

The Motivating Power of the Resurrection
Selected Scriptures
4/17/01

Introduction:

* The Fact of Christ's Resurrection is the motivating force behind all that is done for Christ!

Christ's Resurrection gave Thomas
I. THE FAITH TO <u>BELIEVE</u> (John 20:24-29)

Christ's Resurrection gave The Emmaus Disciples
II. THE POWER TO <u>LIVE</u> (Luke 24:13-35)

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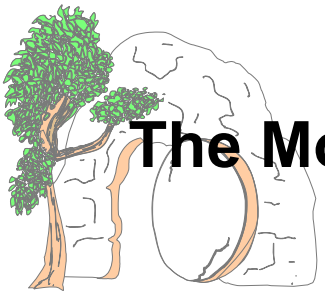

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Introduction:

READ I Cor. 15:1-4

The resurrection is an essential element of the Gospel.

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. To many the resurrection is nothing but a holiday we celebrate in April of each year.

There are many proofs of Christ's Resurrection given in Scripture such as:

1.	The FACT of His BURIAL	Matthew 27:57-61
2.	The GUARDING of His TOMB	27:62-66
3.	The TESTIMONY of an ANGEL	28:1-8
4.	The PHYSICAL APPEARANCE of CHRIST	28:9-10
5.	The BRIBE of the JEWS	28:11-15

Other proofs of Christ's resurrection:

6. The grave clothes were left behind (Jn. 20:5-7)
   (If Christ's body had been stolen, there is no way they would have wasted the time to unwrap Him)

But the most profound evidence would be the effect the resurrection had on Christ's followers

7. The cowardly disciples were transformed and turned the world right side up for Christ (Acts 17:6) and were even willing to all die as martyrs for their faith
   Jesus is transforming people today, as He has for nearly 2,000 years
   Hymn: "You ask me how I know He lives, He lives within my heart"

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.

*** The Fact of Christ's Resurrection is the motivating force behind all that is done for Christ!**

Christ's Resurrection gave Thomas

I. THE FAITH TO **BELIEVE** (John 20:24-29)

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.

Christ's Resurrection gave The Emmaus Disciples

II. THE POWER TO <u>LIVE</u> (Luke 24:13-35)

Have you ever had an experience in which you thought everything would work out perfectly (nothing could possibly go wrong) only to find your plans come crashing down through an unexpected and disappointing turn of events?

V. 17

Jesus knew why they were sad, but He wanted them to do an internal inspection.

V. 18

These two were evidently husband and wife (cp. Jn. 19:25).

Cleopas would have been the brother-in-law of the Virgin Mary (Jn. 19:25 - *"Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother,a nd his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene."*

V. 19

"a prophet and mighty" - They hadn't come to a full recognition of His deity.

V. 21

"Hope deferred maketh the heart sick" (Prov. 13:12).

Their hopes and dreams were shattered - Everything that seems to be going so well had fallen apart in a few short days.

(Their words revealed hopes that were dead and buried)

--Like many Jews of their day they longed for a Messiah.

--In their eyes, this "Son of David" would break the despised Roman yoke of oppression.

--When Jesus appeared, performing wonders and proclaiming a "kingdom," they were sure they had found the Deliverer of their dreams.

--But when the time had arrived, when they were sure Jesus would lead a revolt, their hopes were crushed by His arrest, trial, and shameful crucifixion.

What was the problem? Did Christ fail? Or did the Jews have a wrong expectation??

V. 25

"Fools" - senseless ones, without understanding
"Slow of heart" - sluggish
"To believe" - to trust upon - total dependence upon all

Examples of how people today pick and choose what they want to believe (spiritualize, rationalize, explain away, misapply) -- yet all of Scripture is inspired. . . not one jot or tittle will fail.

The same Scriptures that spoke about a glorious Messiah also spoke about a suffering Messiah.

I Pet. 1:10-11 - *"Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."*

First coming - Lamb Second coming - Lion

EX: Ps. 22, Is. 53, Zech. 9:9
Psalm 16:10 - *"For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell (sheol = grave) neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."*

V. 27

Fulfilled prophecy - In O.T. there were some 300 distinct prophecies of Christ that lay like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. Jesus came and put them all together.

The Master-Teacher began a Bible study that must have been a marvel to hear. If I could get a "Time Machine" and be transported to anyplace in history, it would be to join in this instruction of Scripture from the One who had authored it.

V. 29

They were so fascinated with Christ's exegesis that they invited Him to their house.

V. 32

"Heartburn" - word = quick and powerful. Cp. John's vision in Rev. 1:14 - *"His eyes were as a flame of fire"* (piercing)

The living Christ can life your discouragement and set your heart ablaze if you will let Him speak to you via His Word.

Christ's Resurrection gave Peter

III. THE BOLDNESS TO PREACH

(Matthew 26:33-35; 69-75; Acts 4:2; 7-13, 19-20, 29-31)

Matthew 26:33-35 - Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee.
Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended. Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples.

Scripture records for us one of the most dramatic "turn arounds" in a person's life. Contrast Peter's Denial of Christ before Christ's resurrection (Mt. 26:69-75) with Peter's Bold life and witness for Christ after

Matthew 26:69
"Peter sat without" - He who gave his word to go "with" Jesus (v. 35) even to death is now outside ("without") (at a distance).

V. 70-74
With each denial Peter gets more specific and serious:

"I know not what thou sayest" (v. 70)
"I do not know the man" (v. 72)
"Then began he to curse and to swear saying, I know not the man" (v. 74)

Matthew 26:74
When Peter had denied the Lord for the third time, "the Lord turned and looked upon Peter" (Lk. 22:61).

Peter and Jesus locked eyes, and this triggered Peter's remembrance of Christ's words about a "thrice" denial.

Can you imagine the gripping emotion the Lord felt as He turned to look at Peter as he even swore that he didn't know who Jesus was!

"The look must have penetrated the disciple's very soul, burning deep into his heart and conscience the evil of his sin. Seeing his Lord standing there with His hands bound and His face covered with spit and bruises was more than Peter could bear" (MacArthur, p. 218).

V. 75
"And he went out and wept bitterly" - He wept because he knew the Lord knew what he had done. He, because of fear and intimidation, had lied about his relationship to Christ. The tears, however, reveal that Peter really loved Christ. Therefore, Peter will not be in the list of the doomed whose life was characterized as being "fearful" (Rev. 21:8).

Jesus had said: "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." (Mt. 10:32, 33).

On Resurrection Sunday some women went to the tomb to anoint the body of Jesus (questioning how they would move the stone) and were addressed by an angel who said:
And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him.
But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you. (Mark 16:6-7)

Peter would be "converted" from His fear (Lk. 22:32) and become one of the mightiest preachers for Christ (Acts 4:13).

See Acts 4 for the Power of Peter's Preaching

Acts 4:2; 7-13, 19-20, 29-31

Acts 5:40-42 - And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.

Peter would eventually die as a martyr for the Lord he loved.
"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry [thee] whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me" (John 21:18-19).

Christ's Resurrection gave Paul

IV. THE EAGERNESS TO <u>SERVE</u> (Acts 20:1-23)

V. 10

"when they were put to death" - EX: Stephen (Acts 7:59-8:1)

I'm sure Saul's mind never forgot Stephen's testimony of having seen the resurrected Christ (Acts 7:55-56)

Saul of Tarsus was so convinced that Jesus was not alive, that He was a hoax, that He was a liar and lunatic and not Lord, that Saul without conscience severely tormented and persecuted Christ's followers, thinking all along that he was doing God service.

But then he met the resurrected Christ! (v. 13-15) ***"Last of all"*** Christ appeared to Paul (I Cor. 15:8)

It is clear from the Scriptural record that no one (no apostle) labored more for Christ than Paul did (I Cor. 15:10). No one planted more churches or perhaps no one won more souls; no one discipled more converts; or had such a dramatic change as Saul of Tarsus! (Gal. 1:23)

Why? Because he came to a full realization that Jesus lived. . . and that Jesus lived in him!

Gal. 2:20 - *"I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I but Christ liveth in me, and the life that I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."*

Christ's Resurrection gave Paul

V. THE PATIENCE TO <u>SUFFER</u> (I Cor. 15:30-32)

1 Cor. 15:30-32

And why stand we in jeopardy every hour? [31] I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily. [32] If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die.

Christ's Resurrection gave Stephen

VI. THE WILLINGNESS TO <u>DIE</u> (Acts 7:54-60)

CONCLUSION:

The resurrection is vitally important because Christ does not merely give us life, He is our life!

(Col. 3:4; cp. Gal. 2:20 - "Christ liveth in me.")

Jesus said: "I am the . . . life" (Jn. 14:6).

He proclaimed, "I am the resurrection and the life" (Jn. 11:25).

John testified, "In Him was life (Jn. 1:4); "...We are in him that is true, even in His son, Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life." (I Jn. 5:20).

WHAT IF CHRIST NEVER AROSE?
I Corinthians 15:12-23

We will gain a greater appreciation for His resurrection when we consider what our life would be like if He never arose.

If Christ never arose, there would be:

I. No Substance to Our Faith (v. 14)
II. No Truth to Our Message (v. 15)
III. No Forgiveness of Our Sins (v. 17)
IV. No Hope for Our Future (v. 18)
V. No Purpose to Our Life (v. 19)

Because we serve a living Savior (I Cor. 15:1-57), our *"labor is not in vain!"*

Because Jesus Christ is alive:

- He is interceding on behalf of those who belong to Him
  Romans 8:34 *Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*
  Hebrews 7:25 *Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.*

- He is in the midst of believers who assemble in His name
  Matthew 18:20 - *For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.*

- He is with those who carry out His Great Commission, even until the end of the Age
  Matthew 28:20 - *I am with you alway, even* unto the end of the world. Amen.

- He is not a victim of death, rather He holds "the keys" of death and of Hell
  Revelation 1:18 - *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

- He sovereignly controls the universe
  Colossians 1:17 - *And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.*

- He is the Head of the Church
  Colossians 1:18 - *And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things* he might have the preeminence.

- He lives inside of believers
  Colossians 1:27 -Christ in you, the hope of glory

- He completes us with all spiritual blessings
  Colossians 2:10 -*And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:*
  Ephesians 1:3 -*Blessed be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ

- He strenthens us for service
  Philippians 4:13 - *I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me*

- He supplies all of your needs
  Philippians 4:19 - *But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

- He gives peace to our hearts and minds
  Philippians 4:7 - *And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus*

- He gives gifts to His Church
  Ephesians 4:8 -*Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.*

- He saves all who call upon Him
  Romans 10:13 -*For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*