

Christian Study

Lesson 268

Be Light

Focusing on Church beyond Sunday

A Closer Look at "The Resurrection"

Many of us believers at least think we understand the meaning of the cross, but when it comes to the meaning of the resurrection, our minds draw a blank. Somehow, we overlook the obvious. Resurrection is the restoration of life. Jesus Christ was raised from the dead so that we may have life. The good news of the gospel is not just that Christ came to die for you, but that He came to live in you. He did not come just to get men out of hell into heaven; He came to get Himself out of Heaven and into us. "To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." **Colossians 1:27** A pastor once said, "Christ did not come to make bad people good He came to make dead people live."

If you were to ask a group of Christians, "What does it mean to be saved?" most would answer something like this. Jesus died for the forgiveness of my sins, so there is a place for me in heaven when I die." While this answer is not wrong, it is incomplete. Jesus said. "I have come that they might have life, and have it to the full." **John 10:10**. What kind of person needs life? someone who is dead. The problem of mankind in the sight of God is not just that we are sinners in need of forgiveness; it is that we are dead and in need of life, we are born into this world dead spiritually, separated from the life of God.

The solution to this dilemma can be best understood through the closer look at **Romans 5:1**. "If, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to Him through the death of His Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved by His life?" There is no more important fact in the Christian experience than the profound truth that Christ lives in you and I. Misunderstanding this spiritual truth enslaves many Christians to the impossible task of trying to live the Christian life. The inevitable failure of such attempts brings them to the practical conclusion that Christianity does not work. This lack of

emphasis on the living Christ may explain why there is such a great contrast between the church of Christ today and the church in the first century. In J.B. Philips' introduction to *Letters to Young Churches* he states:

"The great difference between present day Christianity and that which we read in these letters (New Testament Epistles) is that, to us it is primarily a preference; but to them, it was a real experience. We are apt to reduce the Christian religion to a code or at best a rule of heart and life. To these men it is quite plainly the invasion of their lives by a new quality of life altogether. They do not hesitate to describe this as Christ living in them."

Time and time again I speak with people from all works-of-life and I hear individuals whose lives are torn apart although they are absolutely confident they are going to Heaven when they die. "I accepted Christ as my Lord and savior when I was 12 years old," they often say. What they mean is; "I accepted Christ for what He did for me on the cross." However, when I ask if they understand the living Christ Himself in them, there is dead silence. In spite of years of failure to experience the abundant life that Jesus provided, these people still declare, "I will live the Christian life if it kills me." To this I reply, "You can be sure it will." Many of us simply have not come to grips with the truth that it is not hard to live the Christian life...it is impossible apart from Christ. It is this very reason the Jesus made this plea in **Matthew 11:28-30** "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.³⁰ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

We are told in **2 Peter 1:3** that "His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of Him who has called us by His own glory and goodness." Paul wrote as well, "Praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. The problem with most of us is that we are not aware of the incredible riches that we already have in Christ. I would like to share some of the biblical truths that will set us free as we grow in the knowledge of "Christ in you, the hops of glory."

Salvation Covers Two Issues

If I may use an unusual illustration, let us suppose that a man has died of a disease. If you had the power to restore the man, how many problems would you have to cure? The answer is TWO. You would have to raise him to life (the cure for death), but you would also have to deal with the disease that killed him. Look at it this way: would it make sense to cure his

disease if you could not raise him to life? No, you would just have a healthy dead man" as a result. On the other hand, would it make sense to raise him to life if you could not cure his diseases? No, because the diseases would only kill him again. You could only truly restore the man by curing both problems.

In the same way, for mankind to be saved spiritually, there were two issues that God had to address: first, man's state of guilt through sin (the diseases); second, the wages of sin, man's spiritual state of death (the result of the diseases). Unless both of these issues were dealt with, mankind could not be totally saved. To deal with the sin issue alone would leave mankind nothing more than a race of forgiven dead men. On the other hand, to raise people from the dead spiritually without putting away their sins once and for all (curing the diseases) would doom them to dying again the first time they sinned, for "the wages of sin is death." **Romans 6:23**. The result would be what I call "Dracula theology": a person's existence would go back and forth, dead, then alive, dead, then alive, over and over. Never could he possess what the Bible calls eternal life.

It is only as we hold the knowledge of both these issues that the New Testament will make sense to us. As strange as it is to our ears the first time we hear it, it is biblically true that we are not saved by the death of Christ. **We are saved by the life of Christ**. That is why **Romans 5:10** says, "For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!"

The Ministry of the Holy Spirit

We have learned that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead to give us life, but how is this life imparted to us? To answer this important question, let us take a closer look at the ministry of the Holy Spirit

Who is the Holy Spirit?

Key Verse: Acts 5:3-4 "Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? Didn't it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn't the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied to men but to God."

According to the above passage, the Holy Spirit is a person, the third person of the Trinity, co-equal with God the father and God the Son. The Holy Spirit is God. Let us read

how the Trinity is declared by the Apostle Paul in **2 Corinthians 13:14** "May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all." An egg provides a good example of a trinity in life. It consists of a yolk, a white, and a shell. All three together make up the egg. If you separate them, they are still egg white, egg yolk and egg shell. Some wise professor once said, "Anyone who denies the Trinity will lose his soul, and anyone who tries to understand the Trinity will lose his mind." The Bible declares that The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. Our finite minds cannot understand all that is involved in the mysteries of God. In light of the evidence however, we only have two options, either the Bible in contradicting itself, or the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are each uniquely God. We must conclude therefore that the sum total of the three equals the one ($1 \times 1 \times 1=1$, not $1 + 1 + 1=3$).

Why did the Holy Spirit Come?

"But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.**8** When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment: **9** in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me; **10** in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer;**11** and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned. **12** "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear.**13** But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. **14** He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you."**John 16:7-14**

The ministry of the Holy Spirit is God's method of enabling the resurrected Christ to live His life in and through us. It is through the Holy Spirit that God imparts His very life to those who believe in His Son.

NOTE

We are pleased to tell you that we have started a blog site where you can read some more teaching and better yet be able to write your comments, share your experience on the topics and pass it on to your friends and family. Go to www.freedombasic.com to read our blog.

It is no secret, what God can do. What He's done for others, He'll do for you.

Our mission is to help people find strength and security on the foundation that can never be shaken, cracked or shattered. This foundation is the remarkable truth of God's unconditional love and His indisputable grace experienced in a relationship with Jesus Christ. The critics of Christianity have launched a full attack to discredit the person and works of Jesus Christ and the reliability of His word. We cannot be silent anymore. Let us as children of light, stand firm in the faith, because He who has taken us this far will never forsake us. You are called Christians, be careful of that name. Let not our Lord Jesus Christ be blasphemed on your account

Believe this, "Jesus did not come to make bad people good, He came to make dead people live."

Keep It Simple

Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so.

If you have any questions, comments or you know anybody else who will benefit from this study please feel free to give us their email address and they will be added to our mailing list to receive weekly lessons. The email address is santigiemando1@yahoo.com,

Remember: A candle loses nothing by lighting another candle (Ephesians 5:8)

Let's go light another candle!