

Raised for Our Sake

2 Cor. 4:16—5:17

INTRODUCTION

Does anyone know what holiday we remember today? No? I'll give you a hint: it has nothing to do with July 22nd. It has to do with what day this is. This is **Sunday**, the Lord's Day. It's been said that every Sunday is "Resurrection Day." Oh, how true!

Adrian Warnock, author of the book *Raised with Christ: How the Resurrection Changes Everything* said this in an interview:

"It is interesting that most Christians talk about the Cross often, and yet we seem to only speak about the Resurrection at Easter."

He goes on to stress that unlike today's preaching and Gospel presentations, the Apostles' evangelistic preaching in Acts majored on Christ's resurrection and stressed its role in our salvation. In his book he says:

"If we only contemplate Jesus experiencing terrible suffering on the cross, there is a danger that we might even feel sorry for him. Jesus does not want our pity. He wants our worship, adoration, and celebration as the rightfully installed King of the universe! Contemplating the resurrection and glorification of Jesus helps us recognize him for who he really is."

I must confess that I am like most of you. I have often thought of Jesus' death and his suffering for me on the cross. And I have much less often thought of his resurrection and ascension into glory. In fact, it may be that I mostly think of the resurrection on Easter. I hope with this message to help all of us to permanently correct our thinking and determine to view every Sunday as a holiday: because every Sunday really is "Resurrection Day."

I. A TRIUMPHANT SAVIOR.

A. Vindicated by his Resurrection.

1. **Raised for our justification.** (*Rom. 4:25* "[Jesus] was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.")

Adrian Warnock elaborates on this point: "If the cross was Jesus' payment for our sins, then the resurrection marked God's acceptance of that payment. Jesus is

declared to still be righteous by his resurrection, just as he was declared to have become sin by his death." And He quotes Jonathan Edwards: "For if Christ were not risen, it would be evidence that God was not yet satisfied for [our] sins."

2. **Appointed judge of the dead.** (*Acts 17:31* "[God] has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.")
3. **Declared the Son of God in power.** (*Rom. 1:4* "And was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead.")
4. **Exalted at God's right hand.** (*Acts 5:30-31* "The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins." Also, Stephen saw the exalted Christ at the Father's right hand in Acts 7.)

B. Active as our Lord in Heaven.

1. **Sent the Holy Spirit to His Church.** (*Acts 2:32-33* "This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing." Also, Spirit not just for those at Pentecost, but for all believers – Jesus sent the Comforter for us, John 14.)
2. **Is our Faithful High Priest.** (*Heb. 4:14* "We have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God." *Heb. 7:26* "For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens.")
3. **Preparing a Place for Us.** (*John 14:3* "I go [to] prepare a place for you [and] I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.")

C. Triumphant over the evil powers.

(*Col. 2:13-15* "God [forgave] all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him." [cf. *Eph. 4:8* "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives"] – "Christus Victor")

D. Made a Life-giving Spirit.

(*1 Cor. 15:45* "The first man Adam became a living being; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit.")

E. Firstfruits/Firstborn from the dead [first to be resurrected – and guarantee that all those represented by him will also rise from the dead]

(*1 Cor. 15:20* "Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep." *Col. 1:18* "He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead" *Rev. 1:5* "Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead")

- Jesus' life is proof that "an eternal weight of glory" exists for us (2 Cor. 4:17) and that we have a true "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Cor. 5:1)
- 2 Cor. 4:14 "Knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence."

F. Inaugurated the New Creation

1. The Old Testament foretold a glorious New Creation – the unmaking of all the wrongs of this world.
 - Isaiah 43:18 Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing.
 - Isaiah 65:17-18 For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy, and her people a gladness.
2. Jesus' resurrection was the start of this new creation – it is already here, but not yet here in its fullness.
 - 2 Cor. 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. "The old has passed away; behold, the new has come." (quotes Isaiah 43:18 LXX)
 - The creation of the world is comparable to this new creation which Jesus works in the hearts of believers – see 2 Cor. 4:6.
 - Gal. 5:15 For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. (cf. v. 16 with 5:24-25 for connection with resurrection)
 - Rev. 3:14 Jesus = "the beginning of God's creation" parallel with Rev. 1:5 "firstborn of the dead". Jesus' resurrection is the start of God's new creation. [cf. Col. 1:18]
3. The world still yearns for the complete consummation of the new creation – see Rom. 8:23.

G. Inaugurated Resurrection Life

1. The Old Testament foretold a general resurrection – to eternal life for believers, and to death and destruction for unbelievers.
 - Daniel 12:2 And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.
2. Jesus taught that his voice would awake the dead and assign them to life or judgment. Go to John 5:24-29
3. Jesus also said that this hour was now here, Jesus would wake some to spiritual life "all those who hear [his] voice".
4. His resurrection vindicates his power to do this – and Jesus (as a life-giving spirit) gives eternal life (a "spiritual resurrection") to

all who hear and come. One day they will also receive a physical resurrection as well.

- 2 Cor. 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. "The old has passed away; behold, the new has come." (quotes Isaiah 43:18 LXX)

H. Re-oriented the Worship of God.

1. The Old Testament foretold an end-times temple where all would come to worship God. A life-giving stream would flow from the holy of holies and spread through all the earth.
 - Ezek. 47:1-12 Water was issuing from below the threshold of the temple toward the east... from... south of the altar....And wherever the river goes...everything will live...
 - Joel 3:18 "a fountain shall come forth from the house of the LORD"
 - Zech. 14:8 "On that day living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem"
2. Jesus declares that this is fulfilled, in some sense, by the Holy Spirit in the heart of the believer. This time is now. And Jesus' resurrection enabled him to send the Spirit to make this a reality. Jesus is the true temple – in our hearts – where we worship God in the Spirit.
 - John 4:14, 21, 23 The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life... Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.... The hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth..."
 - John 7:38-39 Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, "Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water" Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

TRANSITION

I entitled this sermon "Raised for Our Sake" – taking the title from 2 Cor. 5:15. All that we have said about the Triumph of our Savior is "for our sake". But there is more, Jesus' resurrection life and triumphant power is given to us – we share in his resurrection even now, in this life. We were "raised... to walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4).

II. TRANSFORMED SAINTS

A. New Life.

1. **Walk in newness of life.** (*Rom. 6:4 "We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life."*)
2. **Brought from death to life.** (*Rom. 6:13 "present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life" John 5:24 "whoever hears my word and believes... does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life."*)
3. **Christ lives in us.** (*Gal. 2:20 "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me..." Col. 1:27 "Christ in you, the hope of glory" Col. 3:4 "Christ who is your life"*)

B. New Heart and New Spirit.

- Ezek. 36:26-27 I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.
- 2 Cor. 3:3 "you are a letter from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.
- Rom. 6:17 "you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart"
- Rom. 7:6 "we serve in the new way of the Spirit"
- Rom. 8:9-10 "you, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit...if Christ is in you... the Spirit is life because of righteousness".

C. New Man (or New Self)

- Col. 3:9-10 "you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator."
- See also Eph. 4:20-22 (you are a new man, but you have to keep working at becoming the new man)

D. New Creature/Creation

- 2 Cor. 5:17 "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come." (see also Eph. 2:10)

E. New Position

1. **Set Free** – (*Rom. 8:2 "For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death." Rom. 6:6 "So that we would no longer be enslaved to sin." Rom. 8:21 "the freedom of the glory of the children of God"*)
2. **In the Heavens.** – (*Eph. 2:5-6 "made us alive together with Christ.. and raised us up with him... in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus."*)
3. **Our life is hid with Christ.** (*Col. 3:3 "You have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God."*) [*hid because we people don't see the true reality of who we are and where our citizenship truly is*]

- F. **New Standing** – (*Col. 2:13-14 "you, who were dead in your trespasses... God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses... nailing it to the cross." [forgiveness is a new covenant blessing bestowed because Jesus has risen from the dead – Jer. 31:31-34, 2 Cor. 3:6, Heb. 8:8-13, Luke 22:20]*)

G. New Fight

- Rom. 6:18 "And, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness."
- Rom. 8:13 "For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live."

H. New Power

- Eph. 1:18-20 "that you may know... what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead..."
- Phil. 3:10 "that I may know him and the power of his resurrection"

- I. **New Fruit** – (*Rom. 7:4 "you also have died to the law... so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God."*)

- J. **New Assurance** – (*Rom. 8:16-17 "Spirit... bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God... heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him."*)

- K. **New Image** – (*1 Cor. 3:18 "beholding the glory of the Lord are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit." [Ro. 12:2]*)

- L. **New Hope** – (*Col. 1:27 "Christ in you, the hope of glory."*)

- M. **New Commission** – (*Matt. 28:18-20 "And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'"*)

TRANSITION

Up to this point, your heads might be swirling. We have covered a lot of ground, and you might have given up on keeping notes. But you may also be frustrated for another reason. You may not feel so "new", and you may struggle to see how Christ's triumph really changes anything for you. You are the flawed person you are, period.

Tim Keller, in his book *The Meaning of Marriage* speaks of Christians not having to settle for who they are. Instead they can envision their "future

glory-selves, the new creation that God will eventually make [them].”

He uses this illustration:

“Have you ever traveled to a mountainous part of the world when it was cloudy and rainy? You look out your windows and you can see almost nothing but the ground. Then the rain stops and the clouds part and you catch your breath because there, towering right over you, is this magnificent peak. But a couple of hours later the clouds roll in and it has vanished, and you don’t see it again for a good while. That is what it is like to get to know a Christian.... The new self is always a work in progress, and sometimes the clouds of the old self make it almost completely invisible. But sometimes the clouds really part, and you see the wisdom, courage, and love of which you are capable. It is a glimpse of where you are going.”

The struggle of the Christian life is to “walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Cor. 5:7). We are to focus on “the things that are unseen” which are “eternal”, rather than “the things that are seen” which are “transient” (2 Cor. 4:18). We, all of us, have a tainted sight, we see through a glass darkly – until we finally go home to be with the Lord, where we’ll finally see things the way they really are.

So how do we cope with “tainted sight” in this fallen world, where our true identity as spiritually-resurrected joint-heirs with Christ is not always very noticeable to others (let alone to ourselves)?

III. TAINTED SIGHT

- A. We GROAN** – (Rom. 8:23 “we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. 2 Cor. 5:2 “we groan, longing...” 2 Cor. 5:4 “we groan, being burdened”)
- B. We WAIT (eagerly)** – (Rom. 8:23, also Gal. 5:5 “for through the Spirit, by faith, we ourselves eagerly wait, for the hope of righteousness.”)
- C. We BELIEVE** – firstfruits (Rom. 8:23) means the Spirit is our guarantee of a fuller experience of resurrection life, but ultimately we “walk by faith, not sight” (2 Cor. 4:18 and 5:7)
- D. We ENDURE** – (2 Cor. 4:16 “we do not lose heart... our outer self is wasting away, [yet] our inner self is being renewed day by day.” Phil. 3:10 “that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death.” 1 Pet. 4:13 “rejoice insofar as you share Christ’s sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed.”)
- E. We PURIFY ourselves** – (2 Cor. 7:1 “Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.” 1 John 3:2-3 “we shall be like him, because we

shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.” Rom. 12:1-2 “present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God... be transformed by the renewal of your mind.” Also, Col. 3:5-17)

- F. We EXAMINE ourselves** – (2 Cor. 13:4-5 “he was crucified in weakness, but lives by the power of God... we will live with him by the power of God. Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? – unless indeed you fail to meet the test!) we have no excuse to not live like transformed saints – since we really are transformed (if we have genuine faith)
- G. We DESIRE to know/experience more** – (Phil. 3:10 “that I may know him and the power of his resurrection...”)
- H. We HOPE** – (Col. 3:1-2 “If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is... Set your mind on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.” Col. 1:27 “Christ in you, the hope of glory”)

CONCLUSION

I hope that you will take away something from this message. The audio will be online, and I will make the notes available on my website – just contact me for a copy. Be encouraged, our Savior is ALIVE and he is TRIUMPHANT. The very power of God that raised Jesus from the dead is in us. We are raised with Jesus and seated with him in the heavenly places right now. Our true Resurrection Life is hid with Christ in God. But that life, eternal life, is ours and motivates us and empowers us to live the Christian life with a new attitude a new heart and by the power of the Spirit of God. God wants to have fellowship with us and renew our broken lives – just like the water flowing out of the prophesied temple would renew the forsaken desert land. God can revive us by his Word and Spirit, and if we are Christ’s then the Life-giving Spirit of God already indwells us. We need to gaze into the image of Christ in his Word and be changed from glory to glory as we mediate on the Risen Christ.

BENEDICTION

Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. (Heb. 13:20-21)