

“The Meaning of the Resurrection”
Romans 10:9-10
(Preached at Trinity, Easter April 1, 2018)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. This morning is Easter Sunday. What is the significance of this day for you. Like many of the Christian holidays Easter has a mixed history. On one hand it is a celebration of the resurrection of Christ. It is our most joyous holiday. Jesus Christ is alive, glorified, exalted, Lord over all.

On the other hand, it is permeated with pagan practices of fertility, Easter eggs, and rabbits. The name Easter is probably derived from the fertility goddess Eostre. None the less, it is testimony to the great influence Christianity has had upon our culture. Apart from Christmas it is one of the most celebrated holidays in our nation. It awakens religious inclinations from people who seldom consider Christ at other times. What is the significance of this day for you?

2. For Christians, the Resurrection is the glorious testimony to the victory of Christ. Having fully accomplished our redemption on the cross, he was raised victoriously from the dead. The resurrection is at the heart of Christianity. Belief in the resurrection is an essential element to Christian faith.

Paul wrote to the Corinthians:

1 Corinthians 15:1-4 NAU - "Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, ² by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. ³ For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,"

3. In our text this morning Paul declares the two elements of saving faith. How does a person receive Christ unto salvation? How is a person saved? How does a person acquire eternal life. Paul states two essential elements.

Romans 10:9 NAU - "that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved"

- a. First, a person must confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. This means he receives Jesus as the master of his life. He recognizes Jesus’ rightful place as King and bows before Him. He seeks to bring everything in his life under that lordship. He seeks to obey Jesus in everything.
 - b. Paul also links belief in the resurrection as an essential element of faith in Christ. “and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead”
4. If belief in the resurrection is essential to the Gospel it is important for us know what it means to believe in the resurrection. Does it mean that we must simply believe that it occurred, or is there more?

Believing in the resurrection demands understanding what it means. Do you understand the meaning of the resurrection? What is the meaning of the Resurrection?

This morning I’m going to set before you that the resurrection Vindicates the claims of Christ, Verifies the work of Christ, and Vanquishes death.

I. The Resurrection vindicates the claims of Christ

A. Most people deny the claims of Christ

1. The Gospel demands that every human being bow before Christ. Jesus Christ demands full homage, absolute obedience.
2. Most find Him easy to dismiss. Jesus is Lord of all, King of all. Salvation is possible through Christ alone, but few accept this. Few are willing to apply this to their lives.
3. Jesus made some amazing statements regarding Himself. How do we know they are true?
4. Over and over He declared His death and resurrection. If Jesus died like all men, if He was buried and His flesh decayed from His bones we would be justified in dismissing everything He said. We could write Him off as a madman who made fantastic claims, all proven false.

But what if His claims were true.

Luke 18:31-33 NAU - "Then He took the twelve aside and said to them, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things which are written through the prophets about the Son of Man will be accomplished. ³² "For He will be handed over to the Gentiles, and will be mocked and mistreated and spit upon, ³³ and after they have scourged Him, they will kill Him; and the third day He will rise again."

Matthew 16:21-22 NAU - "From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day. ²² Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "God forbid *it*, Lord! This shall never happen to You."

Matthew 17:22-23 NAU - "And while they were gathering together in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men; ²³ and they will kill Him, and He will be raised on the third day." And they were deeply grieved."

Matthew 20:18-19 NAU - "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn Him to death, ¹⁹ and will hand Him over to the Gentiles to mock and scourge and crucify *Him*, and on the third day He will be raised up."

5. No one believed Him.

John 3:31-32 NAU - "He who comes from above is above all, he who is of the earth is from the earth and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all. ³² "What He has seen and heard, of that He testifies; and no one receives His testimony."

6. The resurrection vindicates the claims of Christ.

Matthew 28:1-6 NAU - "Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first *day* of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to look at the grave. ² And behold, a severe earthquake had occurred, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it. ³ And his appearance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. ⁴ The guards shook for fear of him and became like dead men. ⁵ The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; for I know that you are looking for Jesus who has been crucified. ⁶ "He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said."

- B. The Resurrection vindicate Jesus and the claims He made about Himself
1. He claimed to rise from the dead on the third day—and He did! If He had remained in the tomb all of His claims about Himself would have been false.
 2. He claimed to be eternal. He claimed to be equal with God. He claimed to be able to forgive sins. He claimed to be the only way of salvation .
It is all just as He said.
 3. The Gospel is based upon historical fact, undeniable truth – the resurrection is a display of Divine truth

II. The Resurrection Verifies the Work of Christ – Jesus is our Mediator

- A. What took place when Jesus was crucified?
1. Jesus became our substitute.
Our sins were transferred to Him and He suffered God's wrath in our place. God's justice was satisfied and our salvation accomplished. Jesus died and was buried.
 2. Was His sacrifice accepted by the Father. Was Jesus an acceptable substitute?
 3. The resurrection proves that His sacrifice satisfied Divine justice - God raised Him from the dead demonstrating His full acceptance of His sacrifice
 4. To believe the God has raised Jesus from the dead means to trust alone in the accomplished work of Christ. It means to trust alone in His righteousness for all of my righteousness is tainted by sin. It means to trust alone in His sacrifice upon the cross as the only basis of my forgiveness, the only possible means of removing my guilt and satisfying God's condemnation.
- B. His death fully accomplished our salvation and His resurrection verifies it. We trust the cross of Christ. We rest upon Christ
Romans 4:25 NAU - "He who was delivered over because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification."
1 Corinthians 15:20-22 NAU - "But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. ²¹ For since by a man *came* death, by a man also *came* the resurrection of the dead. ²² For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive."
- C. Our faith rests on the fact that Jesus is alive. He did not remain in the tomb. He accomplished our salvation and then returned to His throne in glory. A dead Christ might be a Wonderful Teacher but not the Savior and Giver of Life.
1 Corinthians 15:17 NAU - "and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins."
- D. His resurrection makes possible His work as Mediator
Romans 8:33-34 NAU - "Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; ³⁴ who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us."

Not only does the resurrection vindicate the claims of Christ and verify His work . . .

III. The Resurrection Vanquishes Death

A. What happens after we die?

1. Not only does every human being experience death, every human being possesses eternal existence beyond this life. We have eternal souls.
2. This is a solemn thing to consider. The question is not whether you will experience life beyond the grave. The question is the nature of this existence. There are only two possibilities beyond the grave:
 - a. One is called eternal life – life of inexpressible joy, life in heaven – an existence of paradise purged of the curse of sin. We sing at Christmas:

No more let sins and sorrows grow
Nor thorns infest the ground
He comes to make His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found
Far as the curse is found
Far as, far as, the curse is found

In other words, the death of Christ has forever crushed the curse of sin.
 - b. The other eternal existence is called the second death – not a death in the grave but the death of being eternally forsaken in eternal darkness, eternal condemnation, eternal suffering. It is a physical existence of being fully alive and conscious in agony forever in a literal hell.
3. Most people deny such an existence. Most expect to enjoy eternal life. Most people expect to enter the pleasures of heaven. What is the basis of their hope – For most it is a hope without substance. They deny Christ and yet hope for eternal life. It is a vain hope.

B. The Resurrection of Christ assures us that we will experience resurrection to eternal life. Jesus was raised unto life and is currently reigning in majesty and exaltation. Those united to Him by faith share in His life of glory.

1. If Jesus was still in the grave we would have no hope
1 Corinthians 15:17-19 NAU - "and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins. ¹⁸ Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. ¹⁹ If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied."
2. But Jesus was raised from the grave—Just as He said.
Jesus is the first-fruit or the surety of life for all who are in Him
1 Corinthians 15:20 NAU - "But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep."
3. The Resurrection is the basis of our hope – it is foundational
1 Peter 1:3-5 NAU - "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to *obtain* an inheritance *which is* imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, ⁵ who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

4. Believing in the resurrection is placing full confidence in Christ – His life, His death, and His victory over death.
- C. Easter stands as a banner to the great reunion at the last day - The same Christ who rose from the grave and ascended into heaven is coming back.
Acts 1:10-11 NAU - "And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them. ¹¹ They also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven."
John 14:1-3 NAU - "Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. ² "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. ³ "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, *there* you may be also."
- D. This is the great comfort of the church
1 Thessalonians 4:16-5:1 NAU - "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of *the* archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words. "
 Every time we partake of the Lord's Supper we express our confidence in His resurrection
1 Corinthians 11:26 NAU - "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes."

Conclusion:

1. What does the resurrection mean to you? Does it bring you glorious hope and wonderful peace?
2. Is the resurrection the basis of your hope?
Romans 10:9 NAU - "that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;"
3. What place does the resurrection have in your daily life?
 Is the reality of the risen Christ evident? Does the resurrection impact how you live? Are you living in the light of the risen Christ and joyously awaiting His return?
Colossians 3:1-2 NAU - "Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth."
Philippians 3:20-21 NAU - "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; ²¹ who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself."
Galatians 2:20 NAU - "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me."