

A Journey with Christ the Messiah Friday is Over, Sunday Has Arrived

I Corinthians 15:1-19

INTRODUCTION:

This morning we are continuing a series that I have entitled *A Journey with Christ the Messiah*. We have now entered into the Easter season. We have seen the excitement of the crowds when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey during His triumphal entry. We have also seen the crowds going from excitement to anger and demanding that Jesus be **crucified**.

All Stand and Read Scripture

1 Corinthians 15:1-19 (NASB)

15 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, ⁵ and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. ⁶ After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep; ⁷ then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles; ⁸ and last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also. ⁹ For I am the least of the apostles, and not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. ¹⁰ But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me. ¹¹ Whether then *it was* I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

¹² Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? ¹³ But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised; 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.

As we prepare to continue this journey, let's bow in a word of prayer.

Prayer

Let's continue the journey!

BODY:

I. WHY DID JESUS HAVE TO DIE?

Last week I shared with you portions of a famous sermon preached by a modern day white liberal minister named Tony Campolo.

Tony told about a message that a black pastor preached one Good Friday at his church. For over an hour, the pastor preached using one line that he kept repeating over and over and over.

It's Friday, But Sunday is coming!

Friday, he said, Jesus was dead on the cross.

But that was because it was Friday, Sunday's coming.

And some women in the crowd said "**Well**".

And somebody yelled "**Keep Going, Keep Going**".

It's Friday.

Jesus is Praying.

Peter is sleeping.

Judas is betraying.

The disciples are hiding
and Peter's denying that he knows the Lord.
But they don't know that **Sunday is a-coming**.

Someone yelled "**Preach On Brother!**"

And that's all he needed. He took off!

But I am here to give you the good news!

It's only Friiidaaaaay! (Pause) Sunday is coming!

Friday. Friday. It's Friday.

The Romans scourge my Jesus.

And spit into His face.

They mock Him in a scarlet robe.

And press on Him a crown of thorns.

Jesus is dragging His cross to Calvary.

His blood is dripping.

His body stumbling.

And He is nailed to the cross.

But you see, it is only Friday, Sunday's coming.

It's Friday.

The world is winning.

People are sinning.

And evil is grinning.

Jesus is hanging on the cross.
Feeling forsaken by His Father.

And we can proclaim...

It's Friiidaaaay! (Pause and stretch arms outward)

(Audience Response) **But Sunday is coming!**

But now Friday is OVER, Sunday has Arrived! And we ask the question...

II. WHY WAS THE RESURRECTION SO IMPORTANT?

Why did Jesus have to raise from the dead? Wasn't His death on the cross the actual event where He took on our sins and provided our means of salvation?

Yes, it was!

When Jesus was hanging on the cross, He cried out with a loud voice and said "**It is finished!**". This was not a cry of defeat and despair. **It was a cry of victory!**

He knew that He had finally accomplished everything that He had come to earth to do.

John 19:28-30 (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.

So WHY was the resurrection SO IMPORTANT?

The resurrection was the **ultimate proof** that Jesus **was** Who He claimed to be!

JESUS did not need to be resurrected in order for HIM TO KNOW that He was the Son of God and that HE had provided a means of salvation to man.

Jesus needed to be resurrected so that MAN would know that Jesus was the Son of God and that His death on the cross provided a means of salvation. Man needed to be convinced that Jesus **WAS** Who He claimed to be!

FRIDAY WAS OVER. SUNDAY HAS ARRIVED!

During Christ's ministry, Jesus was performing miracles and crowds of people were being amazed. This was the purpose of His miracles: to authenticate that His claims and teachings were from God.

The resurrection became the ultimate miracle.

FRIDAY WAS OVER. SUNDAY HAS ARRIVED!

It demonstrated that Jesus' sacrifice on our behalf received God's stamp of approval.

He is in effect saying that these miracles are verification that I AM the MESSIAH prophesied in the Old Testament scriptures!

The resurrection was also the **ultimate proof** that there IS a resurrection from the dead.

I am going to read from the Living Bible and let it tell you the importance of the resurrection.

1 Corinthians 15:12-22 Living Bible

13 For if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ must still be dead. 14 And if he is still dead, then all our preaching is useless and your trust in God is empty, worthless, hopeless; 15 and we apostles are all liars because we have said that God raised Christ from the grave, and of course that isn't true if the dead do not come back to life again. 16 If they don't, then Christ is still dead, 17 and you are very foolish to keep on trusting God to save you, and you are still under condemnation for your sins; 18 in that case, all Christians who have died are lost! 19 And if being a Christian is of value to us only now in this life, we are the most miserable of creatures.

20 But the fact is that Christ did actually rise from the dead and has become the first of millions who will come back to life again someday.

21 Death came into the world because of what one man (Adam) did, and it is because of what this other man (Christ) has done that now there is the resurrection from the dead. 22 Everyone dies because all of us are related to Adam, being members of his sinful race, and wherever there is sin, death results. But all who are related to Christ will rise again.

Jesus Has Risen from the Dead!

Friday is Over, Sunday has Arrived!

Christ has risen!

Disciples are grinning.
Evil is cringing.
Jesus is appearing,
and People are believing.

And we can proclaim...

Fridaaaay is over! (Pause and stretch arms outward)

And (Audience Response) Sunday has Arrived!

III. WHAT IS THE VALUE OF SALVATION?

ILLUSTRATION:

Someone once used the example of a penny stock broker to emphasize the value of salvation.

Think about this for a moment. You have heard of penny stocks, right?

Let's say that I am a stock broker and you are overwhelmed with my stock brokering skills, which you definitely shouldn't! However, you are.

I tell you of a penny stock. This penny stock today is only worth one cent per share. But if you invest your penny today, tomorrow that penny is going to be worth one million dollars. For every penny that you invest today, that penny will be worth one million dollars tomorrow.

You are so convinced that you become willing to invest everything because you believe what I am going to tell you.

Knowing that, how many of your pennies would you be willing to invest in that stock today? All of them right! As many as you could find. As many as you could get your hands on. You might start selling all of your possessions for pennies on the dollar to anyone who would buy them. You might sell your car for \$100 because tomorrow that \$100 dollars would be worth \$100,000,000. You would go to your neighbors down the street asking for pennies. **You would do anything that you could.**

Time is of the essence. Those stocks **MUST** be bought before the stock market closes.

One must have faith that this stock is going to be worth millions tomorrow, and once we have that faith, it will cause us to invest everything that we can possibly can before the stock market closes.

Isn't SALVATION much greater than that lousy penny stock?

Matthew 16:26 (NASB)

26 For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

Only a fool would give what he cannot LOSE to gain what he cannot KEEP.

Let me repeat that one more time. **Only a fool would give what he cannot LOSE to gain what he cannot KEEP.**

Jesus tells us that the Kingdom of God is invaluable. It's worth is immeasurable! Far greater than any penny stock.

Matthew 13:44 (NASB)

44 "The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid *again*; and from joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

Jesus in essence is saying that the kingdom of heaven is like that penny stock that is going to increase overnight one million times. It is worth everything that we hold dear in this world. **Is it worth everything to you?**

It certainly was for the man in the field.

The difference is that the penny stock is just money. We cannot take it with us when we die. Salvation is eternal. It is a treasure that will never go away.

Only a fool would give what he cannot LOSE to gain what he cannot KEEP.

Earthly treasures are left behind when we die. Salvation allows us to spend an **eternity** in Heaven in the presence of our Creator.

God so loved you, me, and the whole world that He allowed Jesus died on the cross for our sins. He died once for all so that we could have our life restored to the righteousness that we had before mankind fell.

CONCLUSION:

Salvation is of immense value. It has eternal value.

Do you **know** what God expects from you in order to inherit this free gift?

God speaks to us through the scriptures and tells us how to acquire salvation. Knowing the importance of salvation, have you diligently searched the scriptures for yourself to ensure that you are a child of God?

Jesus loved you so much He was willing to die for you before you were ever born.

This same JESUS invites you today to:

- COME to Him by FAITH,
- BELIEVING that He alone can save your soul,
- REPENTING of your sinful ways,
- CONFESSING HIM as your Lord and Savior,
- BEING BAPTIZED in the waters of Christian baptism,
- and WALK IN NEWNESS OF LIFE.

This is how Jesus has taught us in the scriptures that we can die to sin and be made spiritually alive with Him. If we are not spiritually alive, we are still dead in our sins.

If we are dead to sin, we no longer want to do sinful things. We desire to live for God. We will continue to sin, but the sin is no longer deliberate and Jesus says therefore there is NO CONDEMNATION for that sin. It is covered by His blood that He shed on the cross.

Matthew 16:24b-25 (NASB)

²⁴ ...“If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. ²⁵ For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.

You see, it is not enough to just believe in Christ and be baptized. If we truly believe that Jesus paid the price for our salvation we will follow Him and **we will throw all of our pennies into HIS stock.**

Matthew 16:27 (NASB)

²⁷ For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and WILL THEN REPAY EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS.

We are not saved by our works. But, if we have died to sin, we will work for Christ. Faith without works is dead.

Compared to eternity our life on earth is very short and we are not guaranteed a tomorrow. Your eternity might be much closer than you think: Do you realize right at this very moment you are

- just one heart beat
- one breath
- one heart attack
- one stroke
- one accident
- one blink of an eye away from your eternity!

The question is: Are you ready? Are you ready to meet your Creator should you leave this world today?

Hebrews 9:27-28 (NIV)

²⁷ Just as people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, ²⁸ so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.

- There is only ONE who can save your soul.
- There is only ONE who can turn your hopelessness into hope.
- There is only ONE who can turn your DEFEAT into VICTORY.
- There is only ONE who can turn your ETERNAL DEATH into ETERNAL LIFE.

and **that is Jesus Christ!**

Jesus died on the cross in order that this miracle can be performed in you! He only asks that you trust that what He tells us in the scriptures are true and that you follow Him.

John 10:27-28a (NASB)

²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; ²⁸ and I give them eternal life

Jesus is patiently waiting for you to make your choice.

Let me ask you this morning. What if this is the last sermon you will ever hear? What if this is the last invitation you will ever be offered?

Seek the Lord while He may still yet be found.

NOW is the acceptable time.

NOW is the day of salvation!

We are going to stand and we are going to sing. And I invite you on behalf of Jesus Christ to come this morning, while God is still giving you breath in your body, to profess your faith and be baptized.

He is Lord!