

# The Resurrection

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**1 Corinthians 15:19-25** - If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable. <sup>20</sup> But now Christ is risen from the dead, *and has become the firstfruits* of those who have fallen asleep. <sup>21</sup> **For since by man *came* death, by Man also *came* the resurrection of the dead.** <sup>22</sup> For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. <sup>23</sup> But each one in his own order: **Christ the firstfruits**, afterward those *who are* Christ's at His coming. <sup>24</sup> Then *comes* the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. <sup>25</sup> For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. <sup>26</sup> The last enemy *that will be destroyed is death*

## **Introduction:**

When you think about the Easter Holiday you think about two distinctive components:

- Friday (Passover), the time that we remember the crucifixion of Christ
- Sunday (First Fruits) that celebrates the resurrection of Christ from the dead

Over the last few days we have been observing some holy times on God's calendar. Passover – the offering of the lamb, Unleavened Bread – the deliverance from the corruption of sin. Now we come to First Fruits. But what does it represent and why is it so important?

But with First Fruits (Easter Sunday), we seem to have confused an ancient pagan fertility rite with the original directions. **Today, we have an amalgam of a Babylonian festival with a Biblical holy convocation.** (this is very sad and diminishing)

- When they entered the promised land they were to bring the first sheaves of the harvest to the Lord and they would wave it before the Lord as an offering of thanksgiving the harvest.
- The original name of the third feast, however, contains a great truth. If there are first fruits, then there must be a second, a third and so on, and that is the true meaning of this Sunday. We do not merely celebrate the resurrection of the Lord on First Fruits, but more so, the resurrection of the entire church.

**I think most people identify with the Friday part, but I'm not sure people really understand the power of the Sunday / resurrection part.**

Friday is the day that Jesus did something that no one ever did for you. He died for your sin! All of us have sinned and all sin has the same price tag, and someone is going to die for it. The wages of sin is death. So basically, on Friday we remember how Jesus stepped into the courtroom of your life and said "I'll die for you".

It wasn't just some display of love (even though it was). It wasn't just a display of power (though it was). I wasn't just the fulfilling of prophetic passage (though it was). Really it was a legal transaction between Jesus, Heaven, Hell and you.

Let me say it like this: **Hell is not a place that God sends people He is mad at, Hell is a place where people decide to pay their own bill!**

But you don't have to pay your own bill... The message I want you to get today – YOU DON'T HAVE TO PAY YOUR OWN BILL. Jesus already did that for you on a cruel cross 2000 years ago!

Big question: **IF FRIDAY WAS SO POWERFUL AND COMPLETE, WHY DID JESUS NEED TO RISE FOR THE DEAD?**

When Jesus was on the earth, he raised four people from the dead. He raised the widow's son in the village of Nain (Luke 7:15). He raised the 12-year-old daughter of Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue (Mark 5:42). He raised Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha in Bethany after he had been dead four days (John 11:44). And he raised himself from the dead after he had been crucified.

Transition: **Why is conquering death such a big deal?**

### **1. To prove He really is who He claimed to be**

- No other God has claimed to have done that, this is what makes Jesus so unique
- **Acts 1:3** (NKJV) - ... to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.
- **Even the Apostles saw the importance of the resurrection: 1 Corinthians 15:12-22** (NLT) - And if Christ has not been raised, then all our preaching is useless, and your faith is useless.<sup>15</sup> And we apostles would all be lying about God—for we have said that God raised Christ from the grave. But that can't be true if there is no resurrection of the dead.<sup>16</sup> And if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised.<sup>17</sup> And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless and you are still guilty of your sins.<sup>18</sup> In that case, all who have died believing in Christ are lost! <sup>19</sup> And if our hope in Christ is only for this life, we are more to be pitied than anyone in the world.

**If the resurrection is not true, then the pillars that uphold the Christian faith crumble to dust.**

## 2. To conquer death for Himself and for us.

- **Revelation 1:18** - I *am* He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.
- The devil is so defeated he don't have the keys to his own house.
- Jesus has unlocked death for everyone
- **Philippians 3:10** - that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death...
- **1 Corinthians 15:54-57** - "Death is swallowed up in victory." "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.
  - Death was not swallowed up in victory when Lazarus came out of the tomb. Death was not swallowed up in victory when the widow's son or the ruler's daughter was raised. Death — John Levy's death — was swallowed up in victory when Jesus raised *Jesus* from the dead as the God-man with all authority in the universe never to die again.
  - **Death had no power in the Garden!** It was impotent until man's sin activated its power.
  - **The only way to remove the sting of death is to remove the sin of man.**
  - **Only the death of a sinless man can reverse the curse of death that came as result of a sinful man.**

### Questions:

1. **Do you know Christ?**
2. **Do you know the power of His resurrection?**

Transition: **What do we really need to take home with us today about the resurrection?**

## 1. Easter is not just a day to be celebrated, it's a power to be experienced.

- **Romans 8:10-11 (NKJV)** - And if Christ *is* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin, but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness. <sup>11</sup> But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.
- Is there an area of your life where something is dead or dying? Are you facing a crisis today? It could be something as minor as a broken bone or as major as a deadly tumor or growth.
- The power of Jesus is available today to heal, to set free, and to deliver!

## 2. The resurrection guarantees an abundant life.

- **1 Peter 1:3 (NLT)** - All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is by his great mercy that we have been born again, because God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. Now we live with great expectation...

## 3. The resurrection offers more than a better now, it ultimately means a better place.

- **John 11:25-26** - Jesus told her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. <sup>26</sup> Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die..."
- **John 14:1-4** "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. <sup>2</sup> In My Father's house are many mansions; if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. <sup>3</sup> And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there* you may be also. <sup>4</sup> And where I go you know, and the way you know."
- **1 Thessalonian 4:13-18** - But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. <sup>14</sup> For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. <sup>15</sup> For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive *and* remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. <sup>16</sup> For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. <sup>18</sup> Therefore comfort one another with these words.

Some of you today have had the sting of death touch your life. Your marriage has felt the sting of death. Your finances have felt the sting of death. Your dreams have felt the sting of death. You might have even physically lost a loved one and the sting of death has set in on you today. You don't know how you are going to make it, but the Lord has a message for you today...

**If you don't know Jesus, earth is as close to heaven as you are ever going to get...  
And it only gets worse!**

Conclusion: My Easter Prayer for You...

**Ephesians 1:19-20 (TLB)** - ...I pray that you will begin to understand how incredibly great his power is to help those who believe him. It is that same mighty power <sup>20</sup> that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in heaven...

