



*The Empty Tomb, Jerusalem*

*Resurrection: Assuring the Power to Love*

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We float around here and there interjecting the resurrection of Jesus Christ into our conversations. It's in our Creeds. We celebrate it at Eastertime. Jesus had taught this truth repeatedly (Matthew 16:21; 17:23; 20:19; 26:32). But if we get real, we must wrestle with the reality of Jesus' resurrection.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is more than just someone coming back to life. People may come back to life only to die again at some point. Look! The import of the resurrection didn't happen all at once or even overnight. It had to sink in. That was true for those who had been with Jesus while He walked on this earth and it is true as well for us. We can note various stages as this truth of Jesus' resurrection settled into the minds and hearts of the believers. As it did, they were transformed, being assured of the power to love.

The disciples thought Jesus was dead. We remember that certain women lingered at the cross. Now they come early to the tomb, bringing with them spices to anoint Jesus' body. They wondered how the stone was going to be rolled away inasmuch as that huge stone blocked the entrance to the tomb. Mary Magdalene encounters the Lord. She receives the first commission to "Go and tell." She carries the message to the others, but she is not believed.

**Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? Isaiah 53:1, John 12:38**

The disciples had to move away from disbelief and doubting, confusion and being perplexed. They were huddled together, mourning instead of rejoicing. They went through their own feelings of guilt over their personal failures to follow Jesus to coming to grips with the reality that Jesus was not a spirit/ghost, but truly appearing to them in a real body, eating and engaging with them, to accepting His forgiveness and then following Him according to, as we would say today, the new normal for their lives. And as Jesus opened the eyes of their understanding and they received within their hearts the truth, they received Him and received power to become the sons of God, set to share the Gospel of God's grace in Christ. They rose up themselves, from the ash heaps. and walked out of the dungeons of their own making into the light and into the kingdom of God's dear Son. They were growing in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

**He came unto His own, and His own received Him not, but as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, not of the will of man, but of God. John 1:12, 13**

Warren Wiersbe considers what the Resurrection of Christ assures. Here's a summary.

1.It proves that Jesus is God's Son. John 10:17, 18. The Father gave the Son authority to lay down His life and to take it up again. No one could truly kill Jesus Christ unless He laid down His life. He offered Himself up to God, an offering so sufficient as atonement for sin, an offering so holy, an offering so necessary and glorious that none could compare with it. It never needed to be repeated. God the Father accepted this offering as a vicarious atonement for those for whom Christ died.

2.It verifies the truth of Scripture. Jesus' resurrection is taught in both OT and NT (Ps 16:10; 110:1, e.g.). Jesus' life and death and resurrection were pre-destined, pre-determined by the prophetic Word of God.

3.Jesus' resurrection assures our own future resurrection. Jesus is the One and only, the One unique Son of God, the Living God. He is the prototype; He is pre-eminent. He is the Federal Head of a new humanity. He is the proof that the Father accepted what Jesus Christ accomplished as Jesus functioned as Mediator, Surety of the Covenant, Substitute, and the Beloved. We are accepted in the Beloved, in Christ Jesus, because of His righteousness imputed to us. (1 Thess. 4:13-18)

4.Jesus' resurrection assures the Day of Judgment will surely come. Acts 17:31. Jesus will one day judge the world in righteousness. Resurrection Day dawned and Jesus was no longer in the tomb.

5.Jesus' resurrection assures Christ's heavenly priesthood. Jesus lives by the power of an endless life. He saves us "to the uttermost." (Hebrews 7:23-28). He lives to intercede for us.

6.Jesus' resurrection gives power for Christian living in order that His own have the ability to do His will and glorify His Name (Romans 6:4) . The Holy Spirit is the Life Producer, and by the power of the Holy Spirit living and working in us, we live. We are able to worship the true God, serve Him, keep His commandments, love one another; love knowing we are accepted by God in Christ. Resurrection assures our power to love by the power of the Holy Spirit.

7.Jesus' resurrection assures our future inheritance. We have a living hope because Jesus Christ is alive, and we have a glorious future (1 Peter 1:3-5). We are kept by the power of God. We persevere because God preserves.

**I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me. Paul, Galatians 2:20**

Galatians 2:20. He loved me and gave Himself for me. In death we let go, we enter into Christ, into the depth of His love, and mercy. We enter into that place where there is only the embrace of His love. And the power of that love comes out of the resurrection, for the resurrection assures us that we are accepted in the Beloved. All that we have comes in that place we term "in Christ." We come to that place, the place which Jesus has prepared for us, that place where we enter into Him just as He entered into us and abides in us when we are saved. John 15. Jesus gave Himself up to death for us. We must embrace this truth, the Cross, the Resurrection. We embrace His love, His forgiveness of our sins, and we enter into Christ. Entering into Christ, we enter into life; we enter into His joy.

*Death will only be revealed at death because **you enter into Him** and it will make sense. The world wants to cover it up... the truth in Him is so far past what we have to offer. Rev. Jim Craig, three days before he passed into glory June 1, 2017.*

Before I was saved I had a recurring nightmare. I would come to the edge of an abyss and begin to fall into that abyss. Somehow I woke up, terrified, because the abyss was a pit of destruction and I was on a collision course headed for destruction. But some describe entering into Christ as falling into an abyss of mercy We are to fall into the deep of the love of God for us. We will do this when we physically die, when we are too weak to resist the LORD, when everything has been stripped from us. Or we can do it now as we meditate on what the crucifixion means and what the resurrection means. We give ourselves up to death: death to sin, death to the Law, death to self, dying daily. We give ourselves up to death and find Christ is all and in all. We give ourselves up to death and find this:

1 Corinthians 15:55-58. **O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.**

**We love because He first loved us. 1 John 4:19**

Sending His love to you,

*Mary Craig*

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