

The Resurrection Part 3 of 3

Tonight we continue with part 3 of our series "Questions" we began this series based on the scripture that comes from ...

1 Peter 3:15

Your heart should be holy and set apart for the Lord God. Always be ready to tell everyone who asks you why you believe as you do. Be gentle as you speak and show respect. ~ New Life Version

For those who are new and for you who have been present over the past two weeks let me bring you all up to date on why is this verse is our starting point.

In this verse there are several things that each of us can apply to our life:

1. We should be **ready**.
 - a. Being ready is not just a matter of having the right information available.
 - b. It is an attitude, of readiness and eagerness to speak/share the truth of our belief
2. We are to give **reason**.
 - a. When the need arises am I prepared to give reason (an answer)
3. We should be **obedient**.

Tonight our question is, **"What is the big deal about the resurrection?"**

Mark 16:14-16

Still later he appeared to the eleven disciples as they were eating together. He rebuked them for their stubborn unbelief because they refused to believe those who had seen him after he had been raised from the dead.

15 *And then he told them, "Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone. **16** Anyone who believes and is baptized will be saved. But anyone who refuses to believe will be condemned.*

It is the one thing that completes our **salvation**.
Jesus came to bring us back into **relationship** with God.

So what is at stake?

1 Cor 15:12-20

*But tell me this — since we preach that Christ rose from the dead, why are some of you saying there will be no resurrection of the dead? 13 For if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised either. 14 And if Christ was not raised, then all our preaching is useless, and your trust in God is useless. 15 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. 16 If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised. 17 **And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless, and you are still under condemnation for your sins.** 18 In that case, all who have died believing in Christ have perished! 19 And if we have hope in Christ only for this life, we are the most miserable people in the world.*

20 But the fact is that Christ has been raised from the dead. He has become the first of a great harvest of those who will be raised to life again. ~ NLT

If Jesus' resurrection didn't happen

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... then your faith is **useless**, and you are still under condemnation for your sins.

The reason the resurrection is so important to the case for Christianity is that if it is true, **it confirms** the teaching of Jesus as having the authority of God.

The teaching of Jesus is often about his own identity. At stake is the ability to know who Jesus was and consequently how we should respond to Him.

What is resurrection?

In order to understand what it is we need to also understand what it is not.

- ☑ Resurrection is not bringing a body back to its former life, a body that needs food, can get sick, can age, and eventually die again.

The bible speaks several times of this type of miracle.

The story of Lazarus being raised from the dead is a great example of one. But Lazarus was revived brought back to life, but not resurrected.

- ☑ Resurrection is a body that is physical yet not corruptible,
- ☑ it can not die, age, or become ill.

According to the Gospels, Jesus was crucified, died on the cross, and was buried in a tomb.

Three days later the tomb was found empty, and many of His followers claimed to have seen His physical body risen from the dead over the forty days.

Let me describe what was entailed in this event.

Before being crucified, Pontius Pilate ordered that Jesus be scourged. A Roman scourging was done with a whip called a flagrum or a flagellum that was comprised of a handle about 8 inches long with 12- inch to 24-inch long leather straps attached to on end. At the other end the straps were tied to lead balls (that looked something like barbells), sharp pieces of metal, bone shards, broken glass, or sharp rock. Whatever was on the end of the whip quickly broke the skin, allowing the flagrum to deeply penetrate the tissue and pull away the flesh, often exposing the bowels, ribs, or spine.

So vicious was this torture that victims often did not survive a scourging. Victims lost so much blood that they went into hypovolemic shock.

- This means that the heart would speed up trying to compensate for the loss of blood;
- the blood pressure would drop, making the victim faint or collapse;
- the kidneys would shut down to keep as much blood volume as possible;

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- because the body needs fluids so badly to replace the lost blood, the victim would become extremely thirsty.

Following this was Jesus' crucifixion, miscellaneous beatings aside.

In crucifixion the victim was laid down with his arms perpendicular to the torso. Nails 5 to 9 inches long would then be driven through both wrists, crushing the median nerve (the largest nerve going to the hand) and creating extraordinary pain.

Nails would also be driven through the ankles with the legs in a bent position. When the victim was raised to a vertical position, his shoulders (and sometime elbows and wrists) would become dislocated from the weight, making them useless to alleviate the pressure on the chest.

At this point the nailing of the wrists kept the position of the body so that the pressure on the chest was relentless and kept the victim from flopping forward. With the pressure on the chest, the victim could not exhale. In order to lessen the pressure, the victim had to straighten his legs, using the nail through his ankles as leverage. Having exhaled, the victim then sunk back down to his original position.

The wood from which the cross was made was rough, making the sliding of the victims back, whose flesh was exposed from scourging, very painful. As the victims strength was slowly worn down, breathing would become less frequent, increasing the acidity in the blood. The acidity would cause an irregular heartbeat that was already rapid because of the hypovolemic shock. This would have caused fluid to build up in the membranes surrounding the heart and lungs. Death would ultimately come in the form of asphyxiation or heart failure.

Back to the question; **What is the big deal about the resurrection?**

The greatest importance of the resurrection is not in the past– "Christ rose" – But in the present– "Christ risen"

In Luke 24:5 the angels at the tomb asked the women,
Luke 24:4-8 *They were puzzled, wondering what to make of this. Then, out of nowhere it seemed, two men, light cascading over them, stood there. The women were awestruck and bowed down in worship. The men said, "Why are you looking for the Living One in a cemetery? He is not here, but raised up. Remember how he told you when you were still back in Galilee that he had to be handed over to sinners, be killed on a cross, and in three days rise up?" Then they remembered Jesus' words. ~ Mess*

That same evening the disciples are hiding behind locked doors because they feared the Jews, they were not expecting Christ.

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They had deserted Him despite their pledge to die with him on the night that He was arrested. Peter, the leader of the disciples denied he even knew Christ three times that night.

Now jump forward to the three days after the crucifixion. He is gone from the tomb, where is he?

The risen Jesus appears in the room, and these disciples who were not expecting Him are terrified.

Fifty days later they are preaching publicly and performing miracles, Peter instead of denying Jesus, is now preaching the resurrection of Jesus boldly.

These men who were not expecting Christ, became so passionate and committed to the message of the resurrection of Jesus that they would pay with their lives.

- **James**, brother of John, was beheaded in Jerusalem by Herod AD44
- **Philip** scourged and crucified in Greece AD54
- **Andrew** crucified on an "X" shaped cross in Greece AD60
- **Matthew** pinned to the ground and beheaded in Ethiopia AD60
- **Peter** crucified upside down in Rome AD64
- **Thomas** executed with spears in India AD70
- **Bartholomew** (Nathaniel) Flayed alive in Armenia
- **Matthias** (Judas' replacement) stoned and beheaded
- **Thaddeus** crucified in Edessa Greece AD72
- **Simon** martyred in Persia

The point is this that these men scattered around the known world for the sole reason of **proclaiming** the physical, historical **resurrection** of Jesus.

Not only that, they did it for no personal gain whatsoever, no motive other than **the truth**.