

Because He Lives:
The Personal Importance of Christ's Resurrection
Matthew 28:1-20

KEY QUESTION:

How would you explain the significance of the resurrection of Jesus to someone who isn't familiar with Christianity?

KEY TAKEAWAY:

Everything we believe about God, salvation, and us hinges on the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Why is the resurrection of Jesus crucial to the Christian faith? How would our beliefs change if Jesus had not been raised?
2. The sermon mentions that "God created us in love for love." How does this shape your understanding of your purpose and relationship with God?
3. Discuss the concept of sin and its consequences. How does Jesus' sinless life and sacrificial death address this issue?
4. How does the resurrection serve as God's "certification" of Jesus as Savior? Why is this important?
5. The pastor mentions three goals God accomplishes through the resurrection. Which of these resonates most with you and why?
 - a. Affirming the worth and work of Jesus
 - b. Extending the hope of His mercy
 - c. Offering a new life of joy

READ Ephesians 4:17-32 together. How does this passage describe the "new life" available to believers because of the resurrection?

Ephesians 4:17-32 (ESV)

¹⁷ Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. ¹⁸ They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. ¹⁹ They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity.

²⁰ But that is not the way you learned Christ!— ²¹ assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, ²² to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, ²³ and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, ²⁴ and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

²⁵ Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. ²⁶ Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, ²⁷ and give no opportunity to the devil. ²⁸ Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. ²⁹ Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. ³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹ Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. ³² Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS:

Trust: Identify an area of your life where you struggle to trust God fully. How can you apply Proverbs 3:5-6 this week?

Love: Choose one practical way to "pursue love" towards God and others this week.

New Life: Select one aspect of the "new self" described in Ephesians 4 to focus on developing in your daily life.

Witness: Practice explaining the importance of the resurrection to a friend or family member.

CLOSING PRAYER:

Thank God for the gift of new life through Christ's life, death, and resurrection. Ask for His help in living out this new life in practical ways throughout the week

QUESTIONS FOR ONGOING REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

How does the resurrection of Jesus fundamentally change our understanding of death, and what implications does this have for how we live our lives?

In what ways does the concept of God creating us 'in love for love' challenge or affirm your view of human purpose and identity?

How might our lives and relationships be different if we truly embraced Jesus' command to love God and neighbor as the greatest commandment?

What does it mean to 'walk before God and be blameless', and how

can we strive for this in our daily lives while acknowledging our human limitations?

How does the resurrection serve as God's 'certification' of Jesus as Savior, and what does this mean for our faith and trust in Him?

In what ways does the resurrection offer 'a new life of joy', and how can we more fully embrace and live out this new life?

What does it mean to 'pursue love' in light of Christ's resurrection, and how can we practically do this in our relationships and communities?

How does the reality of the resurrection change the way we approach suffering, hardship, and death in our own lives and the lives of others?