

April 20, 2014

Three Truths Everyone Should Know

I Cor. 15:1-4

All Stand and Read Scripture

1 Corinthians 15:1-4

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

¹ 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,

Prayer

INTRODUCTION:

The big day on the calendar for Christians is the resurrection. Jesus rose from the dead on the third day as prophesied in scripture.

This morning I would like to reflect on the last week of Christ's life on earth and talk about the three truths that everyone should know concerning our Savior.

The death of Jesus on the cross was the culmination of His ministry on earth. It is the reason He was born as a man—to die for the sins of the world so that those who believe in Him would not perish, but have everlasting life (John 3:16).

After being found innocent of all charges against Him, Jesus was nevertheless handed over to the Romans to be crucified. The recorded events of that day included:

- the betrayal of Judas
- a scourging with a Roman whip called a “cat of 9 tails”
- the mocking and taunting by the soldiers and the crowd
- the casting of lots among the soldiers for His clothing
- and three hours of darkness during the middle of the day

At the moment Jesus gave up His spirit:

- there was an earthquake and rocks split in two

- there was a resurrection of some of the believers who had died
- the huge, heavy curtain separating the Holy of Holies from the rest of the temple was torn from top to bottom, signifying that access to God was now open to all who believe in Jesus.

These were all unnatural “signs” that Christ was indeed the Son of God. People who were there commented that this was obviously, the “Son of God”.

But it didn’t stop there. On the third day **HE ROSE FROM THE DEAD!**

Let’s look at the Three Truths that Everyone Should Know.

BODY:

The first truth that you should know is:

I. It is Finished.

John 19:28-30

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

²⁸ After this, Jesus, knowing that all things had already been accomplished, to fulfill the Scripture, *said, “I am thirsty.” ²⁹ A jar full of sour wine was standing there; so they put a sponge full of the sour wine upon *a branch of hyssop* and brought it up to His mouth. ³⁰ Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished!” And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.

“It is Finished”. These were the last words spoken on the cross, according to John, before Jesus bowed His head and died.

These words did not specify the **end of His life**, it specifies the **completion of His task**.

What looked like a shameful death for Jesus was actually a triumph for God’s plan, because it is through the cross that Jesus **won victory over enemy powers, including Satan, sin and death**. Their claim on us has been fully satisfied in the death of the innocent victim. They cannot demand any more than what he has already paid. They have nothing further to threaten us with.

Man needed Christ’s death because we acquired sin through Adam when he partook of the tree of good and evil. Sin separates us from God. We are unable to overcome our sin. There is no works good enough to cover our sin. We needed to get back in favor with God. Without that reconciliation, we would remain in spiritual death with no hope of eternal salvation.

Why is the cross good news? Because the cross is the means by which Jesus rescued us from death. Paul focused on the cross because it is the key to Jesus being good news for us. We will not be raised into glory unless in Christ we are

made “the righteousness of God.” Only then can we join Jesus in his glory. The crucifixion is part of the process by which we are transformed from the old creation to the new.

It is as if we were on the cross, receiving the curse that our sins deserved. But he did it for us, and because he did it, we can be justified, or proclaimed as righteous. He takes our sin and death; he gives us righteousness and life.

“By his death,” we are told, Jesus was able to “destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil” (Hebrews 2:14). “The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil’s work”. Victory was won on the cross.

II. He is Risen.

Luke 24:1-9

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

24 But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. ² And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, ³ but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴ While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men suddenly stood near them in dazzling clothing; ⁵ and as *the women* were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, *the men* said to them, “Why do you seek the living One among the dead? ⁶ He is not here, but He has risen. Remember how He spoke to you while He was still in Galilee, ⁷ saying that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.” ⁸ And they remembered His words, ⁹ and returned from the tomb and reported all these things to the eleven and to all the rest.

"Why is the resurrection of Jesus Christ important?"

1. It witnesses to the immense power of God Himself.

- To believe in the resurrection is to believe in God.
- If God exists, and if He created the universe and has power over it, He has power to raise the dead.
- If He does not have such power, He is not a God worthy of our faith and worship.
- Only He who created life can resurrect it after death, only He can reverse the horror that is death itself,
- and only He can remove the sting that is death and the victory that is the grave’s.

1 Corinthians 15:54-57

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

⁵⁴ But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, “DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP in victory. ⁵⁵ O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?” ⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; ⁵⁷ but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

- In resurrecting Jesus from the grave, God reminds us of His absolute control over life and death.

2. The resurrection of Jesus is a testimony to our own hope of resurrection.

- This is a basic hope of the Christian faith.
- Unlike all other religions, Christianity alone possesses a founder who transcends death and who promises that His followers will do the same.
- All other religions were founded by men and prophets whose end was the grave. As Christians, we take comfort in the fact that our God became man, died for our sins, and was resurrected the third day.
- The grave could not hold Him. He lives, and He sits today at the right hand of God the Father in heaven.

3. Paul gives six disastrous consequences if there were no resurrection.

1 Corinthians 15:14-19

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

¹⁴ and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain.

¹⁵ Moreover we are even found *to be* false witnesses of God, because we testified against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised. ¹⁶ For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised; ¹⁷ 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.

- preaching Christ would be senseless
- faith in Christ would be useless
- all the witnesses and preachers of the resurrection would be liars
- no one would be redeemed from sin
- all former believers would have perished
- Christians would be the most pitiable people on the earth

4. The resurrection gives us confidence to work for Christ.

- “...you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain”

1 Corinthians 15:58

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

⁵⁸ Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not *in vain* in the Lord.

- Since we know we will be resurrected to new life, we can have confidence to suffer persecution and danger for Christ’s sake.
- We can follow the example of the thousands of martyrs through history who gladly traded their earthly lives for everlasting life via the resurrection.

The resurrection is the triumphant and glorious victory for every believer. Jesus Christ died, was buried, and rose the third day according to the Scripture.

Post-resurrection appearances: Christ made hundreds of appearances after His resurrection to testify that He had indeed risen from the dead.

Ascension: Jesus’ final act on earth was His ascension into heaven in the presence of the disciples. He was taken up in a cloud which hid Him from their view, but two angels came to tell them that He would return one day in a similar manner.

He is coming again!

1 Thessalonians 4:16-18

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

¹⁶ 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.

Why is the resurrection of Jesus Christ important to salvation? It demonstrated that God accepted Jesus’ sacrifice on our behalf. It proves that God has the power to raise us from the dead. It guarantees that those who believe in Christ will not remain dead, but will be resurrected unto eternal life. That is our hope!

III. He is Lord.

Philippians 2:8-11

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

⁸ Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹ For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

This passage tells us that **every knee shall bow** and **everyone** tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. Christ wants that time to be now, while our window of opportunity to surrender to Him is still open. When you die or when the Lord comes again, that window of opportunity will be closed forever. If you do not accept Him as your Lord and Savior in this life, you **will** acknowledge Him when He returns. Then it will be too late for you to turn to Him.

Christianity is not a list of things to do —it is accepting that Christ has done everything we need to be right with God—and he did it on the cross.

He did this before we believed it, before we were even born. And since we are reconciled through him, all our sins are forgiven. Reconciliation, forgiveness and justification all mean the same thing: **to be put back in favor with God.**

1 Corinthians 15:21-22

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

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.

The scriptures tell us that all have sinned and fallen away from God. The wages of sin is death. This is a spiritual death that separates us from God.

Jesus stepped in as a substitute for you and me. He paid the price of what you and I deserved. The price was high, our creator died a physical death on the cross for our sins.

You can claim to believe that Jesus died for you and rose again to give us hope for salvation, but until you accept Him as your Lord and Savior and let Him take control of your life, the promises will not be applied to you.

Your faith in Christ **MUST** be more than “**head knowledge**”. It **MUST** be **embedded in your heart**. You put your entire life and destiny in His hands.

When you surrender yourself completely to Jesus, you are putting your whole trust in Him. You no longer want to participate in worldly things.

You **MUST** know that you can't carry the burden of your own sin. Unless you believe and obey God's commands, you will die in your sin. Salvation is only gained through Jesus Christ our Lord.

John 3:36

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

³⁶ He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

All that we do as believers is a result of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

The conclusion is simple: Since God so loved us, we also ought to love Him and one another.

CONCLUSION:

Romans 6:3-11.

A. Have you been crucified with Christ?

³ Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? ⁴ Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

B. Are you putting to death the deeds of the flesh?

⁶ knowing this, that our old self was crucified with *Him*, in order that our body of our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; ⁷ for he who has died is freed from sin.

C. Can you claim your hope of eternal salvation?

⁸ Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, ⁹ knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him. ¹⁰ For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. ¹¹ Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

That hope will only come to those who have fully surrendered their lives to Christ. When we accept Christ as our savior, we must **die** to our self and be raised into a new life with Christ.

Christ's death on the cross covers **all** of our sins permanently when you have surrendered to Him and claimed your hope of eternal salvation. There is no need for any more sacrifices. He was the perfect sacrifice. No sin is too great for Christ as long as you are truly repentant of your sins.

If you do not know Christ as your personal Savior, the window of opportunity is open for you now. God wants to come into your life. If you have not been baptized into Christ, won't you come forward this morning and let God know that you are ready to turn your life around for Him and start obeying His commands?

If you have wandered away from the Lord and the Holy Spirit is convicting you this morning to come back home, the invitation is open to you to rededicate your life to Christ by stepping forward.

We are also here with open arms, if you would like to identify yourself as part of this family of God in the Greenwood Christian church.

He Is Lord (Page 105)

Emptied of His glory; God became a man,
To walk on earth in ridicule and shame.
A Ruler, yet a Servant; a Shepherd, yet a Lamb;
A Man of Sorrows, agony and pain.

Humbled and rejected, beaten, and despised.
Upon the cross the Son of God was slain.
Just like a lamb to slaughter, a sinless sacrifice;
But, by His death His loss became our gain.

Satan's forces crumbled like a mighty wall.
The stone that held Him in was rolled aside.
The Price of Life in glory was lifted over all,
Now earth and heaven echo with the cry.

He is Lord, He is Lord! He is risen from the dead and He is Lord.
Ev'ry knee shall bow, ev'ry tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.