

Introduction:

- The resurrection is one of the greatest events to every take place in the history of man. It is one of the most life changing events in the life of a person when they believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the reason why one would put their faith in Jesus. He lives! He is not dead! He was dead but lives.
- Rev 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.* NKJV
- Rev 2:8 ...*'These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life:* NKJV
- The resurrection is the very center of the Christian faith. Without it we have no faith, or more accurately –our faith is vain.
- The resurrection is our hope that we too shall live.
- The resurrection is the message of the Christian faith! The cross contains the truth but the empty tomb contains our message! The cross contains the truth but the empty tomb proclaims it! The Resurrection gave birth to church on the third day. The church is made up of people who believe that Jesus rose from the dead, never to die again.
- The cross was but a gateway to the message of the third day–He lives! Jesus is the first to be resurrected! (There is a difference between being raised from the dead and resurrected.)

I. What is the Resurrection

- A. The word itself means to rise up, to awaken, to stir, to awaken from the dead.
 1. As Christian's, 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. The resurrection is not: resuscitation, restoration, revived, or just raised. To the Christian resurrection is raised to Newness of Life and not dying again.

II. The Resurrection Was Foretold

- A. What is foretold when remembered is often imprinted deeply upon the heart.
 1. The road to Emmaus - *"Then Jesus said to them, "You foolish people! You find it so hard to believe all that the prophets wrote in the Scriptures. Wasn't it clearly predicted that the Messiah would have to suffer all these things before entering his glory?""* (Luke 24:25-26, NLT)
 2. When they heard the scriptures spoken regarding the Christ their hearts burned with in them.
 3. Think of Peter–Jesus told him he would deny him three times. Peter denied Him three times, the rooster crowed just as Jesus had said and Peter remembered and went away sad.

4. There is no fulfillment of something spoken unless there is someone there to remember what had been spoken/told. That is why we should search the scripture OT and new regarding the resurrection.
 5. The disciples after seeing the resurrected Lord, remembered (what was spoken) and immediately began to proclaim it. Their believing that Jesus is resurrected put passion in their proclamation!
- B. The OT is filled with references to the resurrection. Let's look at some.
1. Abraham was a picture in Advance— "offer up your son Isaac, Abraham". Abraham believed in the resurrection and was convinced that God would raise Isaac from the dead. Abraham was looking for a city built by God not with human hands.
 - a) Paul in Galatians infers that Abraham heard the Gospel Gal. 3:8. The Gospel? That the dead in God would live again.
 - b) Jesus in John 8:56 tells the Jews that Abraham saw this day and rejoiced and was glad.
 2. Ps 68:18-20 You lead captivity captive. NKJV You know the ins and outs of death. NLT
 3. Psalms 16:10 *"For you will not leave my soul among the dead or allow your holy one to rot in the grave."* (Psalm 16:10, NLT)
 - a) (Acts 2:25-31; Acts 13:35-38)
 - (1) *"Dear brothers, think about this! You can be sure that the patriarch David wasn't referring to himself, for he died and was buried, and his tomb is still here among us. But he was a prophet, and he knew God had promised with an oath that one of David's own descendants would sit on his throne. David was looking into the future (foreseeing) and speaking of the Messiah's resurrection. He was saying that God would not leave him among the dead or allow his body to rot in the grave."* (Acts 2:29-31, NLT)
 - (2) *"Another psalm explains it more fully: 'You will not allow your Holy One to rot in the grave.' This is not a reference to David, for after David had done the will of God in his own generation, he died and was buried with his ancestors, and his body decayed. No, it was a reference to someone else—someone whom God raised and whose body did not decay. "Brothers, listen! We are here to proclaim that through this man Jesus there is forgiveness for your sins."* (Acts 13:35-38, NLT)
 4. Psalms 118:17 *I shall not die, but live, And declare the works of the Lord.* NKJV
 5. Jonah 1:17 *Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.* NKJV
 - a) *"For as Jonah was in the belly of the great fish for three days and three nights, so will the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights."* (Matthew 12:40, NLT)

- b) Isaiah 25:8 *He will swallow up death forever, And the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces; The rebuke of His people He will take away from all the earth; For the Lord has spoken.* NKJV
- 6. Hosea 6:2 *After two days He will revive us; On the third day He will raise us up, That we may live in His sight.* NKJV
- C. Jesus foretold His resurrection
 - 1. It was a message/a truth that Jesus taught His disciples. Therefore when they saw Jesus resurrected they believed and began to teach it. *"From then on Jesus began to tell his disciples plainly that it was necessary for him to go to Jerusalem, and that he would suffer many terrible things at the hands of the elders, the leading priests, and the teachers of religious law. He would be killed, but on the third day he would be raised from the dead."* (Matthew 16:21, NLT) (Mark 8:31-33; Luke 9:21,22)
 - 2. *"As they went back down the mountain, he told them not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead. So they kept it to themselves, but they often asked each other what he meant by "rising from the dead.""* (Mark 9:9-10, NLT)
 - 3. The sign of His authority would be His death and resurrection. John 2:18-22 *So the Jews answered and said to Him, "What sign do You show to us, since You do these things?" 19 Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." 20 Then the Jews said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" 21 But He was speaking of the temple of His body. 22 Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said.* NKJV Only a crazy man would say this unless he was sure it would add to the faith of his followers.

III. The Resurrection Was Validated

- A. A resurrected Jesus changed the lives of many in just a moment. They knew He was crucified. They knew He had been put in a tomb. On the third day, when the tomb was found empty—they were shocked! When they saw Him—they believed!
- B. Their testimony builds our faith. Many saw Him after he had died and they touched Him. It was not a ghost they saw.
 - 1. Mary on resurrection morning. She thinks he is the gardener at first. Jn 20:15, Mk 16:9 *He appeared first to Mary Magdalene.* Isn't it interesting that Jesus chooses to reveal himself to a woman whom He cast 7 demons out of. He who has been forgiven much loves much! She was seeking Him.
 - 2. Luke 24:34-35 the two on the road to Emmaus.
 - a) He vanishes. They see and they go back to Jerusalem.
 - b) Lk 24:34 They declare to those in the room Simon has seen Jesus. And Jesus walks through door.

3. Luke 24:38-43 Jesus told those in the room, Touch me... give me fish to eat. The disciples in that room were seeing all of this! Now if you were the one seeing this you would have one awesome story to tell!
 4. Thomas who was gone but later sees Jesus is asked to touch Jesus scars. Jn 20:27.
 5. Mt 28:4 the guards saw the angel at the tomb and were so scared they fell as though dead.
 6. I Cor. 15: 5 Peter saw Him and then the 12, the He was seen by over 500 fellow believers at once (some of those were still alive). He was seen by James and all the apostle and finally Paul says, I saw Him.
- C. Their changed lives validates the message of the Gospel to us.
1. The transformation of the lives of the disciples has to be the most telling proof of all that Jesus was raised from the dead, resurrected!
 2. These men all had the history of running from trouble and willingness to deny Christ yet they all end up dying for Him. All the apostles died a martyrs death but John and he died on Patmos in exile. How many people do you know that would die for something they did not believe in?
 3. From the time they saw the resurrected Lord they devoted their lives to him and proclaiming salvation is here, Jesus is alive!
 4. Would Paul the apostle endured all he did for nothing?
- D. The attempted cover up.
1. The guards are paid a bribe, by the Elders, not to say anything but to lie. And if word got back to Pilot they would pay him off too. Mt 28:13-14
- E. The tomb was empty and the body was never found. All they had to do was come up with a body and the whole thing would have been mute!

Conclusion:

- The Resurrection is about Jesus, the first man to be raised from the dead to Newness of Life, never die again.
- When you understand that this event happened and was spoken of many times in the OT, it increases your faith. "They remember" what He had said, and they believed. Jesus to Thomas, '*blessed are those who believe and have not seen!*'"
- When you consider the lives of these men who followed Jesus and left Him when trouble began, and suddenly they are preaching HE IS ALIVE! We have seen him! You have to say, "something has happened!" When these fearful men lay down their lives to die for Jesus in preaching the Gospel, you know something powerful has happened!
- In light of the evidence, what do you believe this morning?
 - Will you make Jesus Lord of your life?