

Resurrection

A doctrine that is a key to our walk of faith is the understanding of the concept of resurrection. Romans 10:9,10, which is a key scripture for our salvation, states that we must believe that Jesus is the Son of God; walked on this earth, died for our sins, and was resurrected from the dead. Paul states, in I Corinthians 15:13, 14 that if there is no resurrection and Christ did not raise the dead, then all of our preaching is worthless. Paul goes on to say in verse 17, of the same chapter, that not only is our preaching foolish, but all of those who have died are lost if the resurrection of Christ did not take place. These are strong words! They certainly emphasize why it is important for us to have an understanding about immortality. Even though human wisdom would emphasize the temporal life the word focuses on the eternalness of man. Jesus' sacrifice on the cross and His resurrection three days later guaranteed that you and I will be able to experience immortality, this must be a key focus for all believers. We can not be victorious in this temporal life without a view of the eternal. Immortality is an important part of a person's life and the Bible certainly has a lot to say about it.

As we look at resurrection, we need to remember I Corinthians 5:2, 3 emphasizes the fact that we are a three part being. We are a spirit, that has a soul and we live in a natural body. This is important to remember when we talk about immortality and resurrection. The body is made of the dust of the earth and it will eventually return to its source; however, our soul and spirit will not decay, but will also eventually return to their source, our heavenly Father. Ephesians 2:10 explains this concept to us. I Thessalonians 5:23 shows that we have three distinct parts, which are spirit, soul, and body. Christ is the substance that our soul and spirit is made of, which is why He desires for us to return to Him when we leave this earth. That, of course, is what will happen when we invite Him to be our Heavenly Father. Genesis 2:7 shows us that God breathed into man and he became a living being. The body was formed from the earth, but the spirit was given from the breath of God. When you ask the Lord to be your Heavenly Father He once again will breath His breath into us and we will become a living being. When our time on earth is completed and we go to be with the Lord, our breath will return to the Lord and our spirit man will be with Him for eternity. Ecclesiastes 3:11 reminds us that we have eternity in our hearts which is our spirit and soul. Be encouraged by knowing that you are going to spend eternity with the Lord.

After Jesus resurrected, He did not have the same limitations as He had when He was in His mortal body. He still had the Spirit without measure and His perfect soul was intact. He was able to explain scripture, perform miracles, discern the heart of man, give instructions, and explain purpose. There are things He did before resurrection, but after resurrection, He needed no sleep, food, transportation or open doors. He was not tied to physical limitation. That gives us a great idea of what we are going to be doing when we reach our immortal state.

Resurrection is a concept that people want to believe, but many have a very non-biblical view. Some believe that they will return to earth after death as an animal or some other created being. Some refuse to kill an animal because it might be a relative. Some even think that their loved ones are watching "down" on them and noticing everything that

they do. Have you ever heard anyone say I know Dad saw me do that? Isn't it amazing what the mind can come up with when we do not use the Bible as our guide? The very provision from God is not accepted because of wrong thinking.

Luke 16:19-31 is a very clear picture of what happens to us when our physical body dies. This teaching by Jesus shows that there is an eternal place that we will live, but it is not on this earth. Jesus' teaching also shows that we will recognize people when we shed these bodies and go into eternity. It also emphasizes that this is a place of rest for those who trust in Christ, which is in His presence and just as real a place of torment for those who refuse to put their faith in Christ. Both places are final and there is no crossing over. Matthew 17:1-9 shows once again that we will recognize people in eternity and carry on spiritual conversations. Another amazing account of resurrection is found in Matthew 27:53. This text states that after Jesus resurrected, many (not all) holy people came out of the grave and went into the city and appeared to many. Wouldn't that be exciting? Can you imagine the excitement that a miracle like that would cause? I would like to have seen that in person. All were certainly recognized, able to communicate, and I am sure preached the gospel with power.

But, of course, the greatest of resurrection was Christ. The prophets said it was going to take place and Jesus spoke of His resurrection before it happened. Jesus accomplished everything that had been spoken. Jesus specifically stated He would be in the grave three days and then He would rise from death to life. He explained the purpose of His death by likening it to a grain of corn that falls into the earth and comes up and establishes a first fruit. Jesus was the first fruit and guaranteed that you and I would certainly follow in His footsteps. He conquered death and released me from any fear that the enemy might be trying to get me to accept. Romans 6 shows us that Jesus died in our place to pay the wages of sin we could not pay, which allows me to identify with His resurrection and live in an overcoming manner, resurrection from sin on the earth and an assurance that I will not be rejected from the presence of the Lord. John 14:1-4 assures me that the Lord has a place for me, that He has prepared and that He will come and escort me home when my job here is complete. 2 Corinthians 5:8 clearly states, that when this body stops working, I will instantly be in the presence of the Lord. We have a confidence that at the end of the race there is a special place for all of us that are champions to stand. I will be able to stand on the right hand side of the Lord and receive my crowns of glory. I can step out of the earth realm and be instantly in the arms of my Heavenly Father. What a joyous hope for me and peace for all of our loved ones to know exactly where we are going to end up and the joy that is waiting there for us.

I Thessalonians was written to bring peace to the hearts of the people. They were concerned about their loved ones who had died and would not be alive when the Lord returned. Christ has promised to come back and get all of those true followers of Him. Some had died and there was grief and worry. Paul writes to encourage those in Thessalonica and it serves as a source of encouragement to us also. Paul explains that if we die in Christ, then we will be resurrected when Christ returns for His church body. If we are still alive when He comes, then He will catch us up to be with Him for eternity. We, of course, will get new resurrected bodies and all of us will get to gather around the throne and worship our Savior. Either way, the gathering around the throne is going to be a great time. (I Thessalonians 4:13-18). I am sure that the letter brought great joy to them

as it continues to bring great joy to us. What a great and wonderful hope of getting to be in the presence of the Lord without the nature of the flesh and the brokenness of a sinful world.

There are a number of resurrections that are explained in the Bible and we will look up most of those scriptures. I know that you will be blessed as you read God's Word on what is going to happen to all of us that are in Christ. We are going to experience a quick change from one dimension of glory to the ultimate glory. Be ready!

Resurrections Mentioned:

1. Old Testament Resurrections: I Kings 17:17-24, II Kings 4:24-27
2. Christ the First Fruit: I Corinthians 15:20-28
3. During the time of Jesus on the earth: John 7:11-17
4. Resurrection of Old and New Testament saints at the "Rapture": I Thess. 4:13-18
5. Two witnesses during the tribulation time: Revelation 11:1-14
6. Tribulation martyrs at the end of the tribulation: Revelation 14:1-5
7. Resurrection of saints at end of millennium: Revelation 20:4,5
8. Final Resurrection: Revelation 20:11-15

Scriptural Reference:

1. Genesis 17:8
2. Genesis 18:5
3. Genesis 21:33
4. Exodus 3:14
5. I Kings 17:22
6. II Kings 4:35
7. II Kings 13:21
8. Job 19:25-27
9. Psalm 16:8-11
10. Psalm 71:20,21
11. Psalm 90:2
12. Psalm 139:13-16
13. Ecclesiastes 3:21
14. Ecclesiastes 12:7
15. Isaiah 14:9,10
16. Isaiah 24:23
17. Isaiah 26:19

18. Isaiah 57:15
19. Isaiah 65:20
20. Jeremiah 30:7
21. Ezekiel: 32:17-32
22. Ezekiel 37:10
23. Daniel 12:1-3
24. Hosea 6:1-3
25. Zechariah 14:5,9
26. Matthew 9:25
27. Matthew 10:28
28. Matthew 16:21
29. Matthew 25:31,32
30. Matthew 26:32
31. Matthew 28:9,17
32. Mark 5:42
33. Mark 9:9
34. Mark 13:26
35. Mark 14:28
36. Mark 16:9
37. Luke 7:15
38. Luke 11:31,32
39. Luke 12:20
40. Luke 16:19-31
41. Luke 21:16-18
42. Luke 20:36
43. Luke 23:43,46
44. Luke 24:15,36,50
45. John 2:19
46. John 5:28,29
47. John 6:50
48. John 8:21-24,51
49. John 11:26,44

50. John 14:3
51. John 20:19,26
52. John 21:1,14
53. Acts 1:9
54. Acts 2:23,24,27,29
55. Acts 3:14,15
56. Acts 4:33
57. Acts 7:55-60
58. Acts 9:5,40
59. Acts 10:39-41
60. Acts 17:2,3,30,31
61. Acts 24:15
62. Acts 26:22,23
63. Romans 1:4
64. Romans 2:7
65. Romans 4:25
66. Romans 6:6,9
67. Romans 8:11,23
68. Romans 10:9,10
69. Romans 11: 15,26,27,36
70. Romans 14:9-11
71. I Corinthians 15:6,7,18,20,22,51-53
72. II Corinthians 5:5-8,10
73. Galatians 5:24
74. Ephesians 1:20
75. Ephesians 4:9,10
76. Philippians 1:2-24
77. Philippians 3:10-12,20,21
78. I Thessalonians 4:13-18
79. II Timothy 1:10
80. II Timothy 2:8,18,19
81. Hebrews: 7:25

- 82. Hebrews 12:1
- 83. I Peter 1:3
- 84. I Peter 3:18-20
- 85. I John 3:2
- 86. Jude 1:14
- 87. Revelation 1:8, 12-18
- 88. Revelation 11:9,11,12
- 89. Revelation 14:3
- 90. Revelation 15:3
- 91. Revelation 16:5
- 92. Revelation 20:4-6,11-15

Summary:

I am confident that the Spirit of God brought you release in your life over the fear of death. Hebrews 2:14, 15 says that Jesus' death and resurrection frees us from the fear of death. If I am afraid of what is in front of me, I am frozen. We are not afraid; we are as bold as a lion. We never flinch at adversity, but face every challenge with the courage for the Lord. Satan has no dominion or access because I am identifying with the resurrection of Christ. I have complete victory over the things that bring death and a complete confidence that I have life and will experience a fullness of life for eternity. Death's sting is removed because of the victory of Christ's resurrection. That is why martyrs can sing as they are burned at the stake, why we will not renounce Christ in the face of death and why every weapon that is formed against us will not prosper. We know that we have a much greater life on the other side of humanity. Our heavenly home is filled with joy and tears are wiped away forever. The grave has lost its victory because it is in the arms of the Lord that I will rest forever. The blessed hope of the Lord is His Coming to take us all with Him. When the shout comes, the walls of humanity will come down and we will meet Him in the air and "forever" we will be with the Lord. Ruling, reigning, rejoicing and giving Him honor will be our forever after.

We need to be ready and expect Him to come at any minute. I will not be found sleeping when He returns. What about you?

Action Point:

Read 1Thessalonians 4:13-18 over and over. Think on I Thessalonians 4:13-18 at your work and when you have your quiet time. Share with your group what the Lord showed you that brought you hope as well as conviction.