

April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022

## Resurrection Sunday Celebrates Eternal Life...

Today is the Day of Good News, the Best News! Jesus Christ was crucified on Friday (paying the penalty for our sins); and on Sunday, He rose from the grave (demonstrating His authority to provide eternal life).

There have been more paintings, songs, and books produced about Jesus Christ than any other person who has ever lived. Why all this attention given to a Jewish carpenter from Nazareth?

The OT records hundreds of prophecies about Jesus Christ [the Messiah, the Savior], most of these written between 500-1000 years before His birth, telling how He would be God in the flesh, born in a manger in Bethlehem to a young Jewish virgin, and His Father would be Almighty God. He would die on a cross as payment for man's sins; most of His own people (the Jews) would reject Him; but many Gentiles (non-Jews) would believe in Him.

The NT records the fulfillment of all these prophecies; the greatest being, His death and resurrection, which declared Him to be both God and Savior. (See **Acts 2:22-24, 36; Romans 1:1-4**).

Christianity stands or falls on the truth of Christ's resurrection! But He would have to die, if He was going to then rise from the dead.

**Read John 19:31-35, 38-42...** Jesus died on a Friday and was placed in a tomb, but on Sunday morning His body was missing. If He did not rise from the grave, someone took His body. What do the Scriptures say?

**Read Matthew 28:1-15...**

**1.** The **Jewish Leaders** wanted Christ's body to stay in the tomb, a missing body could be perceived as a resurrected body (Please turn to **Matthew 27:62-65**).

**2.** The **Roman Guards** would have no reason to steal the body, they were stationed there to make sure it stayed put; moving it or allowing it to be taken, was punishable by death; therefore, they made sure Christ's body remained in the tomb, at all costs, against all foes; but then, they had never seen one of God's mighty angels, like the one who rolled away the stone.

**3.** The **Disciples** wouldn't move His body and falsify His resurrection; for if they knew Jesus did not rise from the grave, they had no hope of eternal life; it would be better for them to quickly and quietly get out of town, and never again mention their relationship with Jesus of Nazareth.

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So why did the Disciples continue to proclaim the risen Lord, if it indeed were not true? Why did the Jewish authorities bribe the Roman Guard to spread the “stolen body” story, if it were true?

The only reasonable explanation is that Jesus rose from the grave, just like He said He would.

Jesus told His disciples, on several occasions, that He would be arrested, put to death, and on the third day He would rise from the grave. He told them He would return to the Father; but that He would ask the Father to send the Holy Spirit to indwell them, and at a future time, He would come back to gather all Christians to be with Him in heaven, forever.

### **Jesus told them:**

**Matthew 16:21**, “Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day.”

**Matthew 17:22-23**, “And while they were gathering together in Galilee, Jesus said to them, ‘The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men; and they will kill Him, and He will be raised on the third day.’”

**Mark 8:31**, “He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.”

**Mark 9:31**, “He was teaching His disciples and telling them, “The Son of Man is to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill Him; and when He has been killed, He will rise three days later.”

**Luke 9:22**, Jesus told them, “The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed and be raised up on the third day.” **44**, “Let these words sink into your ears; for the Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men.”

Just days before Jesus entered Jerusalem for the last time, He came to Bethany to comfort His friends Mary and Martha, for their brother Lazarus had died. Jesus said to them (**John 11:25-26**), “I am the resurrection and the life; the one who believes in Me will live, even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?

Please turn to **John 11:38-53...**

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### LAST PASSOVER:

**Matthew 26:1-5**, "Jesus said, 'You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man is to be handed over for crucifixion.' Then the chief priests and the elders of the people were gathered together in the court of the high priest, named Caiaphas; and they plotted together to seize Jesus by stealth and kill Him. But they were saying, 'Not during the festival, otherwise a riot might occur among the people.'"

**John 14:1-3**, Jesus said to them, "Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. 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." **29**, "Now I have told you before it happens, so that when it happens, you may believe."

### POST RESURRECTION:

**Luke 24:44-48**, "Jesus said to them, 'These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.' Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and He said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.'"

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After His resurrection, before ascending back into heaven, Jesus appeared to many of His followers:

1. Mary and other women near the tomb (**Matthew 28:9-10**)
2. Two disciples walking to Emmaus (**Luke 24:13-32**)
3. Peter (**Luke 24:33-34**)
4. 10 disciples, Thomas absent (Mark 16:14; Luke 24:36-43; **John 20:19-25**)
5. 11 disciples, Thomas present (**John 20:26-31**)
6. 7 disciples by the Sea of Galilee (**John 21:1-14, 25**)
7. The apostles just before His ascension (**Acts 1:3-26**)
8. Paul records other appearances (**1Corinthians 15**).
  - a. The 12 Disciples (**v. 5**)
  - b. 500 disciples (**v. 6**)
  - c. James (**v. 7**)
  - d. Paul (**v. 8; cf. Acts 9:1-8; 18:9-10; 23:11**)

The Bible declares everyone guilty of sin, deserving punishment; but God, in His great love for us, has provided forgiveness and eternal life through Jesus Christ.

Everyone who trusts and believes in Him, receives God's unmerited favor, God's **G R A C E**, expressed in and through the sacrificial death and sovereign resurrection of God's Son (cf. **Romans 3:23-24; 6:23; 5:8; 8:1; 10:9-10, 13**).

When you repent of your sins, trusting in Jesus Christ's death to provide forgiveness for your sins, you are saved.

Christ's resurrection demonstrates His sovereign power and authority over sin, death, and judgment; He alone provides eternal life.

The only reasonable explanation for the empty tomb is the one that is repeatedly revealed in Scripture: Jesus Christ rose from the grave, by His own divine power and authority (**John 10:17-18**), Jesus declared, "For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father."

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**Revelation 1:8**, "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

**Revelation 1:17-18**, "I am the first and the last, and the living One; I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore."

**1John 5:11-13**, "And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life."

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is God's greatest demonstration of eternal life; Jesus Christ is the Resurrection and the Life; and therefore, everyone who believes in Him will live forever, and although we may physically die, we will, at that very moment, come into the presence of the Lord.

Resurrection Sunday celebrates eternal life for everyone who believes in Jesus Christ, God's Son, Lord and Savior: crucified, resurrected, and coming again to take all those who belong to Him to be with Him in heaven, forever.

And therefore, we can earnestly proclaim, He Is Risen! He is Risen indeed!

He lives, He lives,  
Christ Jesus lives today!  
He walks with me and talks with me  
Along life's narrow way.  
He lives, He lives, salvation to impart!  
You ask me how I know He lives:  
He lives within my heart.

*Pastor Mike*

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