcast, to proclaim, to make known a message. – As a matter of fact, he says that he has been, "separated" to it.

That is, his life has been set apart for a single purpose, it's his sole passion. He says, "Man, it's what I focus *on*, it's what I live to *do*, it's my life's mission to make it *known*, the gospel." The good news. & Ladies & Gentlemen, that's what the *gospel* is. It's "good news", hear me now, it's not "good views".

You know, a good perspective on life. Good advice on how to raise your children, on financial planning or marriage counseling. Today, it seems that there's no end to preachers, authors or public speakers who try to make Christianity relevant culturally by preaching a bunch of good advice. You could take the name of Jesus out of their book or remove it from their message & it wouldn't affect a thing!

But listen, as a believer, you have something so much better than good advice! You've got a message that will bring *life!* That ushers in *forgiveness*, reconciliation (peace) w/God, righteousness in the sight of God. Freedom from the bondage of sin & death... Paul wasn't separated unto the good *views* of Christian living; he was set apart to the *good news* (notice) of God! –

It's an important point to take note of. Who's "good news" it is... It's not Paul's! Paul didn't think it up! It wasn't something that the 12 disciples of Jesus sat around and manufactured. It's the *gospel* – or *good news* – of God! It's *God's* good news! Meaning that this message (& all that it entails) is something that it originated *in*, was designed *by* & found in the heart & mind of God. & It's imperative to *Him* to get this message out to *you*.

The question is; what is the message? What *is* this good news? This is where things can get cloudy or confusing for people. They can begin to murk & muddy the waters by adding to it. Thinking that there's a list of "do's & don'ts" that come along w/it. "Well, you have to always talk to people about the fact that they're a sinner." "Well, you've got to tell them about repentance & turning from their sins." & Other people may have other things... Now: are those things important? Absolutely. Are those topics inseparable elements of the gospel? Absolutely not.

Paul, when he wrote to the Corinthians said this, "*For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,*"¹ In Acts Ch 16, when the Philippian jailor ran & fell down trembling before Paul & Silas & said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Did Paul say, "Well, 1st confess that you're a sinner." No. Did he say, "Well, 1st you need to repent (turn from your sins)." No. He said, "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.*"² He understood that one constitutes the other. I can't turn *to* one thing w/out necessarily turning away *from* another. To turn *to* Jesus is to turn away *from* my sin.

Again, I'm not saying that those other conversations shouldn't be had. But nor do I doubt the ability of Holy Spirit to minister to man's heart (or woman's heart ☺) in leading them in the way they should go. What we're talking about here are the essential elements of the gospel of God. That Christ died for our sins, was buried & that He rose again the 3rd day according to the Scriptures. – That's "the gospel of God". (God's good news).

¹ *The New King James Version*. (1982). {1 Co 15:3-4}. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

² *The New King James Version*. (1982). {Ac 16:31}. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Vs 2

Again, Paul is affirming that the message that he's making known isn't some new-fangled doctrine that was cleverly contrived in the heart/mind of man. It's the good news of *God*, which *He promised before* through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures (or all throughout the O.T.)

God gave His word to you & me, to all of humanity that He would resolve the sin dilemma & provide salvation for all who believe... He made a promise. – & This is huge because God can't lie. Did you know that? Paul, in writing to Titus said, *"...in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began,"*³In the O.T. we read it like this, *"God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?"*⁴

People sometimes wonder, is there anything God can't do? The answer is, "Yes". There are a # of things God can't do. We've mentioned before that 1 thing God can't do is learn. He already knows *everything*. It's impossible that He should learn, be shocked or surprised by *anything*. –

You're never going to do anything & have God respond like, "I'm shocked! I had no idea that you would do such a thing!" Now, think about that. That makes the love of God for you & me all the more amazing! ... He *knows* you. Every-*thing*, every thought, every motive of all you do & for all that He still *loves* you & to prove it Jesus died *for* you! Jesus said, *"Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends."*⁵

Later on in the book of Romans, Paul writes, *"God demonstrates His own love* (it's a love like nothing we've ever known, it's not man's love, it's God's own love) *toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."*⁶ (But I digress ☺). God can't learn.

& Pertaining to our context; God can't lie, & God *promised* the gospel. The coming of a Savior. One who would *redeem* us, provide forgiveness of sin & everlasting life *for* us. – All the way back in Gen Ch 3, directly following the fall of man God promised One who would be born of the Seed of the woman (the woman btw doesn't carry the seed, she carries the egg. This was an allusion to the virgin birth) who would crush the head of the serpent (the deceiver) & bring salvation. & From that point forward, all throughout the O.T. it's pointing *to*, prophesying *of*, setting the stage *for*, the coming of J.C. & what He would accomplish upon the cross.

³ *The New King James Version*. (1982). [Tt 1:2]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁴ *The New King James Version*. (1982). [Nu 23:19]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁵ *The New King James Version*. (1982). [Jn 15:13-14]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁶ *The New King James Version*. (1982). [Ro 5:8]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Ps 22 *"The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet; I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me. They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots."*⁷ That entire psalm paints a picture of the cross centuries prior to crucifixion being devised as a method of execution.

Isa 53, *"He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all."*⁸

Scriptures pertaining to where the Messiah would be born, where He would be raised, what kind of a life He would live, the manner in which He would reveal Himself to the nation (both the day & the way) we call it Palm Sunday. Literally hundreds of prophecies, every one of which was fulfilled by Jesus.

You see; it's true that Jesus initiated a new *covenant* (a covenant of grace, established in His blood as opposed to the Mosaic covenant, established in the law). But Jesus did *not* establish a new *concept*. Are you with me? A new *covenant*? Yes. A new *concept*? No. The gospel of God is the fulfillment of all the hopes which He Himself inspired throughout the O.T. scriptures. (Notice)

Vs3

Here we're coming to the heart of the gospel. What does it center *upon*? What does it all revolve *around*? By now, you already know. It's not "What", It's "Who". The "Son". Everything about the gospel orbits around the "Son". At the heart (the very center) of Christianity, you won't find a teaching, a philosophy, an ideology or a moral system. You'll find a Person: The Person of J.C.

In the volume of the book (the bible) it's written of Him. One day, in a rebuke against the religious leaders, Jesus told them, *"You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life."*⁹ You see? Eternal life isn't found in a teaching, or a principle, but in a Person. Believe on the Lord J.C. & you will be saved. The scriptures (appropriately understood & applied) point *to* Him & are fulfilled *in* Him. He's the One who died for our sins...

"...who was born according to the seed of David according to the flesh."

⁷ *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Ps 22:16-18). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁸ *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Is 53:5-6). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁹ *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Jn 5:39-40). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

You can find His genealogy in both Matt & Luke (one focusing on Mary's ancestry, the other on His adoptive dad Joseph's ancestry) both of which lead back to David. Why is that important? 2 Reasons.

#1 It points to the humanity of Jesus. Jesus was fully God (as we'll see in a minute) & fully Man. Not ½ & ½. 100/100. The Son of Man (born of a woman, being fully Human) & the Son of God (being conceived of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of God overshadowed her & life was created *in her*). Both are imperative & we'll consider that in a moment.

#2 Because God made David a promise. It's found in 2nd Samuel Ch 7. & The short of it is that God promised David that the Messiah (the Savior of the world) would come through his lineage *directly* & sit on the throne *eternally*. Therefore, it has to be verifiable that the lineage of the Christ leads back to David *specifically*. Be it through Joseph or through Mary, Jesus can demonstrate that either way you wanna go.

So we're seeing that Jesus has both a human origin (born of the seed of David according to the flesh) & an eternal existence... look at Vs 4

Vs 4

The evidence of the humanity of Jesus is His human birth; the evidence (or revelation) of His deity is His resurrection from the dead...

You see, how do I know that Jesus is everything He said that He is? That His claims are true? He said things like, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."*¹⁰ That He alone was the exclusive means to the Father (to heaven). That all who made claims like this outside of Him were liars & thieves. That He was the door by which we enter into sheepfold (Jn 10:7-9) & that if we enter through Him we'll be saved. He made Himself equal w/God (that's a claim to deity), called Himself the **Son of God**. — Later on in Jn 10, at the Feast of Dedication, the Religious leaders surrounded Jesus & said, "If you're the Christ, tell us plainly." Jesus said, "I told you & you don't believe." & He said, *"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one."*¹¹ Wait; what? You & God are the same!? You're one!? – They picked up stones, they were going to stone Him for blasphemy. Jesus said, "I've done a lot of good works around here, for which do you stone Me?"

¹⁰ *The New King James Version*, (1982). (Jn 14:6). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

¹¹ *The New King James Version*, (1982). (Jn 10:27-30). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

They said, *"For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God."*¹² People say that Jesus never claimed to be God, but ladies & gentlemen, you have to be 2,000 yrs, cultures & continents removed to make that statement. Because *they knew exactly* what Jesus was saying. –

He said that God (His Father) had committed the judgment of mankind into His hands (as the Son). When Jesus asked His disciples, "Who do you say that I am?" Peter responded, *"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."* Jesus answered and said to him, *'Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.'*¹³

So, Jesus made these kinds of claims. How do we know He wasn't lying? How do we know that He wasn't simply insane to say such things? 2 Words, "The resurrection." The resurrection is the revelation, the definitive triumphant verification that Jesus is the Son of God.

Now, why is this important? Why does it really matter whether or not Jesus was the Son of God? Because if He's anything less than Deity, (if He's not perfect in every way) then He can't provide the perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world. (Are you following me?)

You see; in Adam, all have sinned & fall short of the glory of God. When Adam fell, he couldn't give to his offspring something he no longer possessed. He couldn't pass on a sinless nature because he didn't have one. You can't give someone something you don't have. & It's impossible for sinful man to atone for sin. An *imperfect* person can't provide a *perfect* sacrifice & it takes *perfection* to provide a *perfect* sacrifice, to make *perfect* atonement.

& On a side note, this is one more way that we come to realize that hell isn't for a limited time, as if you serve your sentence & then you can get out. Because you can never provide a "perfect" sacrifice. If somehow, after millions of years you could finally provide a perfect sacrifice, then in theory you could get out of hell, enter heaven & enjoy the kingdom of God. But because man can never provide a perfect sacrifice (because sin is inherent w/in us) we can never atone for our sins. Every sacrifice is inherently flawed.

My point being that the sacrifice for sin could never come from a son of *Adam* because every son of Adam has sinned. We're all imperfect. The *Son of God* however... Perfection, sinless, absolutely holy & as such qualified completely to be the sacrifice for the sin of the world.

¹² *The New King James Version*. (1982). [Jn 10:33] Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

¹³ *The New King James Version*. (1982). [Mt 16:16-17]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Equally true (however) is the fact that Messiah must be a Man. How could anything other than Man, somehow stand in the gap or provide atonement *for* man? The author of Hebrews picks up on this when he says that it's impossible that the blood of bulls & goats could take away sins (Heb 10:4).

Animal sacrifice could provide a "covering" of sorts, but never a true *cleansing* of sin. This one reason why sacrifices had to happen over & over again on the regular. (They were imperfect, inefficient to adequately atone for man's sin). However, w/Jesus being fully human, being born through Mary, He's akin to mankind (qualifies to atone for us). Being fully God, He's perfect & w/out sin & can provide the perfect sacrifice.

So things are lining up. Jesus claimed to be the Son of God, sent into the world that the world through Him might be saved. Scripture had foretold that God would send His Son. All throughout the O.T. it's prophesied, foreshadowed & foretold (who the Messiah would be, the way He would live, what He would do, literally 100's of prophecies). Perfect in His humanity, Holy in His deity... His would truly be the perfect sacrifice – if all of it were true.

The question is... How can I know? How can I know that Jesus truly is the Son of God? Not simply some guru or religious fanatic making outlandish claims? What sets him apart from other great religious teachers & philosophers throughout history? How do I know that He was truly sinless? What's the tangible, observational proof that I can trust Him beyond any other? –

One day the religious leaders were talking to Jesus. They said, "Teacher, show us a sign." Jesus said, "*An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. 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.*"¹⁴ Here's the point: verifiable, certifiable, irrefutable proof of every claim that Jesus made, & that the wages of sin was fully paid is found in the resurrection... You serve the risen Son of God...

You know, I've been to Israel. I've stepped into the garden tomb. They've made a beautiful place surrounding it. But you go in (it's quite small). You kind of do this 360 to look around & you know what you see? Nothing. & It's the most beautiful nothing you'll ever see. He's not there... He is risen.

¹⁴ *The New King James Version*, (1982). [Mt 12:39–40]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Prayer Points:

Jesus we praise You today! You alone have conquered sin & death. It's in You alone that we find salvation, reconciliation to God through the blood of Your cross. We acknowledge You as being seated on High at the right hand of the Father & we anxiously await Your return.

Even as Jesus conquered sin, the day is coming when He will return again, put down sin & reign in righteousness upon the earth. All of humanity will stand before Him. Every knee will bow, every tongue will confess that J.C. is Lord to the glory of God the Father. The only thing that stands between condemnation & salvation is where you place your faith. We're saved by grace, through faith in J.C. who has love us & given Himself for us. Believe on Him today & be saved.