

The Significance of the Resurrection of Christ

This morning we are celebrating the resurrection of Christ from the dead.

Our belief in the resurrection of Christ is obviously very significant, not only to us but also to all true believers. But why is the resurrection of Christ from the dead so significant? This morning I would like to answer that question based on three very specific biblical statements.

What is my hope for this message as we examine these people statements? My hope is that as we consider these three statements, we by the grace of God might live our lives in a manner consistent with our belief in the resurrection and with those truths that the resurrection of Christ confirms.

So now with this hope in mind let us now seek to answer the following question.

Why is the resurrection of Christ significant? Why is it so important? Can you answer that question? Can you support your answer from the Scripture? Hopefully by the time we finish this morning you will know why it is significant and you will be able to support it.

So, what is the first thought that I want to present you from the Scriptures?

The resurrection of Christ is significant because it confirmed that He is the Son of God (Romans 1:4).

Let me read for you **Romans 1:4** and see if this is not so. **“Who [referring to Christ] was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness [or in other words according to the Holy Spirit].”** So based on this verse can we say that the resurrection of Christ did in fact confirm that He was the Son of God? And the answer is yes, absolutely! So why was it so necessary for the resurrection of Christ to confirm this truth?

Jesus, during His earthly life, said that He was the Son of God, but most people in spite of His works were unconvinced (John 10:22-33). So where do we see this in the Scriptures?

Let me read for you **John 10:22-33**. “At that time the Feast of the Dedication took place at Jerusalem; (23) it was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple in the portico of Solomon. (24) The Jews then gathered around Him, and were saying to Him, ‘How long will you keep us in suspense? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly.’ (25) Jesus answered them, ‘I told you, and you do not believe; the works that I do in My Father’s name, these testify of Me. (26) But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep. (27) My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; (28) and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. (29) My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand. (30) I and the Father are one’ [And how did the Jews respond when He said this?]. (31) The Jews picked up stones again [or in other words as they had done earlier in John 8:59] to stone Him. (32) Jesus answered them, ‘I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?’ (33) The Jews answered Him, ‘For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; because You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God.’” So, based on these verses, can we say, that though Christ during His earthly life proclaimed that He was the Son of God, most people in spite of His works, were unconvinced? Yes! I believe we can.

So why was this? Why was it that so many people, in spite of what He said, were still unconvinced? Beyond the fact that they were not His sheep, which is the primary reason given by Christ in the passage we just read; a secondary reason would have been this:

People were unconvinced that He was Son of God, because in their minds His appearance contradicted His claim (Isaiah 53:1-3). So should this struggle that the people of Israel had to reconcile Jesus’ claim with His appearance during His earthly ministry concern us?

No! Isaiah had anticipated it. Let me read for you **Isaiah 53:1-3**. “Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? (2) For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of parched ground; He has no stately form or majesty, that we should look upon Him, nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him. (3) He was despised and forsaken of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and like one from whom men hide their face He

was despised, and we did not esteem Him.” So did Isaiah in these verses anticipate the struggle the people of Israel would have in reconciling the claim of Jesus, that He was the Christ, the Son of the living God, with His appearance? Absolutely! Isaiah in **Isaiah 53:1-3** had anticipated it.

So, what was the problem? What was the source of their struggle? The people of Israel had anticipated that their coming king, their Messiah, the Son of the living God, would come in power and overthrow Rome. This did not happen. Rather than coming in power and overthrowing Rome, it appeared to them that Jesus, who claimed to be the Messiah, the Son of the living God, had come in weakness.

This was their problem. This is why they were having problems reconciling His claim about His Himself with His appearance. And this struggle came to a head when Jesus willingly surrendered Himself to arrest, trial and crucifixion.

We, at that point in time in history if we had been there, would have been hard pressed, even if we searched the whole, to find but a few people who still would have been holding out hope that Jesus was in fact the Christ, the Son of the living God, but today we would have not such problem, there are many. So how can this be explained?

When Jesus died there were only a few people who believed He was the Christ, the Son of the living God, but today there are many because Jesus was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection.

So now we have the answer. If Jesus had not been raised from the dead with power, and if this fact had not been confirmed to others who were then alive, by credible eyewitnesses, there would not be the millions of people around the world today, who have by faith have not only embraced Jesus as the Son of man but also the Son of God.

So why is the resurrection of Christ significant? First of all, the resurrection of Christ is significant because it confirmed that Jesus was in fact the Son of the Living God based on **Romans 1:4**. So, what else makes the resurrection of Christ significant?

The resurrection of Christ is significant because it confirms our justification (Romans 4:23-25).

Let me read for you **Romans 4:23-25** and see if this is not so. **“Now not for his sake only (referring to Abraham) was it written that it was credited to him, (24) but for our sake also, to whom it will be credited, as those who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, (25) He who was delivered over because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification.”**

So based on these verses, is there a link between the resurrection of Christ and the confirmation of our justification, if we have in fact placed our faith and trust in Jesus Christ alone for our salvation? I believe there is.

But before I explain this link we must first of all understand the meaning of the word “justification” as it is used in our context in **Romans 4**.

The word “justification” (DIKAIOSUNE) carries the meaning of “to count, reckon, or declare righteous.”

So when I said to you, based on **Romans 4:23-25**, that the resurrection of Christ confirms our justification, what was I saying? I was saying this: The resurrection of Christ, if we have placed our faith and trust in Jesus Christ alone for our salvation, confirms that at the very moment that we placed our faith in Christ that we were declared righteous by God, not for a day or a week, but forever. This is what I am saying.

So how could God do this? How could God declare us righteous when we were not righteous? He was able to do this through imputation, or in other words based on what Christ was able to accomplish on our behalf through His death on the cross. God, in response to our faith, was able to transfer our sin to Christ’s account and Christ’s righteousness to our account.

This in essence is what we see happening in **Romans 4:24** when the Apostle Paul spoke of God crediting the righteousness of Christ to those **“who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.”**

And this is also in essence what we see happening in **2 Corinthians 5:21** when the Apostle Paul told the Corinthians that, **“He made Him who knew**

no sin to be to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

So how is God able to justify or to declare someone righteous who is not righteous? He is able to do this through imputation.

But now let me ask you this question. If imputation makes it possible for God to justify us or in other words to declare us righteous, when we are in fact unrighteous, what makes it possible for God to impute our sins to Christ and His righteousness to us? It might seem to some that He is cooking the books or in other words doing something wrong. But this is not so!

Christ's work on the cross of Calvary is what makes this possible. So why is this? When Christ offered Himself up to death on the cross of Calvary, on our behalf, in order to satisfy in full the debt we owed to God because of our sin, and His payment was accepted by God as payment in full, as is indicated in **Colossians 2:14**. This is what makes it possible for God to impute our sin to Christ. So is God cooking the heavenly books? No!

So how do we know that God has accepted Christ's atoning work, thus making it possible for Him to impute our sin to Christ and Christ's righteousness to us? We know this because the resurrection of Christ confirmed it.

Christ's resurrection confirmed God's acceptance of Jesus' work on the cross, which made it possible for God to impute our sins to His Son and His Son's righteousness to us.

So if Christ's resurrection confirmed God's acceptance of Jesus atoning work on the cross, which made it possible for God to impute our sins to His Son and His Son's righteousness to us, which in turn makes it possible for God to declare us righteous or in other words to justify us if we exercise faith in Christ, what else can we also conclude?

Christ's resurrection not only confirms that Jesus Christ is the Son of God but it also confirms our justification if we know that we have in fact placed our faith and trust in Jesus Christ for our salvation. So what else makes the resurrection of Christ so significant?

The resurrection of Christ is significant because it confirms that the hope that we have placed in Christ is indeed living and not dead (1 Peter 1:3).

Let me read for **1 Peter 1:3** and see if this is not so. **“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.”** So does this verse confirm for us that the hope that we have placed in Christ is indeed living and not dead? Yes, I believe it does.

And is this important? Absolutely! Most everybody in this world has placed their hope in something. Some people have placed their hope in money, others have placed their hope in fame, others have placed their hope in power, and so on.

Yet to hope in such things is hopeless, because such things will one day come to an end, only a dead hope.

The Christian however does not have a dead hope. As Peter made very clear in the verse that we just read. What did he say in **1 Peter 1:3**. **“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.”**

The hope of the world is dead, for it will not endure nor will it come to a good end, but our hope, which is living, will endure will have wonderful conclusion.

And what confirms for us that the hope that we have placed in Christ is indeed a living hope? It is the resurrection.

Let us continue to read **1 Peter 1:3** and what does it say? **“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.”**

This living hope is our hope of salvation that includes an imperishable inheritance, which is presently being reserved for us in heaven and which can never be taken away from us according to **1 Peter 1:4**. And why will this imperishable inheritance never be taken away from us? It will never be

taken away from because the power of God, the very power that was seen when Christ was raised from the dead, is even now protecting our faith according to **1 Peter 1:5**.

The resurrection confirms that Jesus was the Son of God, the resurrection of Christ confirms our justification if we have in fact placed our faith and trust in Jesus Christ alone for our salvation, and finally the resurrection confirmed if we have in fact placed our faith and trust in Jesus Christ alone for our salvation that our hope is living and not dead.

May God give us the grace to live our lives in a manner consistent with our belief in the resurrection and with those truths that the resurrection of Christ confirms.