

**Psalm 22: 21-26; “Christ’s Triumphant Praise”, An Easter Sunday Communion
Sermon, delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on April 4th, 2021,
in the Afternoon Worship Service.**

We saw last Sunday, in my sermons to you from Psalm 22, that the Father did not answer the Lord Jesus to deliver Him from death, at that time when He was on the cross. Christ had to die for all the sins of His people. His precious life could not be spared from this, even though He was not only innocent, but He was perfectly righteous. But after He died there on the cross, His precious life could be righteously restored in His resurrection from death. God would vindicate His Righteous Son, and He would crown with glory and honor, and place Him over all the works of His hands.

We see here in these verses Christ’s triumphant praise to His Father for the Father’s fulfilling His Eternal Purposes in regard to Redemption, when He was raised from the dead. Christ really gloried in this, and we should also glory in it as well. This is the reason that we have come to know God, and this is the reason that our hearts will live forever. And so, let us look together at Christ’s responses to the Father’s raising Him from the dead, and let’s learn together what our responses should be from His responses of praise.

1st of all – Christ’s response to the Father’s raising Him from the dead was to declare His Father’s name.

He says: “I will declare Your name to My brethren; in the midst of the assembly I will praise You.” Now that He had been freed from the grave and was alive forevermore, He would declare His Father’s name to His brethren; those who had stood by Him in His trials. He would declare what the Father had done for Him in raising Him from the dead. It says, “In the midst of the assembly.” The specific fulfillment of this can legitimately be understood as referring to a number of places and times where Christ appeared to His brethren after the resurrection took place. Christ appeared to His disciples, manifesting Himself to them, telling them to touch Him and see that it was Him.

Turn with me over to Luke 24, verses 36-43. This was a great occasion of praise, Christ’s bodily physical resurrection from the dead. And it says in verse 36 – “Now as they said these things, (the two on the road to Emmaus who had returned to tell the other disciples about Jesus being raised from the dead) Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, ‘Peace to you.’ “But they were frightened and supposed they had seen a spirit.” “And He said to them, ‘Why are you troubled?’ “And why do doubts arise in your hearts?’” “Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself.” “Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.” “When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet.” It goes on to say in verse 41 – “But while they still did not believe it for joy, and marveled, He said to them, ‘Have you any food here?’” “So they gave Him a piece of broiled fish and some honeycomb.” “And He took it and ate in their presence.”

You and I should see, that because our Lord Jesus was raised from the dead, and showed Himself to be alive in this way, we who believe in Him should be looking forward to the time of our Lord’s 2nd Coming, when He will raise us from the dead on that final Day, with a transformed body. Because He is raised from the dead, so shall we someday be raised from the dead. When we are raised, on that final Day, it will be the same body that we have now, only glorified; and we will be recognizable to others that we have known, as it being ourselves. We shall one day be alive forevermore in a glorified body, a perfect body like unto Christ’s.

This ought to bring us great joy this afternoon as we partake of the Lord’s Supper. It is because Christ died that we might live. And it is because Christ was raised from the dead, that we too, shall one day be raised from the dead. As a believer in Christ, your spirit has been made

alive by the working of the Holy Spirit. And this work was done on the basis of the meritorious blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ. It is true that someday our bodies will die because of Adam's sin and our own sin. We when we die our bodies will still decay in the grave, and molder into dust. But let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him. God can put it all together again, so that we will be more beautiful, more powerful, more lovely, because we will be, humanly speaking, perfect in every way. And certainly we should also glory in the fact that our spirits shall never die. And so, we can rejoice greatly that we will never perish eternally, because of what Christ has done for us redeeming us to Himself.

But, you say, it is a sad fact that our body must eventually die someday. Yes, 'tis true, but must we really be sad, that one day we shall die? I suppose that this might be a cause for real discouragement, even to a true Christian, except for the reality of the resurrection which we celebrate here today. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God," Paul says in 1st Corinthians 15: 50. "There is a natural body and *there is* a spiritual body," he says in 1st Corinthians 15: 44. But now, it is good for us to rejoice greatly in what Christ died to purchase for us; a glorified body in the Day of the resurrection.

The hope that we have, even with regard to our mortal body is that someday we shall attain to this glorious resurrection of the dead. Our hope in this regard, should be fixed just as much upon our Lord Jesus for that great event, as it is fixed upon Him for the salvation of our souls, in our being brought to heaven instantly upon our death. Let us hold to both. Let us glory in these two future events together, this afternoon. We can rejoice that a redeemed man is not destined to be a disembodied spirit forever! It is true that we will die in weakness, at some point in time, in the future. We will die physically, but we shall be raised in power, if we have believed in Jesus.

Turn with me over to the book of Philippians, chapter 3, and verse 20 and 21. "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself." How we should rejoice in this, today, and look forward to the future with a sure and certain hope! Our lowly body will be transformed. It is going to be made over into conformity to His glorious body; a body without sin or any of its effects; joined to a spirit without sin and its effects, so that we shall be like Christ Himself. We will be very beautiful, powerful, glorious, and righteous forevermore.

What is the basis of such a hope? Verse 24 of our text tells us what happened behind the scenes spiritually, in the Father's mind. It says that God the Father did not "despise nor abhor the affliction of the afflicted; nor did He hide His face from Him; but when He cried to Him, He heard." The sufferings of the Lord Jesus were not despised by His Father. Instead they were rewarded. Oh, it is true, that He could not hear and give an favorable answer to Jesus' crying in His prayers, to those prayers He offered up and the tears which He shed to be delivered from suffering on our behalf. When Jesus was praying in the garden, and when He was suffering on the cross, the Father would not hear His prayers to deliver Him from dead. But He could hear and answer His prayers in all their details in the richness of His blessing, when those sufferings had been accomplished.

When Jesus died, the work of redemption was complete. The Lord had made propitiation for our sins; when He fulfilled everything necessary to bring salvation to us. The response of our Savior Himself at that time is recorded for us in verse 25 – "My praise shall be of You in the great assembly; I will pay my vows before those who fear Him." It is recorded in 1st Corinthians 15, verse 6, that He praised His Father in the midst of the great assembly of 500 brethren who saw Him, all at one time there. He was praising His Father God, after His resurrection from the dead, because He knew that the Father had answered Him. He was alive forevermore, and He had much grace to give to sinners everywhere who would believe in Him. His Father crowned

Him with glory and honor, and He gave Him a name above every name. He knew that all of His prayers for the Elect would be answered; that a vast number of sinners, a number which cannot be numbered, would all receive this great salvation which He had purchased.

This verse 25 of our text is quoted again in Hebrews 2: 10-12 – “For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.” “For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying: ‘I will declare Your name to my brethren; in the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to you.’” So Christ praises His Father here, realizing that He has been given a people to sanctify. It will most certainly be, that because of His death and resurrection, they shall most certainly come to have all the blessings of grace which they need to bring them to that place where they shall be made holy and happy forevermore. Will you not rejoice in this today, dear Christian? There is a great future coming for all the sons of God.

2nd – We see here that another of Christ’s responses was that His praise would be of God in the great assembly.

You see it first in verse 23. “You who fear the Lord, praise Him!” “All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him, and fear Him, all you offspring of Israel!” You see it again in verse 26 – “The poor shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek Him will praise the Lord.” So, we who believe have not come here this afternoon simply to go through the motions of partaking of the elements. No, we have come here to truly remember and praise the Lord because we fear Him. We are having regard for what He had done for us in His great redemptive work, and the fact that He is raised from the dead for our justification and our sanctification. Let your heart live forever is not simply a slogan that we might say to one another because we hope that one day that we will wake up and find that it so.

This statement is made here so that we might wake up now, in praise and thankfulness for all that Christ has done for us. We should realize that God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ would have our hearts respond to Him now, today, here in this place, for all the work which He has accomplished on the cross. We see that the Father has vindicated Him in His righteousness. And we conclude from this that He would have us to be a people who believe that the righteousness and strength of Christ are ours by faith. God has sent His Son, and He has suffered and died for us. With His blood and righteousness He had purchased our redemption, the forgiveness of all of our sins. He has given us a new heart, and grace and wisdom and truth to guide us all the way to heaven; all the way to the arms of your Savior.

When you think of these things, I hope that you will come to realize, as it says in Proverbs 23: 17 – “You should not let your heart envy sinners, but rather it will be good for you to be zealous for the fear of the Lord all day long.” “For surely there is a hereafter, and your hope will not be cut off.” This is one of the greatest reasons that you will want to praise Him here today. You will want to praise Him because you have come to fear Him. You do not fear Him with a craven fear. But you have come to fear Him as it is described in Hymn # 31 of our Hymnal. “O how I fear thee, living God, with deepest tenderest fears; and worship thee with trembling hope, and penitential tears.” “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom”, it says in the Bible.

If that is so, then we should understand that it is not only our duty to praise God for what He has done for us in Christ Jesus. But it should be our joy and our delight to do so. Even if we are not the physical descendants of Jacob, we should realize that through Christ we are the spiritual descendants of this great patriarch. Therefore we ought to glorify God and fear Him as He deserves. We ought to reason this way: If He can save tricky Jacob, He can save me! If Jacob can wrestle with God and prevail, then I can too, because of the mercy of God to me in giving me Christ. Since we have Christ, we can fear God in our worship of our Him. We can fear Him in the way that we live our lives. When you fear God you are having regard to him, to do what He

commands you. You greatly desire to live in the way that the Bible shows you that you ought to live; in reverence, joy, and holiness. It is your greatest joy to love God and keep His commandments.

Will you not covenant with the Lord, when you come down to the front now, to partake of the communion? Tell Him that you would like to be more zealous for Him, and live in the fear of Him all day long. Make solemn vows to Him and tell Him in prayer that you want to regard Him and His word above all things and all people. Declare to Him that by His grace and the power of His Spirit working in your life, that you will learn to do and keep His commandments out of a love for what He has done for you. Let's come down front now, and have real dealings with our God during this time of our considering and remembering what He has done for us.

3rd – The Final Response of our Lord here, to the Father's raising Him from the dead was His exhortation to us – “Let your heart live forever!”

You should remember that you who were spiritually poor before you were converted to Christ, have now been made spiritually rich by His grace. Therefore, we who believe in Jesus should remember to live in light of this exhortation – Let your heart live forever! All of us who are partaking of this Supper are going to eat and be satisfied, for this is why Christ died. You should remember that when Christ has said to you, “Let your heart live forever!”, that you must consciously live in light of this truth – My heart is going to live forever because I have been raised from my spiritual death in trespasses and sins, to have Christ's resurrection life in my life!

The response that you come with this afternoon to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is that since you have died with Him to sin, you have been raised with Him also to newness of life. Jesus has paid His vows. His vow was to do all of God's will and fulfill His holy law. He has worked out your salvation on the cross and He was rewarded in His resurrection to be able to apply all that He has purchased for you. His righteousness and His sufferings were all done on your behalf. Now that He has accomplished redemption, He has vowed to carry on this glorious work in your heart until He brings you to perfection; until you are completely like Him. The vows of the Lord Jesus are binding upon Him. Now that He has died and is raised from the dead, He will bring many sons and daughters to glory by the power of His grace.

The Lord is meeting here with us now; all of us who are poor in spirit. We have nothing in ourselves to bring to God so that He might continue to show us His favor. But we are confessing anew and afresh, the power of Christ to save us and to sanctify us. He is not ashamed to call us brethren because both Christ Himself, and our salvation in Him, are of gifts of our God who has united us to Himself. You see, Christ is God's gift to us poor believing sinners. We come here to feed on His faithfulness. “The poor shall eat and be satisfied.” Are you a partaker of Christ's death? Have you His resurrection power working in your heart, bringing you along step by step on the path of righteousness? Then your heart wants to seek Him and you will praise Him here today.

In partaking of these elements you are saying: I know that Christ's death satisfied for all of my sins and iniquities. I know that because He lives I can be satisfied with all that He shall bring me, in this life and the next. This truth will be made especially apparent to every believer in the coming Day of Christ's return when He raises you from the dead. Christ is saying to us here today, “If you have partaken of Me, then let your heart live forever!” In other words, praise God the Father now for all that is coming. Praise the Lord Jesus for His dying for you. Praise the Holy Spirit who is the great Teacher and Comforter in your learning and growing in the knowledge of Christ. For He is the one who gives you understanding in how you can glorify God. Let us now, with a thankful heart, partake of the Supper.