

I. THE POWER OF THE RESURRECTION

...and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; ¹⁰ that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, ¹¹ if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. Phil. 3: 9-11

Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead... Rev. 1: 5

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. ¹⁷ And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. ¹⁸ And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the pre-eminence. ¹⁹ For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, ²⁰ and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross. Col. 1: 15-19

- A. Jesus is the firstborn from the dead. He is the firstborn of a new prototype human. A human born by the Spirit of God, and having been given a glorified body.
- B. Jesus' resurrection was historical, physical, and permanent. The word for resurrection in the New Testament is *anastasis*, which means "life after 'life after death.'"¹ The New Testament promise of resurrection is different from a belief in life after death.
- C. Every culture has believed in life after death in some sort of immaterial state. However, Christianity was proclaiming that a new age had dawned in the human experience; a man had come out of the grave and stayed out. Death had been reversed; a new physical life in real time and space had emerged.
- D. The resurrection is at the very core of the Christian faith. We are the resurrection people; we believe in the resurrection from the dead.

¹¹ In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, ¹² buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. ¹³ And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, ¹⁴ having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. ¹⁵ Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it. Col. 2: 11-15

- E. As believers we have been brought into by our salvation the newness of life granted Christ at his resurrection.

F. Jesus staked the truth of His own claims upon His resurrection. He foretold His own death and stated that the evidence of His identity would be based upon His rising from the dead. Imagine the nerve of a religious leader declaring: “The proof of my messianic identity is in my dying and rising from the dead on the third day. I have power to lay down my life and to take it up again!”

¹⁸So the Jews answered and said to Him, “What sign do You show to us, since You do these things?”

¹⁹Jesus answered and said to them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” ²⁰Then the Jews said, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?”

²¹But He was speaking of the temple of His body. ²²Therefore, 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. (Jn. 2:18–22)

G. Many Christians think we are permanently leaving this earth to have some spiritual, ethereal, and abstract existence with God somewhere “out there” in space. I call it the “gospel of George Lucas,” but it is not the testimony of the Bible. It may be *Star Wars* but not Christianity. I do not want to become one with “the force.” The “gospel of *Star Wars*” has aided in warping and twisting our Christian thinking of eternity. God’s highest for you is not to drift through eternity in an ethereal state of existence. God is not trying to get you to escape this life, he is anchoring your life to this earth in a resurrected body!

H. Christians are not looking to escape the cycle of life. Christians are seeking to obtain an inheritance on this planet from which humanity came, with a resurrected, glorified body that will never die. God has promised to renew created order. He will create a new heaven and a new earth, where resurrected humanity will forever dwell with Him in an eternal city built by God Himself.

II. JESUS RAISED FROM THE DEAD, SEATED IN HEAVEN, RETURNING TO EARTH

A. Jesus presently is seated in heaven at the right hand of God on a throne in a glorified body. (1Cor. 15; Eph. 1-2...)

B. As believers we have the indwelling Holy Spirit but we are not in our glorified bodies. We are susceptible to sickness, disease and death. However, because we are unified in the Spirit with Christ, we have access not just to the healing power of Christ, but to the truth of his resurrected body and the power of His resurrection.

...that...you would know ¹⁹ ...what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power ²⁰ which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. Eph. 1: 17-21

⁶and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus...Eph. 2: 6

C. At his Second Coming to the earth, those in Christ who have died, will be raised from the dead and given glorified bodies—bodies like his. Those who are still alive will be given glorified bodies and we all will be with him in this state for eternity. 1Cor. 15: 51-52...*in a moment...*

III. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESURRECTION

- A. What are the implications of the belief that Jesus was really raised from the dead?
1. Jesus is the Messiah. Jn. 2: 18-22
 2. Gospel Preaching centers on resurrection. The Apostles in their preaching as witnessed by Luke in the book of Acts centers on the resurrection as the central message they are witnesses to.
 3. Empowerment for believers. The very Spirit of God lives in every believer and the Spirit fills us with resurrection power and vitality.
 4. Announces the destruction of death. Jn. 11:25-26
 5. New Creation. The resurrection signals that God's new creation has begun. The first fruits of Christ's new life in a glorified human body, signals the future advent of a new prototype of human being.
 - a. The resurrection honors the human body. Jesus is in a glorified body for all eternity. If our bodies were not valuable to God, he would not have given us one, nor promised us a glorified body like Christ's.
 6. New Fulfillment. When Jesus rises from the dead, he fulfills what the ancient Scriptures promised, but in an unexpected way.
 7. New Exodus. Those who follow Jesus constitute a new people who have been released from slavery.
 8. New political implication. Through Jesus' resurrection, the Messiah saves not just Israel, but also the entire world; and is established as its rightful ruler at this 2nd Coming. Paul taught the resurrection as an eschatological event not just spiritual or historical.