

Rise with Hope
Luke 23:50-24:9

Notes

The resurrection of Jesus not only gives you eternal life, but it is how you can experience a fully blessed and most fulfilled life on earth.

INTRODUCTION

Every year, thousands of people climb a mountain in the Italian Alps, passing the "stations of the cross" to stand at an outdoor crucifix. One tourist noticed a little trail that led beyond the cross. He fought through the rough thicket and, to his surprise, came upon another shrine, a shrine that symbolized the empty tomb. It was neglected. The brush had grown up around it. Almost everyone had gone as far as the cross, but there they stopped.

Far too many have gotten to the cross and have known the despair and the heart break. Far too few have moved beyond the cross to find the real message of Easter. That is the message of the empty tomb.

The message is found in the conquering of death and the grave. Jesus' death burial, and resurrection have meaning, deep meaning in your life.

Just as with the birth of Jesus and the death of Jesus the resurrection of Jesus is essential to the Christian faith. The resurrection of Jesus proves much and offers much to the person who has faith in Jesus.

Christianity begins where other religions end - with the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the tomb. Other religions may point to a founder as Christianity does, but they must also point to a founder's grave. ONLY Christianity can point to an empty tomb. Some tombs are famous because of whom they contain; the tomb of Jesus is famous because of whom it does not contain.

Many claim the resurrection of Jesus is not real. Just imagine if the resurrection of Jesus was not real.

Despite the apparent absurdity of such a claim and vigorous attempts to persecute them off the face of the earth, this group of new followers grew quicker than any other before or since.

Soon the whole Roman Empire became a Christian state without a sword being raised. This remarkable growth is impossible to explain without the resurrection.

The resurrection has the power to give life; to renew life; to bring the dead to life. What about your life? Are you with questions and no answers? Are you with objections and no faith? Are you one who sees no need or has no interest in a risen Jesus?

Maybe you are one who has believed but found the power of Christ fading in your life.

Today I would like to look at the resurrection of Christ. After we read the resurrection story, I want us to look at several hopes the resurrection has for our lives.

WHAT JESUS' RESURRECTION MEANS FOR YOU

Let us begin by reading our Easter story shall we.

Luke 23:44-46, *"⁴⁴ It was now about the sixth hour, and darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour, ⁴⁵ because the sun was obscured; and the veil of the temple was torn in two. ⁴⁶ And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit." Having said this, He breathed His last."*

Luke 23:50-55, *"⁵⁰ And a man named Joseph, who was a member of the Council, a good and righteous man ⁵¹ (he had not consented to their plan and action), a man from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who was waiting for the kingdom of God; ⁵² this man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. ⁵³ And he took it down and wrapped it in a linen cloth, and laid Him in a tomb cut into the rock, where no one had ever lain. ⁵⁴ It was the preparation day, and the Sabbath was about to begin. ⁵⁵ Now the women who had come with Him out of Galilee followed and saw the tomb and how His body was laid."*

Luke 24:1-9, *"But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. ² And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb,³ but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴ While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men suddenly stood near them in dazzling clothing;⁵ and as the women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living One among the dead? ⁶ He is not here, but He has risen. Remember how He spoke to you while He was still in Galilee, ⁷ saying that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again." ⁸ And they remembered His words,⁹ and returned from the tomb and reported all these things to the eleven and to all the rest."*

This morning we will take Luke's account of the resurrection and understand it as a historical fact. From this understanding we will see several benefits of the resurrection of Jesus to us here today.

I want us listen to these points, note them, and see if they are being used in our lives, seeing if you are taking advantage of the joy and blessings they provide.

The common thread I want us to notice and what I want us to take from this message and these points is this: ***The resurrection of Jesus not only gives you eternal life, but it is how you can experience a fully blessed and most fulfilled life on earth.***

JESUS' RESURRECTION ENSURES OUR SALVATION

The first and most important fact about the resurrection is that the resurrection and belief and trust in the resurrection of Jesus brings us into the family of God; it gives us salvation.

The cross is the payment for sin and the resurrection shows us the payment was accepted.

Romans 10:9-10 says, *“because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.”*

Now does just believing that someone was raised from the dead bring you into a right relationship with God? No, but believing in the resurrection of Jesus means that you believe he is who he said he is which means you believe his is the Son of God, the only one who could die for your sins, and the only one who could take your place and be God’s perfect substitutionary sacrifice.

So, the resurrection of Jesus offers salvation to the lost.

Jesus alone bridges the gap of sin and brings us into a right relationship with God, without we would bust hell wide open. Make no mistake about it, none of us are good people, none of us are deserving of heaven.

More people are atheist, non-spiritual, or non-religious today than ever before, yet there are more people who believe they are going to heaven because they are “good people” than ever before.

We want something for nothing. We want eternity without giving up the temporary. Jesus says, “What does it profit a man if he gains his life (this world) and loses his soul (eternity)?

To trust in the death, burial, and resurrection is to receive eternal salvation from sin and eternal life from the Savior.

JESUS’ RESURRECTION IS A HISTORICAL FACT

In 1887, twenty-two years after the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln, his coffin was dug up and opened because there were constant rumors that his body was not in the grave. So they dug it up and the body was there. The rumors continued so 14 years later they had to dig it up again. Both times witnesses were present who testified that Lincoln was still in the grave.

Three days after the death of Jesus Christ, similar rumors began to spread throughout the land of Israel. Only this time there were no witnesses who could say that they had seen His body. In fact, to the contrary, many witnesses claimed to have seen him out of His grave and even talked with Him after the resurrection.

As great a man as Lincoln was there were witnesses to prove he was still in the grave. If one of our Presidents or another leader in our government were to cry out today to Lincoln for help, there would be no response. If a scientist were to cry out to Einstein for help today there would only be empty silence. If someone were to call out to Mohammed or Buddha or Gandhi today there would be no help.

But if you and I call out to Jesus Christ there is instant power available to us... power to change lives ...why? Because He lives!

One of the things that turn people off Jesus is they just cannot believe that a person was raised from the dead. They say there is no proof; there is no evidence, that it is just a fairytale, or a myth made up by his followers. Listen to Paul's words to the Corinthians who were asking some of the same questions and having some of the same doubts.

1 Cor. 15:3-8, *"³ For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, ⁵ and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. ⁶ After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep; ⁷ then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles; ⁸ and last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also."*

If you want historical proof the resurrection you have it right here. Christ appeared as we saw in Luke to Mary. Paul says he appeared to Cephas, then to the whole group, then to over 500 people, then his brother James, then to all of the apostles, and lastly to Paul himself. If you want proof, you got it.

In the introduction to his gospel, Luke says he took careful pains to track down eyewitnesses so that he could properly record the events of Jesus' life.

If you are a person who needs proof here it is. Don't tell me you can't believe in the resurrection of Jesus because there is lack of proof after looking at the evidence. Because then it is not about facts and proof, it is about you choosing not to believe in the facts.

Many say the resurrection is a hoax, but historically it cannot be a hoax.

There are at least three things that stand out about the resurrection that verify its authenticity:

1. Empty tomb discovered by women on Sunday (broken seal, stone rolled away, Roman guards AWOL, grave clothes with no body)
2. Disciples had real experiences with the risen Christ
3. The result of the disciples preaching was the established and growing church

People are willing to die for what they believe to be true, but no one is will to die for what they know to be false. The disciples preached and died for the gospel, because they knew it was true.

For the believer this should give you strength, courage, and comfort to know that the resurrection is a provable event.

For the unbeliever who seeks proof, this should at least provide you with evidence of facts on which to establish certainties that Jesus was who he said he was and did what he said he would do.

JESUS' RESURRECTION IS REASON TO SHARE

My brother and I used to get the World's Greatest Chocolate bars from school and sell them outside of the store my mom worked at after school. We liked that chocolate so much and wanted to share it so much that we always sold out of our boxes. The chocolates were to be sold for \$1, but my brother and I were so proud of our product that we sold them for \$2. We shared those candy bars for profit buddy.

But the gospel you and I are called to share is not shared for any profit, but it is shared in love and knowledge of the truth.

The third impact of the resurrection is that it gives us a reason to share the truth of God's love and the power of the Jesus. If Christ had not been raised from the dead then all our preaching, all of our outreach and ministry is in vain.

Listen to Paul's words in 1 Cor. 15 verses 14 and 17.

"¹⁴And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain.

If there is no resurrection there is no need for the church or for any ministry on behalf of God.

¹⁷And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins."

If there is no resurrection there is no salvation, there is no church, there is nothing. The resurrection of Christ seals the deal. It is the reason we share, we live, and we serve. The resurrection is the reason we can endure all for the sake of Christ.

It is precisely because Jesus rose from the grave that we must share. It is precisely because we know that all those who place their faith in Christ and repent of their sins will receive eternal, everlasting life and those who do not repent of their sins and gives their lives to Christ will spend eternity in real literal hell.

What about you?

The reality of sin is to real not to share eternal life.

We know the truth and we are called to share the truth!

JESUS' RESURRECTION GIVES US POWER

The resurrection of Christ gives you power in life. It is how you can have strength to make it through those tough times. It is how you overcome sin and shame. The resurrection is truly a new life.

Paul tells us this truth in Romans **8:11**.

***8:11**, "If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you."*

This truth and these verses can have such an impact on your life. All of us want to make an impact on our families, our communities, and in our world. We all want to overcome sin. We want to be better people.

In the resurrected Christ you have the power to actually serve God instead of yourself, to worship Christ instead of yourself, to genuinely live for another person instead of yourself.

In Christ you can. Christ's resurrection gives life to our mortal bodies that are dead in sin and gives us newness (a new Spirit, outlook, a new purpose, new goals, new gifts).

Are you allowing the power of God to empower your life?

Through the power of Christ that dwells in you, you can do all things for Christ.

JESUS' RESURRECTION GIVES HOPE AND COURAGE

Christ not only gives you power, but his resurrection also gives hope and courage.

2 Cor. 1:10 shows us how a risen Savior gives hope in any situation.

"He delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again."

Paul was facing death and yet he had a hope in Christ that went beyond his current circumstance. He knew that the risen Lord was greater than his current situation and that gave him hope.

In **2 Cor. 4:17** we see how Christ gives courage to go through anything,

"For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison."

Paul knew that the fact of the resurrection gave him hope and courage to go through anything. The truth of the resurrection can give you hope as well.

The fact that God brought you through the greatest trial you will ever face (being lost and dead in sin) should give you hope that he will be right beside you in everything else you face.

The truth that the risen Lord is in heaven preparing for you a place of immense glory should give you courage to face whatever life throws at you.

You can face the loss of a loved one with hope and courage, you can withstand enemies trying to take you down, you can make it through financial difficulties, and you can struggle through difficult decisions because you know that Christ's resurrection has secured for you an eternal weight in glory and if he brought you through sin and death he can and will see you through everything else.

JESUS' RESURRECTION SECURES OUR RESURRECTION

Jesus' resurrection not only gives us hope and courage, it also secures our resurrection. Because Christ was raised from the dead, God promises to raise from the dead all who trust in him.

1 Th. 4:16 paints a beautiful picture of the resurrection of the dead in Christ.

“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.”

Because Christ rose from the dead, the firstborn of the dead, his resurrection guarantees ours. And not only guarantees ours, He will cause our resurrection and escort our new bodies into heaven where we shall be given new glorified bodies.

CONCLUSION

You may be here today for many reasons. You may have come as a regular member, as a special service, to join your family. Whatever reason you choose to come this morning I want you to leave here knowing this.

The resurrection of Jesus not only gives you eternal life, but it is the means by which you can experience a fully blessed and most effective life on earth.

Yes, Jesus' resurrection gives us life after we die, but I think just as important and even more important is that life that he gives us here and now.

With that in mind I have two invitations I want to offer this morning.

The first is to the Christian. Are you living the life that Christ desires you to live? Are you living in power, hope, and courage? Are you using the truth of the resurrection to share the gospel with others? Is your life being all that it can be and should be for Christ?

If not, make a commitment to walk in the power of Christ so that you can live the life that Christ desires of you and you can affect the world as Christ empowers you to.

The second invitation is to the lost person here today. You have heard the proof, you have listened to the evidence, and you have noted the impact of Christ on a life.

Now it is your turn. You can now make a choice to follow the living Jesus.

Following Christ does not mean your life will be easy breezy or fantastic or that all your problems will go away.

Following Christ means giving him your whole life and trusting him to make the very best of it. It is seeing your values, interests, and habits change. It is you becoming the best you that God intends for you to be. It is having the power to affect that world in the greatest manner possible.

It means entering into a family of believers who are just like you. Living for Christ in the midst of a hectic life.

Christ life, death, and resurrection mean that you can be forgiven of your sins, be brought into the family of God, given the power to affect other lives, and you can have a home in heaven.

As our team comes, please stand with me.

If either of those two people are you this morning, I simply ask that after I pray you would step out of your seat and come forward. Come to repent, come to pray, and come to make a commitment.

Let us honor the resurrection of Jesus by living out the resurrection in our own lives.