

**Introduction:**

- People have been trying to disprove the resurrection since the Pharisees first tried after the third day of the crucifixion. Many who try to disprove on wind up believing. In the 1700s there were two young intellectuals by the names of Lord Littleton and Gilbert West. Both were lawyers and both rejected the claims of Christ. One day in a conversation it was concluded that Christianity stood on two foundations: the resurrection of Jesus and the conversion of the apostle Paul. Should these two stories be disproved, the rest of Christianity would fall with them. Gilbert West agreed to write a book disproving Jesus' resurrection and Lord Littleton agreed to write a book disproving that Paul was converted by hearing a voice from heaven. No problem, they thought. But when they got together to share their progress reports, they each had to confess that the evidence was winning them over to the other side. In fact, when it was all over, there were two books: Lord Littleton's *The Conversion of St. Paul* and Gilbert West's book, *The Resurrection of Jesus Christ*, arguing that the resurrection is a fact of history.
- *"But the Jewish leaders demanded, "What are you doing? If God gave you authority to do this, show us a miraculous sign to prove it." "All right," Jesus replied. "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." "What!" they exclaimed. "It has taken forty-six years to build this Temple, and you can rebuild it in three days?" But when Jesus said, "this temple," he meant his own body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered he had said this, and they believed both the Scriptures and what Jesus had said."* (John 2:18-22, NLT)
- The Pharisees were asking for a sign.
  - "A sign is something that suggests the presence or existence of a fact, condition, or quality." They were looking for a mark or indication that Jesus was who He said He was. They were looking for a mark, or indication that He was the Messiah.
  - Jesus said, "Here is the sign to be looking for: Kill me and three days I will rise again to New Life.
  - This sign matters so much to the Christian faith that Paul said, *"If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain."* 1 Cor 15:14 I want to encourage each of you today to vigorously reaffirm your faith in the resurrection of Jesus. *The Resurrection Matters for several reasons, but first lets look at what it is.*

**I. What Is The Resurrection?**

- A. The word itself means to rise up, to awaken, to stir, to awaken from the dead.
  1. As Christians, we understand the word resurrection to mean the raising up of Jesus to **Newness of Life** after having been dead for three days. He was brutally tortured, crucified and on the third day arose from the dead.
  2. We call his rising from the dead the resurrection! The resurrection of Jesus is the defining moment of our Christian faith. It is the hinge on which the entire Christian message hangs.

- B. When we speak of the resurrection of Jesus it is more than being made alive again. Jesus was made alive again with a new body! A glorified body that would never, ever die again.
  - 1. Jesus, after the crucifixion was not resuscitated. Jesus was resurrected!
  - 2. Jesus, after the crucifixion was not restored. Jesus was resurrected!
  - 3. Jesus, after the crucifixion was not revived. Jesus was resurrected!
  - 4. Jesus, after the crucifixion was more than raised from the dead. Jesus was resurrected! Raised to newness of life. Jesus was raised up to a newness of life that would never see death again.
- C. The resurrection is what Jesus experienced on the third day after the crucifixion.
- D. The resurrection is what the Saints of God will experience at the end of the age. We too will be raised to newness of life and will never see death again.

## II. Why Is It Significant?

- A. Why is the message of the resurrection so important to the Christian faith? Why is the resurrection of Jesus so significant?
- B. The resurrection is significant because it declares the identity, authority, and Lordship of Jesus Christ. When the Jews asked for a sign they were concerned by what authority He used to cleanse the temple. They wanted to know His identity
  - 1. His identity was revealed in the resurrection. Paul writes in Romans, "*and he was shown to be the Son of God when he was raised from the dead by the power of the Holy Spirit. He is Jesus Christ our Lord.*" (Romans 1:4, NLT) He was not raised up to become the Son of God. He was already the Son of God! But the resurrection was the powerful declaration of His Sonship.
  - 2. His divinity. Because the resurrection is a powerful sign that pointed to His Sonship. His Sonship points to His divinity/deity...He is God!
    - a) The fact that Jesus Christ died on the cross does not prove in itself He is God. Jesus proved His deity by fulfilling the prophecies of His death and by His return from the grave.
    - b) The resurrection from the dead is a declaration of the divine power the divine reality of Jesus Christ. Only God could raise a man from the dead: John 2:18 "*Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.*"
  - 3. Lordship Jesus' resurrection from the dead affirms His Lordship. Death could not hold Him. "*But God released him from the horrors of death and raised him back to life, for death could not keep him in its grip.*" (Acts 2:24, NLT) Peter then declares: "*So let everyone in Israel know for certain that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, to be both Lord and Messiah!*" (Acts 2:36, NLT)
  - 4. Jesus' identity...Son of God. Jesus' divinity...He is God. Jesus' Lordship...Ruler over all (including death) All three of these speak of Jesus authority! "Kill me and in three days I will rise again.

- C. Secondly, the resurrection is significant because it proved Christ's power to forgive sin, justify sinners and grant eternal life to those who believe.
1. *"And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless and you are still guilty of your sins."* (1 Corinthians 15:17, NLT) If we reverse this scripture it would read, *"Christ has been raised, our faith is very meaningful and we are no longer guilty of our sins!"*
  2. By rising from the dead, Jesus proved His authority and power to break the bonds of sin and to assure forgiveness and eternal life to all who accept His gift of salvation.
  3. *"He was handed over to die because of our sins, and he was raised to life to make us right with God."* (Romans 4:25, NLT) AMP "He was raised to secure our justification!" Not guilty! Charged with righteousness!
  4. *"...He broke the power of death and illuminated the way to life and immortality through the Good News."* (2 Timothy 1:10, NLT)
- D. Thirdly, the resurrection is significant because it reveals Christ's power over death. Death was a fruit of sin in the Garden of Eden. All men died as a result of that sin. But Jesus was the sinless Son of God. And when the man Jesus died, death had no authority to keep Him down.
1. *"And since we died with Christ, we know we will also live with him. We are sure of this because Christ was raised from the dead, and he will never die again. Death no longer has any power over him."* (Romans 6:8-9, NLT)
  2. *"For he raised us from the dead along with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ Jesus."* (Ephesians 2:6, NLT)
  3. Because death has no power over him, it has no power over us. The Cross was heaven's triumph. And when Jesus Christ arose, the power of sin and death was forever shattered.
  4. *"Because God's children are human beings—made of flesh and blood—the Son also became flesh and blood. For only as a human being could he die, and only by dying could he break the power of the devil, who had the power of death."* (Hebrews 2:14, NLT)
- E. Fourth, the resurrection is significant because it proves that physical death is not the termination of human existence.
1. In 1 Cor 15:20, 23 Jesus is called the 'first fruits' from those who have died. First fruits refer to the first part of the harvest to come in. It represents the rest of the harvest yet to come. IL. When an automobile manufacturer designs a new car they will, before going into mass production, first come out with the prototype. Christ is the prototype, the first fruits, of the resurrection. He is the first of many to follow. All those who are His will be raised like Him.
  2. His resurrection assures us that we too, who believe, shall be raised to life everlasting.
  3. Our assurance of a future resurrection depends totally upon Jesus having been raised from the dead.

### III. Why Does It Matter To Me?

- A. We must all ask ourselves this morning, "Why does the resurrection matter to me?"
- B. It matters because as a believer your entire salvation experience depends on Jesus resurrection.
  - 1. It is the one thing we should spend time on affirming in our faith.
  - 2. If our entire salvation experience hangs on it, then we should want to know all we can about it. Celebrate it often. And be able to talk about it to others.
- C. It matters because it was the main message of the apostles, the early church and the Biblical writers. Everything NT stemmed from this event.
  - 1. Word search: resurrection, resurrected, raised up, raised, lifted, risen, rise, etc.
  - 2. The resurrection was the 'proof' that all the other promises were true.
- D. It matters because the resurrection gives us a future and a hope. We are living for someone, Jesus, and something, heaven.
  - 1. A way has been made to God by Jesus. One of us has made it back!
  - 2. When God judges the living and the dead, those in Christ will have great hope!
- E. It matters because the same power that raised Christ Jesus from the dead resides in the heart of every believer.
  - 1. *"I want to know Christ and experience the mighty power that raised him from the dead. I want to suffer with him, sharing in his death,"* (Philippians 3:10, NLT)
- F. The resurrection matters because now I am faced with a decision that has eternal implications.
  - 1. *"Don't be so surprised! Indeed, the time is coming when all the dead in their graves will hear the voice of God's Son, and they will rise again. Those who have done good will rise to experience eternal life, and those who have continued in evil will rise to experience judgment."* (John 5:28-29, NLT)
  - 2. Make Jesus Lord of your life today.

**Conclusion:**

- The Resurrection is the most important event to the Christian Faith. Everything depends upon it.