

Sunday, April 4, 2021 am

## REMEMBERING THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS

Today is a special day for many in the religious world. It is a day referred to as Easter. To the Jews, this day is associated with the Passover, a commemoration of their deliverance from Egypt. To Catholics and much of the denominational world, this day is a celebration of our Lord's resurrection.

However, as you study the Bible, you will find that this observance is NOT found in its pages. Nowhere do we read of a special Sunday being set apart for celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Also, a study of church history will reveal that while this holiday was one of the earliest observed, it was not officially recognized until the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D. The Catholic season of Lent, was not fixed until the 8<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

Today is a special day for us as well. It is special in that we are assembled here today as we do every Sunday. This worship service is NO different from any other Sunday service to God. We must constantly remind ourselves that we are here to worship GOD in Spirit and in truth (John 4:24) and not to please the whims of man. He is a jealous God who demands that we worship Him according to His pattern.

Having said all this, we are not saying that the resurrection is not important or that we do not remember the resurrection, because WE DO. In fact, much of what we do is a testament to the resurrection of the Lord. Let us consider some ways we remember the resurrection. We remember it:

### I. As we read of it in the Bible

- a. All 4 gospels record the resurrection of our Lord on the first day of the week. Mathew, Mark and Luke all devote the last chapter to the resurrection of the Lord. John 20 & 21 records the account giving numerous appearances that our Lord made.
- b. 1 Corinthians 15 is a discourse of Paul appealing to the significance of the resurrection in our lives as Christians. In vs. 3-8, he notes several appearances that Jesus made after He arose.
- c. As you read the book of Acts you find it as a recurring theme in the preaching of Peter & Paul. It was preached on Pentecost in Acts 2:23-33 by Peter. Acts 4:2, the temple leaders were disturbed that the resurrection was being taught. Acts 4:10 – Paul noted they crucified Jesus, but “God raised (Him) from the dead.” Acts 10:38-43 - It was preached to Cornelius, the first Gentile convert.
- d. Truly, if we believe the Bible to be true, we MUST accept the resurrection of our Lord.

### II. In Becoming Christians

- a. Our hope of salvation is found in the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. That is why it was so emphasized in the preaching of the apostles.
- b. The very act of obeying the gospel centers on the resurrection. Hebrews 5:8-9 speaks of the example of Jesus learning obedience (a reference that culminated in His death and resurrection) and He becoming “the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him”  
We must believe – Romans 10:9 says, “*that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.*”  
We must repent – the idea of repentance involves making Jesus your Lord and master. This is an indication of your belief that He still lives. We are serving a risen Savior rather than One who *used to* live.  
Acts 2:38, having just concluded a lesson dealing heavily with the resurrection Peter calls for repentance if their sins are to be forgiven.  
Acts 17:30-31 – where Paul told the Athenians to repent and noted, “He has given

assurance of this by raising Him from the dead.

We must confess Him – Romans 10:9-10 – again leading to salvation.

We must be baptized - Note Romans 6:3-6 which compares our baptism to Christ dying and being raised from the dead. In like manner, we are “raised to walk in newness of life.”

Colossians 2:12 also says, “*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.*”

- c. As one obeys the gospel, he does so understanding the importance of the resurrection.

### III. **As we partake of the Lord’s Supper**

- a. For many, today is one of a few occasions each year that they partake of the Lord’s Supper.  
b. But it is something we do EACH first day of the week following the example of Acts 20:7.  
c. This memorial is a remembrance of His death and resurrection.  
As He instituted the Lord’s Supper in Matthew 26:26-29 Jesus broke bread which symbolized His body and fruit of the vine which represented His blood. It was instituted to commemorate His death. NOTE vs. 29 where Jesus states that this would be something He would drink with His disciples, “*when I drink it new with you in My Father’s kingdom.*” This is an indication that it would be observed AFTER He arose from the dead.  
d. Note that it was His resurrection that made His death so great unto us.  
Consider 1 Corinthians 15:12-17 where Paul is appealing to the resurrection. There he notes that if Christ is not risen, “*your faith is futile; you are still in your sins.*” So as we partake of the Lord’s Supper or ANYTHING we do in which we remember His death, we ALSO remember His resurrection. Where our faith is concerned, they CANNOT be separated.

### IV. **As we ponder our home in heaven**

- a. Everyone here wants to go to heaven when this life is over. What gives us that hope? Why is it that when we attend a funeral of one of our own, we have hope? It is the resurrection of our Lord. Why are we here today? Why do faithfully serve God and give up the ways of the world? Why are we willing to sacrifice, endure temptations and possibly persecutions? It is our hope of heaven after this life.  
b. Again, 1 Corinthians 15:18-19, Paul notes that if in this life only we have hope, we are of all men most pitiable.  
c. Often as we read of hope, it is founded in the resurrection.  
Philippians 3:10-11 – Paul’s walked away from it all because of this hope.  
1 Peter 1:3 – begotten again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.  
1 Thessalonians 4:13-14 speaking of the resurrection Paul says we have hope  
d. We know that there is something better waiting on the other side.  
1 Corinthians 15:50-54 speaks of our bodies changing and putting on an incorruptible body.

### V. **Our prayers to God are offered though our living Savior –**

- a. Even in our prayers to God, there is faith in the resurrection of our Lord.  
b. Proper prayers are offered through Jesus Christ to God the Father.  
Ephesians 2:18 says, “For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.”  
Also 1 Timothy 2:5-6 which describes our Lord as our Mediator. Note how he IS our Mediator though he GAVE himself for us.  
c. Hebrews 7:24-25, in appealing to the priesthood of Jesus in contrast to that of the Levites, the writer notes that He continues forever, unchangeable, and **He always lives** to make intercession for us.  
d. We are told in Romans 8:34 that Christ is risen, sits at the right hand of God and intercedes for us.

### VI. **But why do we believe in the resurrection?**

- a. While this is a multi-faceted question that deserves to be developed at each point, let plainly summarize WHY I believe in the resurrection.  
b. I believe Jesus arose from the grave because:  
i. I believe the Bible is the word of God – a book that has proven to be reliable, accurate and inerrant, which speaks of Jesus rising from the dead. There is plenty of evidence to verify why we should accept the Bible as the word of God.

- ii. Of the multitude of witnesses that saw Him after He arose (1 Corinthians 15:3-9)
- iii. Of multiple witnesses that spoke about His resurrection (e.g. the 4 gospels & Paul)
- iv. Of the conversion of Paul, an enemy of Jesus, until he saw Him on the road to Damascus and became His strongest advocate (Acts 9). Much like that of many skeptics who set out to disprove the Bible and their honest inquiry leads them to accept Him.
- v. Of the conversion of James, the brother of Jesus – a skeptic while Jesus was alive (Galatians 1:19, cf. John 7:5, 1 Corinthians 9:5)
- vi. Because of the unwavering faith of first century Christians, being willing to lose everything, suffer and even die because they believed Jesus arose. You do not die for lie.  
Consider the apostles and first disciples, who boldly taught, “HE AROSE!” and paid the price for it. And yet we do not have EVEN ONE account of anyone recanting what they saw and believed.
- vii. A conclusive argument against why the tomb was empty has not been made.
- viii. Of the impact that Christianity (following the teachings of Christ truthfully) has had on the world since Jesus came to this earth, and even to this day.

Thus we can see the resurrection of our Lord is something to be remembered. And I am glad that many do pause at this time of year to remember our risen Lord. But I want to encourage us to remember Him as we are called upon to do in scripture. Let us remember this important event in the life of our Lord, not just this day, but every day and every week as we assemble together and in all we do to serve Him. How are you remembering His resurrection? Think about it!