



THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST

Jesus Ruins Funerals – Part 4

Message #1738

Pastor Keith Stewart

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All month long we've been looking at the resurrection miracles in the gospels culminating on Easter with the resurrection of Jesus Christ. More than anything, this message will help you see why the resurrection matters, what it means for us today, and how hope for true transformation is possible because of what happened on Easter Sunday morning. This is a message that can change your life.

"My memory is nearly gone; but I remember two things:
That I am a great sinner, and that Christ is a great Savior."
- John Newton

1. RESURRECTION POWER TO CHANGE YOUR LIFE

"The most memorable thing I can recall about that particular day was the opportunity to stand alone by myself out there and look at the rocket and the quietness, and see the sun come up and realize that in a very few

moments, we are going to be departing in a great roar and off for a momentous event.” - Buzz Aldrin

“I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal before this decade is out of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the earth.”
- John F. Kennedy

POWER: Energy to accomplish an effect or change.

I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know... his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead... Ephesians 1.18-20

“...my mind began to drift back in time...to scholarships and honors earned, cases argued and won, great decisions made from lofty government offices. My life had been the perfect success story, the great American dream fulfilled. But all at once I realized that it was not my success God had used to enable me to help those in this prison, or in hundreds of others just like it...all my achievements meant nothing in God's economy. No, the real legacy of my life was my biggest failure - that I was an ex-convict. My greatest humiliation - being sent to prison - was the beginning of God's greatest use of my life. He chose the one experience in which I could not glory for his glory...”
- Chuck Colson, Loving God

2. THE TRANSFORMATION WE DESPERATELY NEED

No shame in brokenness

"[Christians should be] the most nonjudgmental of peoples. They get along well with sinners... They are aware of their lack of wholeness, their brokenness, the simple fact they don't have it all together. While they do not excuse their sin, they are humbly aware that is precisely what caused them to throw themselves at the mercy of the Father. They do not pretend to be anything but what they are; sinners saved by grace."

- Brennan Manning

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 5.3

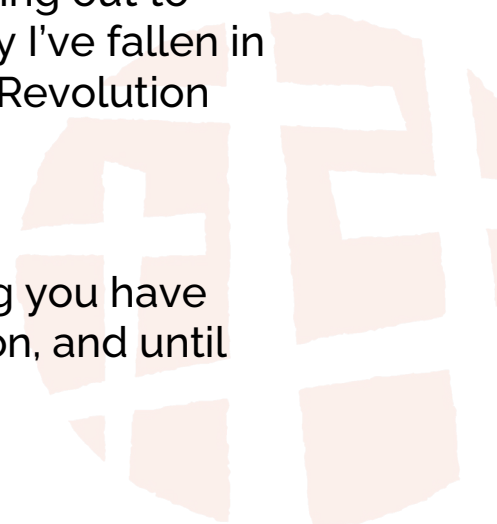
Spiritually prosperous are the destitute and helpless in the realm of the spirit, because theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 5.3 (Wuest)

"We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable." – The Big Book

"Christianity can be built around isolating ourselves from evildoers and sinners, creating a community of religious piety and moral purity. That's the Christianity I grew up with. Christianity can also be built around joining with the broken sinners and evildoers of our world crying out to God, groaning for grace. That's the Christianity I've fallen in love with." - Shane Claiborne, *The Irresistible Revolution*

No fear in failure

"The only way to be a Christian is by admitting you have no qualifications, which is the only qualification, and until



you admit you have no qualifications, you're not qualified!"
– Dr. Timothy Keller

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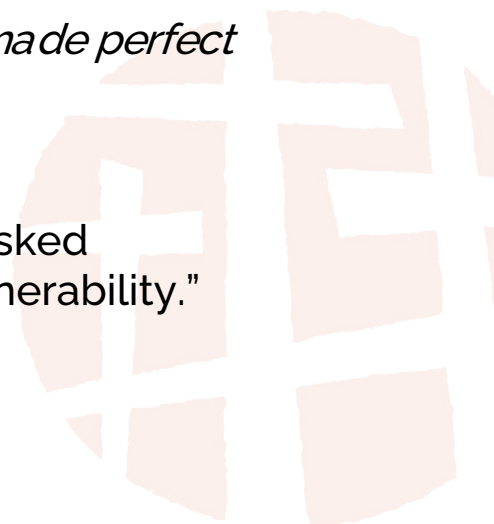
3. ACCEPT HIS ACCEPTANCE OF YOU

"God does not force his kingdom upon anybody but gladly gives it to all who know they're losers without him and humbly seek his help." - Clarence Jordan

"Little wonder the gospel is only good news to those who consider themselves losers. It is humiliating to be sandblasted to the core, to be told by the Spirit that we are not as wise or winsome or loving or patient as we thought. But when the mask of pride is ripped away, there's something refreshing about knowing yourself at the core - the vulnerability - the transparency - the relief of nothing more to hide." - Joni Eareckson Tada

My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. 2 Corinthians 12.9

"The world has enough people who live a masked insecurity. It needs more who live a brave vulnerability."
- Ann Voskamp



“God's reputation isn't honored by our publicly faking what isn't privately true. The grave danger to sufferers is not admission of weakness but delusions of strength.”

- Paul David Tripp

Long ago, even before he made the world, God chose us to be his very own through what Christ would do for us; he decided then to make us holy in his eyes, without a single fault -- we who stand before him covered with his love. Ephesians 1.4 (Living Bible)

Now God has us where he wants us, with all the time in this world and the next to shower grace and kindness upon us in Christ Jesus. Saving is all his idea, and all his work. All we do is trust him enough to let him do it. It's God's gift from start to finish! We don't play the major role. If we did, we'd probably go around bragging that we'd done the whole thing! No, we neither make nor save ourselves. God does both the making and saving. He creates each of us by Christ Jesus to join him in the work he does, the good work he has gotten ready for us to do, work we had better be doing. Ephesians 2.7-10 (The Message)

...He has made us accepted in the beloved.
Ephesians 1.6b (KJV)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Paul wrote in the book of Ephesians...
I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know... his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty



strength he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead... Ephesians 1.18-20

What does this verse mean to you? How have you experienced its truth? Bible prayers are some of the best prayers to pray for others. In your personal time with God, try praying this prayer for others you care about who are struggling, "I pray that the eyes of Jim's heart will be enlightened in order that he might know..."

2. God shows up in the most broken places of our life to show us His grace. Then He frequently uses the very things for which we are most embarrassed and ashamed as our ministry – the way we touch and help others most. Have you found this to be true in your life? If so, in what ways has God most used you? How would you encourage someone who tried to keep their failures and stumbling secret?

3. Shane Claiborne, in his book *The Irresistible Revolution*, said it like this, "Christianity can be built around isolating ourselves from evildoers and sinners, creating a community of religious piety and moral purity. That's the Christianity I grew up with. Christianity can also be built around joining with the broken sinners and evildoers of our world crying out to God, groaning for grace. That's the Christianity I've fallen in love with." Do you agree with this thought? If so, how have you seen this same truth lived out? If you don't agree with what Shane Claiborne said, how is your view different?

4. Pastor Keith mentioned how the Bible is filled with the stories of main characters with messy problems. The Bible is a truth-telling book, even when it makes those lifted-up

good examples, as marred by imperfections. Who are some of the characters that display both strengths and weaknesses? Why do you think the Bible tells the truth about people even when it makes them look bad? Does this encourage you in your walk with the Lord or discourage you?

5. Paul says in Ephesians, *"Now God has us where he wants us, with all the time in this world and the next to shower grace and kindness upon us in Christ Jesus. Saving is all his idea, and all his work. All we do is trust him enough to let him do it. It's God's gift from start to finish! We don't play the major role. If we did, we'd probably go around bragging that we'd done the whole thing! No, we neither make nor save ourselves. God does both the making and saving. He creates each of us by Christ Jesus to join him in the work he does, the good work he has gotten ready for us to do, work we had better be doing"* Ephesians 2.7-10 (The Message)."

He even says this, *"...He has made us accepted in the beloved"* Ephesians 1.6b (KJV). To be a Christ follower is to accept the truth we will never be good enough on our own. It means to accept His acceptance of us. How does one accept God's acceptance of us?

