

Lesson 7: The Importance of the Resurrection

Lesson Introduction



In our last lesson we looked at the importance of the death that Christ died. Without that, our sin could not have been paid for. The Resurrection, however, is just as important. Without the Resurrection, the New Testament could not have been. Disciples, once cowering in darkened rooms, were now made bold by the power of the Resurrection. Without the Resurrection, we would not have assurance of God the Father's acceptance of the payment His

Son had made. We would not be justified, we would not have a High Priest, and we definitely would not have a living hope.

In this Lesson, we will look at several aspects of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. We will see what the Apostles had to say, as well as what Christ's enemies were saying. We will see proof that it was a bodily resurrection, not just spiritual. We will look at some unscriptural theories that try to refute the empty tomb, but will see that these theories are full of holes. Finally, we will see the results of the Resurrection, and look briefly at Jesus' ascension and enthronement in Heaven, and what that means for the believer today.

Lesson Outline

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Proofs of the Resurrection

Topic 4: Results of the Resurrection

Topic 5: Ascension and Enthronement of Christ

Topic 1: Preeminence of the Resurrection

When we study, when we get excited about one doctrine, I think we must get most excited about the resurrection. The resurrection of Christ is unique in Scripture. There were other resurrections, did you know that? These people were restored to life. And wonderful examples of power of God. Wonderful miracles, but the sad fact is those people that were resurrected died again. Now maybe they wouldn't be so happy, right? After all, we've often thought, "What would Lazarus have thought, 'Why did you bring

me back here after all that I've seen, and all that I've been able to experience? And here I am back on the earth. What in the world were you all thinking?" The uniqueness about the resurrection of Christ is that He is alive and will always be alive. He will never die, and that's why the resurrection of Christ is preeminent. It's mentioned over a hundred times in the New Testament. And we're going to look at the testimony of the Apostles through Acts. Acts, of course, is the record of the Early Church and the establishment and the work of the Apostles, and we're going to look at chapter 2, verse 24 now. And we're going to really go through quite a few verses (Acts 2:24-27). The Holy One, Jesus Christ, had to rise again. He had to. There was no option. He had to because He could not see corruption. (Acts 2:28) Still again quoting David. Now again, Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost: (Acts 2:29). Now there is a place in Jerusalem that they say is the sepulcher of David. It is not known that it really is the actual burial place of David, but obviously he is still, even to this day, his body there in Jerusalem somewhere. And because he was a patriarch, venerated, incredible man, (Acts 2:30). So the offspring of David is still in the earth. The offspring of David would be born, although he would die, he would still live after death and sit on his throne. (Acts 2:31-32) What is he doing? He's giving testimony to the fact that Jesus is alive. Remember Acts was written after the resurrection. These are the acts of the Apostles. These are what they're going about doing, and these are the things that they said to win souls, to influence people, to share with people that there's hope; not in tradition, not in Judaism, not in the Law, but there's hope in the one that fulfilled all those things, Jesus: He's alive just as David predicted. And going back to prophecy. That's the best way to convince a Jewish person, is to show Christ through Old Testament prophecies, and using David is a wonderful way to do that.

QUESTION 1

The resurrection of Jesus is not the only Biblical account of someone rising from the _____.

QUESTION 2

What makes the resurrection of Jesus unique is that He is still _____.

QUESTION 3

Peter used _____ to show that Jesus was alive.

Public Testimony of the Bodily Resurrection

So we have the Apostolic testimony in Acts 2. We have it also in (Acts 3:15). All through Acts it talks about the resurrection that they were witnesses of. (Acts 3:26) Again, the resurrection, raising up of the Son, Jesus. (Acts 4:10) So again the testimony of the Apostles that Jesus indeed, this Jesus Christ of Nazareth, is alive. Chapter 4, verse 33 continues the testimony of the Apostles (Acts 4:33). If you can't get excited about the resurrection, maybe you're still dead. Maybe you're dead. I don't know. (Acts 17:18) these people were curious about this man's new philosophy. They wanted to hear the "new thing." But they wanted to find out the new thing. What was this guy saying? And so some said, "What will this babblers say?" What would you do if someone called you a babblers? . The resurrection, that is the key, the foundation, the focal point of history, the focal point of my faith and your faith, the resurrection. In Acts over, and over, and over is a testimony of the Apostles and their belief, their firm belief, in the resurrection, because they saw it. They saw it, and they believed in it.

Assignment

- Memorize Acts 4:10

QUESTION 4

The Apostles gave _____ testimony of the resurrection.

QUESTION 5

The Resurrection of Jesus is the focal point of _____.

QUESTION 6

The Resurrection of Jesus is the key to our _____.

Prominence in the Gospel

We also see in the preeminence of the resurrection the prominence in the gospel. Without the resurrection, there would be no gospel. It's prominent in the gospel. It's a key component of the gospel. He is risen from the dead, and we see it in salvation. It's preeminent in salvation. Now let's go to 1 Corinthians 15, and we'll look at 12, starting at verse 12. And really the whole chapter of 1 Corinthians 15 is focusing on the resurrection, the importance of it. But we're going to go through some of these verses, as they were saying there was no such thing as anyone resurrecting from the dead bodily, and if that doctrine were true, then we'd have a whole lot of other things that would not be true about our faith to where we would be men most miserable. So let's get into that, (1 Corinthians 15:12-20). There is a resurrection of the dead, but it's all because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is the focal point of the plan of salvation, the gospel in salvation. If Christ did not rise from the dead, we are all unsaved, Hell-bound people. That is the importance of the resurrection. If He's still dead, the price of redemption has not been paid. If He is still dead, then we are all men and women most miserable, because God the Father would be not satisfied. The resurrection proved the satisfaction of God with the sacrifice of Christ as perfect, God the Father. So therefore, in Romans 4 it talks about that in verse 25, that He was raised again for our justification. It's an important part of salvation. That's why it's so preeminent in doctrine. [If] Christ is not risen from the dead, all who have died before us have just died a dog's death. But really, if Christ hadn't . . . didn't raise from the dead, our death would just be [you] just die. There's no hope. It's just all there is. And it is terrible when we consider it. So it is preeminent; it's so focal in the life of the believer.

Assignment

- Memorize 1 Corinthians 15:19-20

QUESTION 7

Without the Resurrection, there would be no _____.

QUESTION 8

The resurrection from the dead is possible because of the _____ of Jesus Christ.

QUESTION 9

If Christ did not rise from the dead, we are most _____.

QUESTION 10

If Christ did not rise from the dead there would be no _____.

Topic 2: The Bodily Resurrection of Christ

The resurrection of Christ was bodily. There was another false doctrine that was going around that the death of Christ was just spiritual; it wasn't a bodily resurrection from the dead. Well, that's not true for many reasons, but the bodily resurrection is important. How do we know it was a bodily resurrection? How do we know that it was His body? Well, we see the testimony of the enemies of Christ proved that it was a bodily resurrection. Look at (Matthew 27:62) Isn't that interesting, that they heard that, and the disciples didn't seem to have heard that. Or if they heard it, they didn't remember it because they, they weren't looking for the resurrection. They were perplexed. They were sorry. They didn't know what to think. The man that they had put all their faith in that was the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, is dead. And they certainly weren't looking for the resurrection. Maybe the women were, but they were going to prepare the body. They certainly, it doesn't seem like they were going early that Sunday morning to see if He was risen. They were going to prepare the body for more spice. But the enemies of Christ knew that He said that, and so what do they say? And by the way, this verifies . . . this verifies the resurrection. Maybe if they hadn't done this, we wouldn't have the proof positive that He really did rise from the dead. But because they did this, we know for sure that He did. In (Matthew 27:64) . . . in other words, you know, they've already got this deceiver and if they steal the body, it looks like a resurrection. It's just going to be horrible if people really think that He really did rise from the dead. And Pilate, you know, said okay. You have a watch; go your way. Make it as sure as you can. (Matthew 27:65-66) And they obviously knew that He had predicted a bodily resurrection. Because you don't go seal the stone, take this tomb which, by the way, is hewn out of rock. It was a tomb of a rich man, hewn out of rock, very typical of the tombs of the day. They had a lot of rock. They have a lot of rock in Israel, you know. Around here, it's strange to see rocks on top of the ground. In Israel, it's strange not to see rocks all over the ground. All their buildings are made out of stone, cut stones. So it's rocky everywhere. So you just go into a rock-face wall and carve it out and make a tomb, and they would put a big stone across the front. I'm sure you've seen the pictures and all of that, of the tombs. And they sealed it and it was really impregnable. They had this whole group of soldiers out there, Roman soldiers, and they were going to guard it for those three days. Why? Because they knew that this had to be a bodily resurrection. It wasn't a spiritual resurrection, obviously.

QUESTION 11

The Resurrection of Christ was not just spiritual, but _____.

QUESTION 12

The _____ of Christ knew that He had predicted that He would rise bodily from the dead.
True or False?

QUESTION 13

Even though they had been with Jesus and listened to His teaching, the _____ were not confidently awaiting His resurrection.

QUESTION 14

The attempt by Jesus' enemies to cover up any resurrection actually helps _____ the Resurrection.

Public Testimony of the Bodily Resurrection

The disciples of Christ recognized that it was a bodily resurrection. Remember when they saw Him and He said to Thomas in John 20, "Reach hither thy finger and behold my hands, and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless, but believing"? Remember that? Thomas said, "My Lord and my God." It's a physical body. It had to be a physical body. It was a bodily resurrection from the dead. It had to be. And we also know Paul said this. And this is some of the verses before that we already read in (1 Corinthians 15:4-6), that He was buried and rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures. And then the proofs that this was a bodily resurrection or some had died. But the majority at the time that this was written were alive, and living testimony proof hundreds and hundreds of people that they had seen the body, the alive body of Christ. (1 Corinthians 15:7-8) which was Paul himself. So he had the testimony that he had seen the Lord risen from the dead. And then we have the announcement of our transformation. In (Philippians 3:20) Now we will be involved in a resurrection. We will be involved in a bodily resurrection. And at that time, we will receive new bodies, whether we die before the Rapture, or even if we're raptured, we will change. It'll be like a great change, changeout. You know, it's the greatest changeout you've ever seen. Some of you are familiar with updating a bathroom, updating a kitchen. You just take all that old junk and you toss it, or you should. And then you put the new stuff in there, and it's all really nice. This is this changeout that's going to take place with us, our transformation, and it's going to be awesome. (1 Corinthians 15:21) what? Body. It has to be a bodily resurrection, and He did rise again from the dead physically, materially, bodily, according to the working whereby He is even able to subdue all things unto Himself.

Assignment

- Memorize Philippians 3:20-21

QUESTION 15

After the Resurrection, the disciples gave testimony to the fact that it was a _____ resurrection.

QUESTION 16

According to 1 Corinthians 15:4-6, Christ was seen bodily by over _____ brethren at one time.

QUESTION 17

Because Jesus rose from the dead, He is able to _____ all things unto Himself.

Topic 3: Theories and Proofs of the Resurrection

So the resurrection is preeminent. The resurrection is bodily, and the resurrection, it was tried to be done away with by other theories, okay. Mankind knows. Wicked man knows that we need to come up with some other explanations of the empty tomb or the resurrection, because they know if He rose from the dead, then He is the Son of God. So they don't want to admit that. They don't want to trust Him as the Savior, so they invent theories. So here are some of the theories about the resurrection of Christ, okay. And some of these are just, don't make any sense at all. Some of them I didn't even list because they're so silly. Like one was the Twins Theory. Apparently someone has theorized that Jesus had a twin, and the one that was seen risen from the dead was the twin of Christ. And my question is, where was that twin for 33 ½ years, and also then what about the body? You know, they would have just gone and produced the body of the dead twin and therefore proven that it wasn't really the resurrection of Jesus. So anyways, that's just how silly these get. But some of these, just so you're aware of the unscriptural theories. One, the Unburied Body Theory. Some have speculated that Jesus' body was taken and just thrown into a trash heap, and wasn't ever really put into the tomb. The refutation of that is that the Jewish people had really strict laws and customs. Do you remember when they went because of the law of getting the condemned buried before the end of the day, before the Sabbath was started, the whatever, the holy day. And they would break the legs of those that are being crucified so they die quicker. You know, remember crucifixion is suffocation. And then they came to Christ and found out that He was already expired, but still thrust the spear, fulfilling prophecy in Him, water and blood pouring out. That's another reason that we know He was dead, because of the water and blood flowing out. But because the Jewish law is so strict, it refutes this idea of Jesus just being tossed onto a trash heap. No, they would give even criminals burials. And we've seen that in other places of Scripture, because they were very zealous of the law. So that theory is refuted. Another theory was the Unempty Grave Theory. Unempty Grave. The theory is this: Jesus' body is still in the tomb. The events of the resurrection in the Bible never occurred at all, or they mistook another grave for Jesus' grave. So how do you refute that theory? Well, this one, if the gravesite is that of someone you know and love, you're going to remember where that grave is. And if it was the wrong grave, explain the grave clothes. Okay, that says that theory is refuted. The grave clothes were still in it. They were grave clothes of Christ. The third theory is the Removal Theory: Joseph of Arimathea took the body in secret. So kind of this whole idea that they were worried about the disciples stealing the body. The refutation: Why did he not also take the grave clothes? How could he have rolled away the stone, and knowing that it weighed between one and two tons, and many other reasons why that could not be true.

QUESTION 18

Man knows that if Jesus rose from the _____, then He is the Son of God.

QUESTION 19

The Roman _____ confirmed that Jesus was dead on the cross.

QUESTION 20

The "Unburied Body" theory can be refuted due to the strict _____ customs of the Jews.

QUESTION 21

The _____ theory asserts that the women went to the wrong tomb.

QUESTION 22

The “Removal Theory” asserts that _____ of Arimathea took the body.

Unscriptural Theories

Then there’s the Mistaken Women Theory: The three, the ladies that were there, mistook what the man told them when they were there coming to the tomb on that Sunday morning. The refutation of that is that the Bible is very clear of what transpired on that day, and that mistake could not have been made and was not made, the Mistaken Women Theory. Then there’s the Deliberate Deception Theory: Christ did not die on the cross, but merely fainted, okay, and revived in the coolness of the tomb. Isn’t that an interesting theory? The problem with that is, how can a person hang on a cross all day long with nails through the hands and feet, and then a spear thrust through the side and the water and the blood coming out. You can ask any doctor. That’s proof that that person is already dead. If Jesus was not dead after three days in a dark, closed tomb with no air, you know when He was put in there, He was certainly dead afterwards. But no, He was dead when He was put in there. He expired and we know that He was dead. But there would be no possible way for Him to move the stone. If He really wasn’t dead because of the physical trauma in His body, and being mummified almost with the grave clothes and all of these things. So, the Deliberate Deception Theory is refuted. How about the Fraud Theory? The Apostles plainly lied and deceived everyone. Well if that was true, then why did they all except John experience a martyr’s death? Would you die for a deliberate fraud? I wouldn’t. Are you kidding me? No. They would not have sacrificed their lives for a lie. How about the Deception or Illusion Theory: the disciples thought that He rose from the dead, and they kept thinking it until they believed it. Well, I guess somebody could really think something is true, you know, first knowing it’s not true, then they really believe it’s true. Then eventually they totally believe it. But again, illusions usually fade away, and I don’t think they could have deceived themselves that long. And certainly when they were being threatened with death, I think they would have not been deceived any more at that point. So I don’t think the Self-Deception or Illusion Theory holds water. How about the Hallucination Theory? They actually thought they saw Jesus because they were so nervous and excited about everything that was going on, and they had such a strong desire to see Jesus. What’s the refutation of that? Well, the disciples were the ones who did not believe in the resurrection. They weren’t looking for Jesus to be alive. And so therefore, they really weren’t looking for Him to be alive, and they weren’t hallucinating about Him being alive. Along with that, over 500 people saw Him at one time. Friends, you might have one person hallucinating the same hallucination, okay. So the Hallucination Theory is all but a hallucination.

QUESTION 23

The “Deliberate Deception” theory asserts that Christ did not _____ on the cross.

QUESTION 24

The “Fraud Theory” asserts that the disciples _____ and died for the lie that Jesus rose from the dead.

QUESTION 25

The number of _____ that saw Jesus alive proves beyond a doubt that He rose bodily.

Proofs of the Resurrection

So we have those and many other theories that people try to come up with that just don't ever hold any water, because of the proofs of the resurrection, which are as follows: The best proof, one of the greatest proofs of the resurrection is the empty tomb. That's all you have to do is tell me, explain the empty tomb. Okay, this is what transpired after the resurrection and the coverup of this. Okay, the unbelievers claim that the disciples stole the body. In Matthew 28:11, this is the story of the coverup. (Matthew 28:11-14) Again, the day that this was written, this was still the story of the day, and had not been refuted. Now friends, what's the problem with this? The problem with this is a Roman soldier is supposed to die if he falls asleep on watch, and the very fact that they didn't punish them as they should have. The Roman guard had about 60 men, four groups of guards, each standing six-hour shifts. Okay? So there were quite a few men that would be part of this cover-up, of this deception. It wasn't like they had to stand out there 24 hours straight, and there's no way that all of them would have fallen asleep. You might have one or two of them nodding off. The penalty for sleeping on the job was, the soldier who had slept on guard was stripped of his clothes. They were piled around his feet, set on fire, and he burned to death. The enemies of Christ wanted His body to stay buried. The disciples were afraid. They fled away. They weren't going to steal the body. So we have something pretty interesting. We have an empty tomb, and the only explanation would be the resurrection of Christ. Another proof of the resurrection are the empty grave clothes. It talks about the grave clothes just kind of been deflated, as if the body was taken out. The only difference was the separate head napkin that was folded. But the grave clothes were deflated as if the body had just disappeared from out from within that, undisturbed and just there. Bodies in that time and that day were wrapped with grave clothes similar to the mummies of Egypt. Not quite the same, but similar to that. That was the way they did it and placed there in the end of a tomb. In John 20, Peter saw the undisturbed grave clothes of Jesus Christ, again a proof of the resurrection. The stone, by the way, was not rolled away to let Christ out, for in the glorified body, He could walk through walls, and we've seen that in other places of Scripture. It was to show that He was already gone, to show the grave clothes, to show the empty tomb. So those are two great evidences of the resurrection. The third is the appearance of Christ. This is powerful testimony of the resurrection of Christ. We have the number of witnesses required in the United States for several different things listed: One witness will convict you for murder; two for treason; three for a will; seven for an oral will. Okay, so the witnesses of the resurrection of Christ: over 500. That's powerful. That's powerful evidence that He is, indeed, alive. And the character of Christ, the character of Christ is another proof of the resurrection. God's justice would not have allowed for One Who was perfect to remain in the tomb. Just looking at the character of Christ, He had to rise from the dead. So we have proofs that He did rise, proofs of the resurrection of Christ.

QUESTION 26

The greatest proof of the resurrection is the empty _____.

QUESTION 27

The number of eyewitnesses that saw Jesus bodily was over _____.

Topic 4: Results of the Resurrection

The resurrection of Christ is the whole reason that the New Testament was written, the whole reason of the New Testament church, the whole reason that we're here today, all of these things transpired because of the resurrection. Without the resurrection, the disciples were depressed, they were scared, they were

weak in their faith. Their faith was all but shattered. If Christ had not appeared, they would not have done anything. They would not have written about Him. They would have not written the Gospels, they would have not done any of the Acts of the Apostles. They wouldn't have written any Epistles to the churches. No, it's all because of the resurrection that we have all of this. The disciples were preaching where Jesus was crucified seven weeks earlier. They were preaching right there in Jerusalem. They were changed people. The body of Christ could not be produced as evidence the disciples were lying because there was no body, and therefore they were all excited and preaching, and testifying of the resurrection of Christ, and writing the Gospels and writing all of these things. Before the crucifixion, the disciples were afraid. Now, they're bold preachers. Something else that happened as a result of the resurrection of Christ was the conversion of Saul, and we know him as Paul. He saw the risen Christ. He saw with his own eyes. You all know the story of his conversion, the terrible persecutor of the church of God. He hated Christians, he hated Christianity; he hated Christ; then he met Him. He saw Him. He saw the resurrected Jesus, and then you just can't do anything but believe. And he believed, and he became a powerful preacher of the gospel. What changed Saul? The resurrection of Christ. And another thing that the resurrection of Christ is causing in this New Testament, is personal. The result of the resurrection of Christ: 1. The resurrection was a seal of the Father's acceptance. Remember how I said that's so important in the gospel and in salvation, in justification—this is the proof, the seal, of the acceptance of the payment of Christ, was the resurrection of the body of Jesus. It was also the mark of His divine Sonship. This proved, again, that He was the Son of God. Nothing can be more abnormal than that the God-man should enter the realms of death, because He is the Source of life. And therefore He had to rise from the dead. This was the demonstration of His victory over the devil. The devil was conquered at the cross and at the empty tomb. Conquered. Conquered. Now he's still fighting. But he's already lost. He's lost. If Christ would have been kept in the grave, the victory would have been the devil's. And he is alive and the devil has lost. I don't think he likes to hear that. That is the truth. And also victory over death, demonstrated the result of the resurrection of Christ. What does the resurrection mean to me and to you? Well, it proves a person's justification. It illustrates the power of God. We don't have any better or bigger illustration of the power of God, even Creation. This resurrection of Christ is a better illustration of the power of God and provides us a high priest. Without the resurrection, we would have no high priest. So this is what it means to me, to you. It begets a living hope. We have hope today, a living hope in Christ, because He rose from the dead and it guarantees our own personal, bodily resurrection.

The Result of the Resurrection of Christ

1. It was the seal of the Father's acceptance.
2. It was the mark of his divine sonship (Rom1:4).
3. It was the demonstration of his victory.

What the Resurrection of Christ Means to You

1. It proves his justification (Romans 4:24-25).
2. It illustrates his power (Ephesians 1:17-20).
3. It provides a high priest (Hebrews 7:25).
4. It begets a living hope (I Peter 1:3-4).
5. It guarantees our resurrection (I Corinthians 15:20-22).

QUESTION 28

Before the resurrection, the disciples were cowards; afterwards, they were _____ boldly.

QUESTION 29

The Resurrection was a _____ of the Father's acceptance.

Topic 5: Ascension and Enthronement of Christ

Not only did He rise from the dead, but He also ascended into Heaven. We can't just leave at the resurrection. We have to go and talk a little bit about the ascension and the enthronement of Christ. He's in Heaven today at the right hand of the Father on the throne. Christ is bodily in Heaven with His immortal, glorified body. The ascension was visible In Acts 1, they saw Him rise from the dead. And the enthronement, or exaltation, is an act by which the Father gave Christ full power and glory, allowing Him to sit at the right hand of God's throne. (Revelation 3:21) Remember the first three chapters of Revelation are talking about the church and the Church Age. (Revelation 3:21) That's where He is now. . . the throne, the right hand of the Father, the enthronement, the exaltation. And that continues on into the Battle of Armageddon and into eternity future. The ascension and enthronement shows the completed work of Christ in redemption. It helps us worship. Human worship is facilitated. Because of the resurrection of Christ, we are bestowed the Holy Spirit, or the ascension. Remember how He says until I'm gone, you can't . . . the Comforter's going to come, and the Comforter won't come until I am gone? Well, His ascension is what helped us bring that to pass, the Holy Spirit coming and indwelling the life of a believer. The ascension and enthronement was necessary for Christ to be head over all things to the church. And it provides an intercessor for us with God. It gives us access and enables us to serve Him. The ascension, the enthronement, are important doctrines of the faith. It gives us confidence in the provision of God, and it gives us a position that is heavenly with Him.

The Ascension and Enthronement of Christ

1. The ascension was visible bodily: (Acts 1:9-10)
2. It shows the completed work of Christ in redemption (Acts 5:31; Hebrews 10:9-10).
3. It facilitates human worship (John 4:23-24).
4. To bestow the Holy Spirit (John 16:7).
5. For Christ to be the head over all things to the church (Ephesians 1:22-23).
6. It gives us an intercessor with God (Hebrews 7:25).
7. It gives us access to God (Hebrews 4:14-16).
8. It gives enablement to serve God (Acts 1:8).
9. It gives confidence in God's provision (Romans 8:28; Philippians 4:19).
10. It gives us our heavenly position (Ephesians 2:4-7).

QUESTION 30

Christ's ascension and enthronement shows His completed work in _____.

QUESTION 31

Christ's ascension and enthronement gives us a Heavenly _____ with Him.