

The Resurrection: What does it mean to you?

This morning we are here to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The resurrection is the exclamation point to the greatest story ever told. The Gospel. At every point of this story we see a God who loves us and wants to do whatever it takes to have a personal relationship with us.

His birth: Emanuel- God with us. God saw our need for a savior and left heaven and came to us.

His death: We deserved death but through His death we have access to God. Matt27:50-51 “And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, He gave up His spirit. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.”

Explain about the curtain.

His resurrection: separates Him from the other god's, allows us to receive the Holy Spirit, gives us hope of eternal life.

Last year I spent a lot of time revealing the undeniable evidence that the resurrection really happened. The empty tomb, the folded grave clothes, Jesus appearing to over 500 people after His resurrection, and the changed lives of the disciples, in an attempt to convince doubting and unbelieving people that it really did happen and to encourage believers to continue in this walk of faith. God's word said it happened so it happened whether you believe it or not.

So this morning we are going to focus on what does the resurrection mean to you? This morning's message is a personal call to all of us. For the believer it should remind us of what we already have and what our response should be to the gift of salvation. For the non-believer my prayer is that it would reveal areas that you that you have missed the mark that God requires of His children and turn to Him in repentance and receive the gift of salvation today.

Walking in Hope: What we have available to us.

1 Peter 1:3-5 “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In His great mercy He has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade- kept in Heaven for you, who through faith are

shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

We see in this passage Peter reminding believers who were experiencing trials of the hope that they have in Jesus even when it does not seem like it in the world around them.

“In His great Mercy” **We are born again:** Spiritual birth, a work of the Holy Spirit. We get a second chance, we are reconciled with God and that is something to praise Him for even in hard times. Because of the resurrection we get peace with God and the peace of God.

Into a living hope: We serve a living God. All the other god's have graves. Our hope is grounded in the living word. Heb 4:12 “The word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.” We have hope in God's living word to get us through this life and into glory. We can trust God's word!

Because our hope is living, it grows and becomes more beautiful as time goes on. We hope for our inheritance. Something in the future. His Glory, Heaven reserved for us. Hotel reservation.

Kept by the power of God (military term, guarded constantly by God assuring our safe arrival to heaven) *Dr. James m. Gray* “*Who can mind the journey when the road leads home?*” Even if there is suffering along the way the road leads to heaven. We win!

Read 2 Cor 4:7-18

Walking in Holiness: Our response to the resurrection

Raised to walk in the newness of life

1 Peter 1:13-21 “Therefore, prepare your minds for action; You recognize that you were created for a purpose and you live your life in a way that shows that you believe it. As Christians we live our lives with the future in mind. Christ's return, the great commission, the fate of lost people. “Gird up your loins” remove things that will hinder you. What you think about God and what you think about yourself. **be self controlled;** (a fruit of the Spirit, to use sound judgment, how do you make decisions) Questions to ask yourself before acting: Why would I do? Is it biblical? Is it wise? Does it glorify God? Will it hurt others as they seek Christ or to walk with Christ?

set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed. Positive, optimistic, looking forward to the grace of God upon Jesus' return but also recognize the Grace of God in the present. When the outlook is gloomy try the uplook.

Titus 2:11-13 "For the Grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say no to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope- the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ."

As obedient children,(a responsibility to obey) **do not conform** (pressed into a mold) **to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance.** (we now have a new nature and should act different, your nature determines your desires,) **But just as He who called you is holy,**(follow me! When Jesus calls you everything changes) **be holy in all you do, for it is written: "Be holy because I am holy."** The Gospel is a call to Holiness. Holy: set apart from the world to God, different- your present lifestyle is not only different from what it was before but it is different from the lifestyles of the unbelievers around us. You will be seen as strange and will be persecuted but trust God with the final judgment. 1 Peter 4:4 "They think it strange that you do not plunge with them the same dissipation, and they heap abuse on you." The bible says you are blessed when you are persecuted for His name. **Since you call on a Father who judges each man's work impartially, live your lives as strangers** (this world is not our home so don't get comfortable, we are only passing through) **here in reverent fear.** Respect, dread of displeasing Him. Many times we do not live for God because we fear man more than we fear God. God is merciful and forgiving but He is also a loving disciplinarian. He can't allow His children to enjoy sin. God does not compromise with sin. Sin is what sent Jesus to the cross. We will be held accountable to how we live our lives. The Greek word for judge here carries the meaning "to judge in order to find something good"

For you know that it was not with perishable things such as gold or silver that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb, without blemish or defect. Here we see Paul reminding them of their salvation and of the emptiness of their former life. And that is what life without Christ

is, empty. He is also reminding them about the price that was paid for their redemption. That is what the Lord's Supper is all about. Remembering what Christ did for us. **He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake.** Again we see a Holy God thinking of you before the creation of the world. He wants you to know Him personally. Why would anyone want to run from a loving God? **Through Him you believed in God, who raised Him from the dead and glorified Him, and so your faith and hope are in God.** The resurrection is the foundation of our faith.

1 Cor 15:14-20 "And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that He raised Christ from the dead... And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men. But indeed Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

The Easter story is an amazing picture of an amazingly loving and merciful God who will go to great lengths to reveal Himself to you and have you come to Him in repentant faith. And as we celebrate His victory over sin and death on this resurrection Sunday, I ask you, what does the resurrection mean to you? Will you follow Jesus into a new life or will you try to attach Jesus to your current life? One leads to hope and a future, the other leads to death and emptiness.

He is alive and available to all who will call on His name.