"THE BLESSINGS OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION"

A Topical Study of John's Gospel
On the Resurrection
4/16/95

INTRODUCTION: John 20:26-31

"BLESSED are they that have not seen,
and yet have believed" (v. 29)

***You are truly BLESSED, if you are a believer in the resurrected Christ!**

--How are we BLESSED by His Resurrection?

I. We are BLESSED with
An Assurance that Jesus is the Messiah and the Son of God
(John 20:31; 2:19-22)

II. We are BLESSED with
A Confidence that Jesus will raise us up from the grave
(John 6:39, 40, 44, 54; 11:25-26)

III. We are BLESSED with
An Eternal Dwelling Place Jesus has been building for us (John 14:1-2)

IV. We are BLESSED with
A Future Rapture because Jesus is coming back for us (John 14:3)

V. We are BLESSED with
An Empowerment by Jesus to do great works for God (John 14:12)

VI. We are BLESSED with
<u>Answers</u> to our prayers by Jesus Christ (John 14:13-14)

VII. We are BLESSED with
The <u>Abiding Presence</u> of Jesus Christ (John 14:18-23, 28-29)

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INTRODUCTION:

Too often we take the resurrection of Christ for granted.

Those of us who grew up in at least a nominal Christian home have heard about His resurrection from childhood, and its impact is often lost. Its importance is often not felt.

No event in history has had a greater impact on people, culture, societies, and nations as the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The French humanistic philosopher Auguste Comte once told Thomas Carlyle that He was going to start a new religion to replace Christianity. "Very good," replied Carlyle. "All you will have to do is be crucified, rise again the third day, and get the world to believe you are still alive. Then your new religion will have a chance."

It's hard to imagine what it must have been like that first "Easter" in April 33 A.D. As the dejected, down-hearted disciples learned that their Messiah who was so shamefully humiliated and crucified was now alive! What a tremendous impact that miracle had in their lives.

See: John 20:26-31

<u>Thomas</u>
(From doubter to believer in Christ)

V. 25

Thomas was an *"I've got to see it to believe it"* man. He was a "Show me" man.

Like the agnostics of today, Thomas said, "When I see it, I'll believe it. When I touch it, I'll acknowledge it."

V. 28

"My Lord" - an acknowledgement of Christ's authority.

Thomas recognized Jesus as his sovereign Master, Ruler, owner, boss, the King of his life!

"My God" - an acknowledgement of Christ's deity.

Christ's resurrection is one of the greatest proofs of His deity.

All of His claims (via His names, attributes, and powers) of deity would have been null and void without this authenticating miracle (Rom. 1:4 - *"And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."*)

"My Lord and My God" -the resurrection made a personal impact on Thomas. He personally received Christ as His very own Lord and God.

This statement *"My Lord and my God"* marks the climax of John's Gospel (cp. V. 30-31). Everything in this Gospel has been building up to this point.

The theme of the book is now declared!

NOTE: If Jesus was not "God" He (if He was righteous at all) should have rebuked Thomas for taking the name of "God" in vain (Exod. 20:7 - *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taken his name in vain.")*

V. 29

However, rather than condemning him, Jesus commends him for believing that He was Lord and God.

Jesus praises Him for finally believing. And promises a blessing on all others who believe what Thomas did.

***"<u>BLESSED</u> are they that have not seen, and yet have believed"* (v. 29)**

*You are truly <u>BLESSED</u>, if you are a believer in the resurrected Christ!

--How are we BLESSED by His Resurrection?

I. We are BLESSED with An <u>Assurance</u> that Jesus is the <u>Messiah</u> and the <u>Son of God</u>

(John 20:31; 2:19-22)

Jesus said, *"Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up. . . He spoke of the temple of His body"* (John 2:19, 21).

Jesus told His disciples that He would be delivered over to the Gentiles *"to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify: and the third day he shall rise again"* (Mt. 20:19).

If He hadn't risen, what right would we have to believe Him? He would have been a liar and certainly not the Messiah.

If Jesus had not been raised from the tomb, then He is dead.

If He is dead, then He was no more than a mere false prophet who peddled yet another false religion.

If He remained dead, He left us no solid evidence to back up His claim that He was deity and the Messiah.

If we don't have a living Savior, we don't have a living faith.

And if He is not the way to eternal life, then as Paul said, *"Our preaching [is] vain. . . your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. . .* (all dead Christians) *are perished. . . . [and] we are of all men most miserable"* (I Cor. 15:14, 17, 18, 19).

"The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the fundamental event upon which the entire Christian faith rests. . . If the resurrection of Jesus were removed from the biblical account, the Christian faith would collapse, becoming simply another man-made religion" (Charles Stanley).

II. We are BLESSED with
A Confidence that Jesus will raise us up from the grave

(John 6:39, 40, 44, 54; 11:25-26)

Jesus has power over the grave.
Ill. As a young man, D.L. Moody was called upon suddenly to preach a funeral sermon. He hunted all through the four Gospels trying to find one of Christ's funeral sermons, but searched in vain. He found that Christ broke up every funeral He ever attended. Death could not exist where He was. When the dead heard His voice they sprang to life. ex. Lazarus.

Christ's resurrection assures the believer that He too will rise again.
Ill. 400 years before the birth of Christ, Socrates, the renowned Greek Philosopher, drank the poison hemlock and lay down to die. "Shall we live again?" his friends asked. The dying philosopher could only reply. "I hope so, but no man can know"

At Lazarus' tomb Jesus said: "I am the resurrection and the life" (Jn.11:25).

Our union with Christ assures our resurrection with Him.
Read: Rom.6:8-9; Col.3:1-4.
"Christ is the firstfruits of them that slept"

The Lord Jesus by His resurrection took away Satan's power to cause a fear of death. The Bible teaches that He took upon Himself flesh and blood "that through death he might destroy him that had power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14,15).

There will be no funerals in Heaven!
"The Christian dies to live" D.L. Moody

An unresurrected Christ could not give eternal life (Rom. 6:23) to anyone.

If He did not conquer death, what hope would we have that we would? (since He is our life - Col. 3:4).

Job 19:25-27 -
"For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another: though my reins be consumed within me."

Revelation 1:17-18 -

". . . Fear not: I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

Christ is sovereign in the area of physical death.

"keys" denote: ownership, authority, control.
Christ has the right to say who goes where. He is in control. He controls when you will die.

1. Believers should not fear death or Hell.
(This is the comfort John received by the statement)

Death had its gates (Ps 9:13, 107:18; Is.38:10) But Christ has the keys to the gates.

Ill. of an emperor's limitation. The Emperor Theodosius having on a great occasion opened all the prisons and released his prisoners, is reported to have said: "and now would to God I could open all the tombs and give life to the dead"

2. Unbelievers should fear death and Hell.
(Because you don't belong to the One who is holding the keys)

The very things about Christ which should cause a believer not to fear, should cause an unbeliever to fear. The Bible says "For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life."(II Cor.2:15,16).

"Keys" (plural) Christ has double power - He either saves from Hell, or He consigns (sends) to Hell.

"Hell" = Hades: The place of the spirits of the unbelieving dead.

ILLUS: Hymn - "Because He lives, I can face tomorrow; because He lives, all fear is gone. Because I know He holds my future, and life is worth the living just because He lives!"

If it wasn't for the resurrected Christ imparting His life (Jn. 1:4, 11:25, 14:6) to us, there would be no hope for eternity. Life would begin in the womb and end in a coffin.

III. We are BLESSED with
An Eternal Dwelling Place Jesus has been building for us (John 14:1-2)

IV. We are BLESSED with

A <u>Future Rapture</u> because Jesus is coming back for us (John 14:3)

This interim time period is a time to:

*<u>wait</u> for His coming

I Th. 1:10 - "And to wit for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come."

*<u>look</u> for His coming

Titus 2:13 - "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savor Jesus Christ"

*<u>be ready</u> for His coming

Mt. 24:44 - "Therefore be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

*<u>to desire</u> His coming

Rev. 22:20 - "Even so come Lord Jesus"

Get ready for a Family Reunion!

I Thess. 4:16-17 - "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead n Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

Get ready for a New Body!

I Cor. 15:51-f - "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,..."

V. We are BLESSED with An <u>Empowerment</u> by Jesus to do great works for God (John 14:12)

VI. We are BLESSED with <u>Answers</u> to our prayers by Jesus Christ (John 14:13-14)

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Matthew 18:20 -
"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

Conclusion:

Because Jesus is alive:

1. He is in the midst of believers who assemble in His name (Mt. 18:20)

2. He is with those who carry out His Great Commission, even until the end of the Age (Mt. 28:20)

3. He is not a victim of death, rather He holds *"the keys of death and of hell"* (Rev. 1:180

4. He sovereignly controls the universe (Col. 1:17)

5. He is the Head of the church (Col. 1:18)

6. He lives inside of believers (Col. 1:27 - *"Christ in you, the hope of glory")*

7. He completes us with all spiritual blessings (Col. 2:10; Eph. 1:3)

8. He strengthens us for service (Phil. 4:13)

9. He supplies all of your needs (Phil. 4:19)

10. He gives peace to our hearts and minds (Phil. 4:7)

11. He gives gifts to His church (Eph. 4:8)

Without the resurrection, what would we believers be living for? What is our effort for? Why such church gatherings? Why evangelistic efforts? What hope do we have? What meaning is there to life?

Our labor would be vain! (I Cor. 15:58)

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