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Tillamook, Oregon

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The Gospel of Matthew

Christ's Resurrection – and Ours

August 16, 2020

Sermon Text: Matthew 28

Scripture Reading: Romans 6

Hebrews 10:19-20 ESV Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, (20) by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh,

Last time we considered the work of Christ on the cross – how He not only fulfilled the Law's demands upon us by becoming a curse for us, but also how He, as Hebrews says, opened up the New Covenant, the new and living way that takes us “through the curtain” and thus into the presence of God. Fellowship lost in Eden now restored. Christ is in us! WE are the Temple. And we are moving toward full

consummation of these things so that when Christ comes again and ushers in the new heavens and earth, all of creation will be the Temple – that is to say, all of creation will be Eden as it is supposed to be. This is our inheritance in Christ as children of Abraham by faith. It is the Christian's hope and we should always be looking up for it – because THAT is where our real life is.

All of this is realized because of Christ and the cross – and His resurrection, the account of which we have here in the final chapter of Matthew. Follow along as I read:

Matthew 28:1-20 ESV Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. (2) And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. (3) His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. (4) And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men.

(5) But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. (6) He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. (7) Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you.”

(8) So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. (9) And behold, Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. (10) Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me.”

(11) While they were going, behold, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priests all that had taken place. (12) And when they had assembled with the elders and taken counsel, they gave a sufficient sum of money to the soldiers (13) and said, “Tell people, ‘His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.’ (14) And if this comes to the governor’s ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.” (15) So they

took the money and did as they were directed. And this story has been spread among the Jews to this day.

(16) Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. (17) And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted.

(18) And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. (19) Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (20) teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

There are many things that we could consider in these verses –

1. The depths of the sin of man in unbelief, in the face of definitive evidence – the sinner clings to his denial of God’s truth regardless of the evidence. It is a knowing unbelief. Denial of that which a person *knows* to be true such as Romans chapter 1 speaks of. No man has an excuse.

Romans 1:25 ESV **because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie** and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

2. The glory and majesty of God – even His angels cause the strongest men to tremble and faint away.
3. The power of God – to roll away the stone, to bring an earthquake, and to overcome death.
4. The Great Commission and the encouraging promises for us in it.

But what I want us to consider this morning is the *resurrection from the dead* which is the main subject of this chapter. Christ's resurrection and our resurrection.

You have heard already this morning that everyone who is in Christ, who has been born again by faith in Him, *has been raised up with Him* –

Romans 6:3-5 ESV Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his

death? (4) We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. (5) For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

You notice that Paul and the rest of the NT teaching on this subject treats our resurrection as *already but not yet*. We *have been* raised with Christ, and we *shall be raised* with Christ. We are made new creations, we are born again – and this new birth is a resurrection. Salvation is a dying with Christ, being buried with Him, and being raised up with Him. When He died, we died. When He was raised, we were raised. This and more is what the NT calls, *in Christ*.

You will see then that it is an impossibility for a Christian to continue to walk in sin as he or she used to –

Romans 6:1-2 ESV What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? (2) By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in

it?

Much of the NT was written to teach us what has happened to us and how we should now live as the new people we are. Put away those old ways that no longer enslave and define you. *Be who you are.*

And then the Bible speaks to us of course of our resurrection yet to come – namely, the resurrection of our bodies.

The Bible knows nothing of some spiritual, vapory, surreal existence which most Christians have in mind when they think of heaven. Think it through – how did God create man in the first place? As a naked spirit – naked in the sense of being “unclothed” without a physical body? Of course not.

2 Corinthians 5:1-7 ESV For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. (2) For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, (3) if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked. (4) For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not

that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. (5) He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. (6) So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, (7) for we walk by faith, not by sight.

Let's consider what Paul is saying here

1. Your earthly body is a *tent*. This is your earthly home, but tents are not permanent. You are merely camped out here.

Hebrews 11:9-10 ESV By faith he [Abraham] went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. (10) For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God.

Now we could go on at length in respect to this subject – a tent. About how foolish people are who so typically focus their life on a *tent* that was never

designed to be permanent, all the while ignoring being sure they have what Paul calls *a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*. The object of their misdirected attentions can be their physical body or as another example, the literal house or palace they build for themselves here in this world. Tents. They are all tents – never meant for permanency.

2. The Christian *groans*. We groan while we are in this tent because we long to put on – to move into – our real house.

I can remember when Verla and I had been married about 6 years or so. We worked and worked at building a new house on two wooded acres south of Gresham. We put some money down on the property. We put a road in about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile long. We had a well drilled – 440 feet deep. I would work on patrol at the Sheriff's department at night and in the mornings go up to the property and work. There were all kinds of details and problems to work out. We rented a trenching machine and had to trench nearly $\frac{1}{4}$ mile for the power line. A builder had to be lined up and the site excavated. Endless permits with the county had to be obtained and a

drainfield put in. We built decks and stairs. We laid brick. We painted and put up wallpaper.

There was nothing sinful in all of that, *but it was a tent!* After all of that we don't live there anymore. Someone else does who probably doesn't even know who we are.

But as we grow in Christ, that same desire – and more – is an ever increasing craving – a groaning as Paul calls it – to move into our eternal home.

The “heavenly dwelling” Paul is talking about here – the eternal one – *is our new resurrection body*. Notice that Paul mentions being naked or *unclothed*. What he means by this is our soul without a body.

(3) if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked.

What Paul is doing here is refuting any idea that our resurrection is only some kind of “spiritual” event that has nothing to do with a real, physical, eternal body. That is an un-natural state which God never created man for. Unfortunately this is the notion that so

many people have of heaven – a place for spirits. Such thinking is a denial of the plain teaching of God’s Word.

So, it is right to maintain and care for your tent! But it is a tent, and we need to keep that in perspective or we are going to not only be misdirected in our focus, but we are going to be a target for discouragement when we see the tent deteriorating!! Dye our hair, get skin treatments, exercise, diet, put on cosmetics, get new teeth – the reality is that our tent is perishable. It is what the Bible calls “corruptible.” It is corrupting and ultimately when we depart our tent, it will fully deteriorate in the grave. [Consider all the ways various civilizations have poured energy into overcoming this decay of the dead body – mummification and so on. Ultimately the body decays and rots]

1 Corinthians 15:50-53 ESV I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. (51) Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, (52) in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound,

and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. (53) For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality.

No one can take a temporal, corruptible tent into our eternal home. It won’t last. It was never made for the new creation. It is a tent, and we need an eternal home made by God for us that has foundations laid for eternity. That is what our resurrection body is.

Now, consider the timeframe of our resurrection:

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 ESV But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. (14) For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep.

(15) For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who

have fallen asleep. (16) For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. (17) Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. (18) **Therefore encourage one another with these words.**

Notice that this passage and the other central passage on our resurrection both end with the application of encouragement.

1 Corinthians 15:58 ESV Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

The Christian must live each day “looking up” to where his or her real life is.

Titus 2:13 ESV waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

Let me close with an observation connected to our coming resurrection and, what the Bible calls, glorification or perfection.

In this present life, in this body, the Christian is going to continue to struggle with battling his or her fallen flesh. Our faith, our obedience, our practical holiness (sanctification) are but *imperfect* offerings to Christ. While we are in this tent, this is our condition:

“...struggles, temptations, and constant imperfect performance mark the lives of all God’s saints. In their quest for obedience to God, which is and must ever be their main concern, they have to cope with distractions, deceptions, perversities, and pitfalls all the way, all the time. Both the peace of not having problems and the perfection of being totally free from sin are blessings that belong to the next world; here, our sanctification is incomplete, our obedience is always flawed, and our spiritual reach regularly exceeds our spiritual grasp.” [J.I. Packer, *A Grief Sanctified*]

Which should cause us all the more to groan for our eternal home.