

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ

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People live and then die, and we all know that, and each of you personally know people who have lived and died. And when I say die, I mean physical death - their hearts have stopped, their blood stops flowing, their physical life is gone, and their physical bodies are dead. But people have a soul. Every person who has ever lived or whoever will live has a soul, and lives on forever, either in heaven or hell. And the person in heaven is spiritually alive, and the person in hell is spiritually dead, that is, is separated from God. Isaiah 59:2

Now people are spiritually dead because of their sin. Ez. 18:4 tells us, *“The soul that sins will die.”* Eph. 2:1 says, *“You were dead in your trespasses and sins.”* And of course, all people have sinned - as Rom. 3:23 says, *“All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”* And so people are spiritually dead and physically dead because of their sin, and if a person remains in his sins during his life on earth and never turns to God and Christ, then he’ll be eternally dead, he’ll be separated from God and from His life and love forever. 2 Thess. 1:9

And physical, spiritual, and eternal death, are the biggest problems a person has. This is where God and Jesus come in, for God has a plan to solve this problem and Jesus carried it out. And the gospels talk about this plan, about the life, suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus. They talk very clearly about how Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, and paid the penalty for people’s sins by dying on the cross. Rom. 5:8, 2 Cor. 5:21, 1 Peter 3:18

And all who repent of their sins and believe that Jesus died to pay the penalty for their sins and was raised from the dead are forgiven, and their problem of sin and death is solved, and they’ll live forever with God and Jesus Christ in heaven. John 5:24, 1 John 5:11-13. And Jesus Christ is the only answer for a person’s sin and death, the only way a person can be saved, and live forever in heaven, and escape being sent to hell. Acts 4:12

Now some people question whether Jesus really died for us and rose again. They say, *“What is the proof, the evidence that Jesus died and rose again?”* Let me share a few things:

- 1st, the dead body of Jesus was never found, which is evidence that Jesus was alive. All these people looked for Jesus in His tomb and He wasn’t there, a tomb that was heavily guarded by Roman soldiers. Luke 24:1-6
- 2nd, He appeared to many witnesses. 1 Cor. 15:3-8. This is important for these witnesses were testifying that Jesus was alive, and some even wrote epistles about Him.
- 3rd, millions and millions of peoples’ lives have been dramatically and wonderfully changed, and it’s by the power of God, the power of the Spirit, that this has been happening, and it’s been going on for nearly 2000 years. All these Christians have been living for Jesus, and they sure wouldn’t have done it for a dead man. 1 Cor. 15:12-19
- And so Jesus died and rose again, and that’s a historical fact, that’s the truth.

Now let me explain more what it means to be saved? That is, what are the results of Christ's death and resurrection in the lives of Christians, in those who are saved?

1 Cor. 1:30-31. This talks about righteousness, what occurred in the past, sanctification, what's happening in the present, and redemption, what will take place in the future.

In the past we were born again, we were justified, we were freed from the penalty of sin.

- In the present we're being sanctified, we're being made holy, we're being freed from the power of sin.

- In the future, we will be redeemed, we will be glorified, we will be completely free from the presence of sin and, in fact, we will be perfect in every way.

- And all this is because of the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. And I want to go over each of these areas, justification, sanctification, and glorification a little more.

First, we were made righteous because of Jesus Christ's death and resurrection. You see, sin is our problem, a problem that results in death. To get victory over our problem of sin and death, Jesus needed to die to pay for our sins and then be raised from the dead. If Jesus wasn't raised from the dead, then that would mean He hadn't gotten victory over the result of our sin, which is death. But Jesus' resurrection is solid proof, is clear and conclusive evidence that Jesus made full payment for our sins.

God the Father knew that Jesus died to make full payment for our sins, and God was totally satisfied by what Jesus did for us, and therefore raised Him from the dead. It's like this – if you purchase something and make full payment, you get a receipt showing that you made full payment, and this resurrection is like God's receipt that Christ fully paid for our sins.

Second, Christ's resurrection is necessary for our sanctification. Rom. 6:2-8. Now what is this saying? That because of the resurrection we can live the Christian life. These vss. tell us what God spiritually did for us through Jesus Christ. We learn spiritually speaking, that we were buried with Christ - therefore, our sins were dealt with and our old self was crucified. And because of Christ's resurrection, and through the work of the Spirit, we have a new self, we are, spiritually speaking, new creatures in Christ. 2 Cor. 5:17

- And as a new creature in Christ, we have the power and ability to walk in newness of life, to live like Christ wants us to live. Gal. 2:20. When we say Christ lives in us, we mean that Christ lives His life in us by the life and power of the Spirit, who literally lives in us. One effect of the resurrection then is that we can live a brand-new spiritual life. Rom. 8:11

Ephesians 1:19-20. This is saying that the power that raised Christ from the dead is now available to us. Look what it says - *“the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe,”* which is in accordance *“with the working of the strength of His might.”* So an incredible amount of spiritual power is available to you, and you can be and do all that God wants you to be and do. This is so amazing and so encouraging. Phil. 3:10, 4:13

So because of Christ's death and resurrection, you have been justified, you are being sanctified - and you'll be glorified. And let's talk about being glorified. As you know, you are still in your fleshly body, but because of Christ's physical resurrection, you'll be glorified. But when does this take place? 1 Cor. 15:20-23. Jesus Christ was physically raised from the dead, at which time He received His new body, and this was about 2000 years ago, and we'll receive our new body when Christ comes back. And because we live in the end-times, it won't be long from now.

1 Thess. 4:14-17. This section of vss. relates to Christians, to those who believe that Jesus Christ died on the cross and rose again and believe that He did it for them. And we just read in 1 Cor. 15 that we receive our new glorified body at the coming of Christ. And 1 Thess. 4 tells us the same thing, but gives us more details. It says that those believers who have already died, who are already in heaven, will receive their new bodies at the coming of Christ, and then, a split second later, the believers who are still on earth will receive their new bodies.

We also learn about the rapture, a word that means believers on earth will be snatched away, will be suddenly taken from this earth, at which time they'll be glorified. Immediately after they're raptured, they'll be united with all the other believers, then meet the Lord in the air. So because of Christ's resurrection, we will be glorified, we will receive a brand new body, a powerful, immortal, glorious, and spiritual body. Phil. 3:10-11

1 Peter 1:3-9. This also tells us the results of the resurrection, that we're born again, we're justified, and that we have hope, which is referring to our future, to this salvation that will be revealed in the last time, when we are glorified, when we receive our new body, and when we receive this incredible inheritance. Vss. 5-8 speak of our life on earth, that we're being sanctified, that by the resurrection power of God, we're able to live a new life for Him.

Now the book of Acts makes it clear that the main message of the apostles is the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. And you need to take this to heart. We can think about and talk about a lot of things in life, but the truth of Christ's death and resurrection is most important, and is always fresh and new, for it relates directly to what God did in saving you, is doing now in sanctifying you, and will do in glorifying you. Acts 2:23-24, 2:29-32, 3:14-15, 4:10-12, 5:29-32, 10:38-43, 17:30-34

So keep thinking about the truth of Christ's death and resurrection. And know that God gives you all the power you need to live the Christian life, and so be looking forward to that time when you receive your brand-new glorified body and are in heaven with Jesus. And like we read in Acts, be telling others. It is the most important news, the most important message you can tell anyone; it is what people need to hear more than anything else, it is a message of life; and it is a matter of life or death, eternal life or eternal death. John 11:25-26