

The Power Of His Rising

Text : **I Corinthians 15: 1-20**

INTRODUCTION :

- A. Have you noticed that a lot of religious people get all excited over things that don't seem to amount to much ?
 1. Back in the 60s I visited a congregation which had a deacon at the door to enforce their dress code.
 - a. He insured girls dresses came down to their knees.
 - b. No boy was allowed in whose hair touched his collar.
 - c. Christians are to be modest, but that was ridiculous, even for the 60s.
 2. Yet today, brethren still get all excited (*even cause divisions*) over silly little things.
 - a. How the communion is distributed
 - b. How the money is collected and spent
 - c. How the building is used ... *and many more equally trivial things.*
 3. What a shame !
 - a. Some want to reduce Christianity to a set of rules so they can feel approved.
 - b. Some brethren want to please God but are so afraid of making a mistake that they lose the joy and the peace of being in Christ. (cf – **I John 4: 18**)
 - c. **How sad** not to feel accepted by God or at peace with Him.
- B. This has been a problem from the time of the Jews until now. (*natural man*)
 1. **Matt. 23: 23-** Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others.
 2. People have always had a tendency to want a standard whereby they can compare themselves to others.
 - a. “*Look how good I am because I keep all the rules, do YOU keep them like me?*”
 - b. The brethren at Corinth had this problem. They were competed with each other.
II Cor. 10: 12- For we are not bold to class or compare ourselves with some of those who commend themselves; but when they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are without understanding.
 3. THE POINT IS : *We must be very careful not to slip into majoring in minors.*

Our lesson this morning will discuss one of the major doctrines of the Christian religion. We will discuss the resurrection of Jesus the Christ.

I. Jesus preached His resurrection from the beginning of His ministry until the end.

A. The first time He went to Jerusalem for the Passover feast He preached it.

1. This trip came right after His first miracle, turning water to wine. (**John 2: 1-12**)
2. Summarize ... **John 2: 13-12**
 - a. Merchants and moneychangers had set up shop in the temple.
 - b. They started as a convenience, but had become a corrupt project of the High priest.
 - c. Jesus ran them out of the temple by force. (*Today coffee shops, book stores, etc.*)
3. Those in charge wanted proof that he had God's authority to do what he had done.
John 2: 18-22 The Jews then said to Him, "What sign do You show us as your authority for doing these things?" ¹⁹ Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." ²⁰ The Jews then said, "It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" ²¹ But He was speaking of the temple of His body. ²² So when He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken.

B. He continued teaching his disciples about His forthcoming death and resurrection.

1. **John 10: 17-18** For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. ¹⁸ No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father.
2. It was important for His disciple (*and for us*) to know that the events which were about to take place were the plan of God, *not out of His control*.

C. Jesus was teaching His disciples about His resurrection on the way to His death.

1. **Mark 9: 31-32** For He was teaching His disciples and telling them, "The Son of Man is to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill Him; and when He has been killed, He will rise three days later."
2. The death and resurrection of Christ was NOT just a murder, *it was the plan of God*.
 - a. **John 12** ... Praying in the garden Jesus said. "for this purpose I came to this hour."
 - b. **Acts 2: 23** ... Peter proclaimed, "This Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. "

II. The resurrection was at the core of the Apostles preaching.

- A. The very first gospel sermon ever preached was about the resurrection. Speaking of the prophet David, Peter proclaimed :

Act. 2: 30-31 And so, because he was a prophet and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath to seat one of his descendants on his throne, ³¹ he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that He was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh suffer decay. ³² This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses.

B. Peter's second sermon was much the same as his first; he continued proclaiming the resurrection.

Act. 3: 18- but put to death the Prince of life, *the one* whom God raised from the dead, *a fact* to which we are witnesses.

26- For you first, God raised up His Servant and sent Him to bless you by turning every one of you from your wicked ways.

C. Multitudes obeyed as a result of their teaching, and the leaders tried to stop them.

1. **Act. 4: 1-2** As they were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to them, ² being greatly disturbed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.
2. **Act. 4: 4-** (*result*) But many of those who had heard the message believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.
3. After being threatened and released, they prayed for power to preach unafraid.
Act. 4: 28- And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that Your bond-servants may speak Your word with all confidence,
4. They kept reinforcing the doctrine of the resurrection to the brethren.
Act. 4: 33- And with great power the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all.
5. When arrested again, they preached the resurrection to those who arrested them.
Act. 5: 30-31 The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you had put to death by hanging Him on a cross. ³¹ He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. (cf.— **4: 10**)

** Pray that we will each have the courage to proclaim the resurrection of our Lord.*

D. The resurrection was also the cornerstone of Apostle Paul's preaching.

1. **Act. 17: 18-** And also some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers were conversing with him. Some were saying, "What would this idle babbler wish to say?" Others, "He seems to be a proclaimer of strange deities,"—because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection. (*at Athens*)
2. **I Cor. 15: 1-5** Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, ² by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. ³ For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ and that He was buried, and that He

was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, ⁵ and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.

III. The resurrection is the core message of the gospel. (*It is major, not a garden herb.*)

A. The resurrection is that which sets us apart from ALL other religions.

1. Buddha was cremated and his ashes buried in eight different places. (*stupas -umbrella*)
2. Millions of Muslim pilgrims visit the tomb of Mohammed every year.
3. Only Christians worship a risen Savior.

B. Without the resurrection of Jesus, nothing else matters.

1. Jesus prophesied of His forthcoming Resurrection.
 - a. **Jer. 28:9** ... ONLY a prophet whose words come true has been sent from God.
 - b. If Jesus is not a true prophet, He can save no one. (cf.— **Deut. 18: 22**)
2. If Jesus is not risen, He does not have the power to save any one.
 - a. The chide of the Jews is true (**Luke 23: 35**),
if Jesus cannot save Himself, He cannot save anyone.
 - b. **I Cor. 15: 17-** and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless;
you are still in your sins.
3. It was the resurrection that proved Jesus to be who He claimed to be — **GOD**.
Rom. 1: 4- who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection
from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord,

C. Without the resurrection of Jesus, there is no resurrection for you.

1. **I Cor. 15: 18-19** Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.
¹⁹ If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men
most to be pitied. (Cf. — **Rom. 8: 9-11** , **II Cor. 4: 14**)
2. If Christ is not risen, when we die, we'll be
“*like the old dog Rover, Dead all over.*”

D. Jesus can only keep saved people saved IF He is risen and ascended.

Heb. 7: 25- Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

IV. Jesus was raised so He could be Lord of our lives. (**Col 3:1-4**)

A. When Jesus came forth from the graves, He came forth as our Lord.

1. **Eph. 1: 19b-23** ... These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might ²⁰ which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the

heavenly places, ²¹ far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. ²² And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, ²³ which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

2. His rule is permeated upon His resurrection. (*He could not rule from the grave.*)
3. Therefore, to deny His rule is to deny He is the risen Lord and vice versa.
 - a. If He is risen, He is undeniably God. (*Only God has the power to give life.*)
 - b. If one does not yield to His rule, he denies that Jesus is God.

B. Each one must individually surrender himself to the rule of Christ.

1. Millions celebrate His resurrection as an historic event,
BUT that is not a sufficient response. (*Move us as it did Thomas .. John 20:28*)
2. His resurrection demands that we recognize Jesus as both Lord and Christ.
3. It is not about knowing the fact, but about accepting the person.

** If Jesus is your co-pilot, switch seats.
He will NEVER sit in the second seat
and He will never share His throne.*

C. Many try to disprove and reject the bodily resurrection of Jesus.

1. Detractors propose many theories attempting to explain away the resurrection :
 - a. Muslims say the crucifixion was an illusion; that Jesus ascended to Heaven alive.
 - b. Some say He was crucified, but that He did not really die. (*Swoon theory*)
 - c. Others still propagate the lie of the Pharisees, that His disciples stole the body.
 - d. One cult teaches that His resurrection was just a spiritual resurrection.
 - e. A few go so far as to say the women didn't find His body because they looked in the wrong tomb.
2. The resurrection of Jesus is an established historical fact. (*Same way as all history*)
 - a. The tomb was indeed empty. (*observed & reported*)
 - b. His enemies tried to find His body and disprove His resurrection.
 - c. People that He knew intimately touched Him and ate with Him after He arose.
 - d. He was seen by over 500 witnesses all at one time.
 - e. His Apostles and many disciples died at the hands of persecutors for advocating His resurrection. *They would not have ALL died for a lie.*

CONCLUSION :

A. All will eventually be humbled before Him.

1. The resurrection proved Jesus to be a true prophet.
2. The resurrection also proved Him to be God.
3. **Therefore**, we can trust that everything He promised will come to pass.
 - a. He will return in judgment just as He said He would.
 - b. As He arose, **ALL mankind will arise from the grave.** (cf. – **John 5: 25-29**)
 - c. He will divide the sheep from the goats.
4. When He returns, there will be NO skeptics.
 - a. **Phil. 2: 9-11** For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
 - b. **Rev. 1: 7-** Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be.
^{17b} ... Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, ¹⁸ and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore and, I have the keys of death and of Hades. (cf. – **John 5: 21**)

B. Jesus wants to be your savior.

1. When He came forth from the grave He proved His ability to save you.
2. He implores you to accept Him by faith and become His servant.

C. One day you will see Him coming in the clouds.

1. Will you welcome Him as your savior or fear Him as your judge ?
2. You must make that decision now because when you see Him it will be too late.

INVITATION :

Lesson Text:

I Cor. 15: 1- 15

1 Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, **2** by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.

3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,

4 and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, 5 and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. 6 After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep; 7 then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles; 8 and last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also. 9 For I am the least of the apostles, and not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me. 11 Whether then *it* was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

12 Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13 But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised; 14 and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain. 15 Moreover we are even found *to be* false witnesses of God, because we testified against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised. 16 For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised; 17 and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins. 18 Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. 19 If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.

20 But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep.

Just a couple thoughts on Easter for your consideration :

Many modern religious practices came to us as a result of the ancient Roman church's policy of syncretism. Syncretism is the practice of giving a "Christian significance" to pre-established cultural practices such as festivals to pagan deities. When something was so engrained in the culture as to be difficult to prevent Christians from practicing it, they gave up trying to compete with it. Instead, they just changed its meaning to something associated with Christianity. The celebration of Easter is one such accommodation to culture. Note the following article from the Internet : (*Further comments after the article*)

Why Do We Celebrate?

Many people celebrate Easter every year. But did you ever stop to think about how or why we started doing this? In these modern times you are taught that Easter celebrates the resurrection of Jesus. But it actually pre-dates that.



How It All Began

Easter is derived from the name Eastre (Eostre), who is the Teutonic Goddess of Spring. Her sacred animal is a hare.

Using eggs as part of the Easter celebration comes from something even more ancient than the name. Eggs have been symbols of rebirth and fertility for so long the roots of the tradition are now unknown. Some say it dates back to the beginning of human civilization. Ancient Romans and Greeks used eggs as symbols of fertility, rebirth, and abundance. Eggs were solar symbols and figured in festivals of numerous resurrected Gods.

Pagan fertility festivals during the Spring equinox were common. The hare is often associated with the moon goddesses, the egg and hare together represent the God and Goddess respectively.

So how did these Pagan symbols become entwined with the Christian holiday of Easter? When the Christian Church was first trying to convert the Pagans to Christianity, they ran into problems. The Pagans did not want to give up their festivals as well as their gods, so the Christians simply incorporated some Pagan practices into the Christian festivals. This made Christianity more palatable to the Pagan people who were reluctant to give up their festivals for the more somber Christian practices.

But how did the rabbit who lays eggs come into practice you ask? 1500 years or so after the incorporation, the Germans had a tradition of their own. A rabbit, called Oschter Haws, layed colored eggs in nests and delighted children who then got to 'find' the eggs. This was introduced to America by German settlers in Pennsylvania.

In these modern times, you can buy chocolate representations of rabbits and eggs. While some still hold to old traditions and color eggs by hand, those who do not have the time or inclination can simply go to the store and buy candy, pre-dyed eggs, and other goodies. Ducks, chickens and rabbits are also highly popular choices for children's gift baskets on Easter morning.

(From ... <http://www.squidoo.com/OriginOfEaster>)

Regardless of the origin of any practice, we understand that each person determines within his own heart what is the significance of that practice to him. This is why Christians are admonished to "examine" themselves before

partaking of the Lord's supper. Partaking of it is but an empty ritual unless we individually place the proper emphasis upon it. (I Cor. 11: 27-32) Being free in Christ, God gives the Christian the liberty to observe special days to God's glory even though their observance is not commanded. (Rom. 14: 5-6 and context) However, as others observe our observance or lack thereof they also make a determination in their heart about us. Our conduct can draw others closer to our Lord or repulse them from Him. Thus, the Christian must always be mindful of the affect his practices or lack thereof are having on others.

In regards to the Easter holiday, surely no one can deny that it is admirable to remember the resurrection of our Lord; we do so every Sunday as we commune with Him, but the observance of an annual holiday which was established by men is a matter for each person's conscience. Each Christian must ask himself, "Will those who observe me associate my actions with a pagan goddess or with Christ? If I do not observe Easter, will the people of the world think I have no faith in the resurrection of Christ ?" To this the Lord said, "The faith which you have, have as your own conviction before God. Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves." (Romans 14: 22)

How Many Time Do I have To Tell You ?

"How many times do I have to tell you?! How many times?" I guess every parent has said this at some time or another, in part because every parent had heard it from their parents. Parents tell their children over and over to pick up their clothes or to shut the door or to put their dishes in the sink. Yet, for some reason their words just don't seem to make it from the kids' ears to their brains. As a result, their behavior isn't changed.

So, we shouldn't be surprised when we read that the women and disciples, upon reaching Jesus' tomb, were shocked to find it empty (*Luke 24:1-12*). They wept and wondered at what had happened to the body of Jesus, but they didn't remember that He had told them plainly and repeatedly that after three days He would rise again (*Mark 8:31-32, 9:30-32, 10:32-34*). I'm sure Jesus felt like saying, *"How many times do I have to tell you?!"* And, even after an angel told them that He had risen, they still were afraid and bewildered (*Mark 16:8*).

The New Testament speaks often about the resurrection of Jesus. But I'm afraid that no matter how many times it is plainly taught, many people will remain ignorant and confused about it. Somehow the significance of the resurrection doesn't get from the ears to the brain to the heart. So, even though the story of the resurrection is told in countless homes and churches around the world this weekend, the behavior of the hearers isn't affected all that much.

The resurrection of Jesus gives us hope: hope for the forgiveness of sins (*1 Cor.*

15:17; 1 Peter 1:3, 3:21), and hope for eternal life (*1 Cor. 15:19; Romans 8:11*). But, it is also intended to change our lives (*Romans 6:4*). Because we have been raised with Christ, we are expected to live differently from the rest of the world. Paul wrote in *Colossians 3:1-4* :

“Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you will also appear with him in glory.”

He then proceeds to be specific about the changes that need to occur in the life of those who have been “*raised with Christ*.” Christians need to get rid of anger, rage, malice, slander and filthy language (*Col. 3:8*), and they need to add things like compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience (*Col 3:12*). But my point is that the resurrection should not only give us hope, it should change our lives.

But for that to happen, at some point the words must get past our ears to our brains and to our hearts. How many times will you need to hear this for it to change your life?

Joe Chesser

The Rest Of The Story

Robert Burns, the Scottish poet, tells us how once he passed an art gallery, and in the window there was a large painting of the crucifixion. While studying the picture, he noticed by his side a ragged little boy,. Wanting to find out how much the lad might know, he said, “Son, who is that?”

The boy instantly replied, “Sir, don’t you know? That is Jesus, and those men are crucifying Him!”

Mr Burns nodded, and then started down the street. He had gone a short distance when he felt a strong tug on his coattail. Turning around, he saw the little fellow looking up into his face. “Sir, I forgot to tell you the best part of the story. That was not the end; He didn’t stay dead; He rose again.”

That is the rest of the story—the glorious part of the story—He didn’t stay dead. He is the living Christ. What more thrilling thought could occupy our minds and souls? ***He lives, and because He lives we too shall live!***

- From ... *The Sower* ... Arthur, Illinois