

## Resurrection

Sunday, 17<sup>th</sup> April 2022

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

Humans have eternal spirits, this means we exist forever, even though our bodies die. But the problem is because of sin we are all destined to exist forever in Hell instead of Heaven, separated from God, and separation from God is worse than death. Because of sin, we are all heading to Hell. But thankfully even before time began God had a solution for this problem. The Jews were bound by the Ten Commandments which summarises the Law, and these Laws were created to set the standard for being saved; it makes sin much clearer as having a law gives us something to compare against. So if you successfully spent your whole life fulfilling the Law then the Law could be viewed as a doorway to Heaven - but the problem is you would have to be a perfect person to achieve fulfillment of the Law and no one is perfect. Everyone of us was heading to Hell and that means the doorway was firmly kept shut.

However in God's plan He made a way to ensure this law can be fulfilled, and His plan was to give us Jesus. Jesus is not a normal man, but the Son of God and perfect! Jesus was able to successfully throughout His whole life fulfil the Law. However in order to save everyone, Jesus needed to go further than just fulfilling the Law, He needed to offer a blood sacrifice which was prophesied throughout the whole Bible, but it needed to be a perfect sacrifice that would pay for the sins of everyone throughout all of time, that means Past, Present and Future. Only one person on Earth has the body and the blood that is pure and precious enough and perfect and able to achieve this, and this person is Jesus Himself. This meant God had to willingly sacrifice His own Son, Jesus. Jesus successfully fulfilled the whole Law and willingly and sacrificially died in the flesh nailed upon the Cross. Jesus took all the sins of the world, past, present and future, upon Himself when He died, therefore He took our punishment. But why did Jesus have to die? Because the punishment for sin is death and sin belongs in Hell - and we are all sinners, we all inherited this condition of being sinners from Adam and Eve, therefore He took the punishment of the entire world - **to save you!**

So how does Jesus dying on the cross save us, if He is now dead and in Hell? Would we still not just end up in Hell? Well it seems Jesus did go to Hell, but because Jesus died on the Cross yet had never broken a single commandment Hell could not keep Him there! He is innocent having fulfilled all prophecies, and He is the perfect sacrifice known as the unblemished lamb (they used to sacrifice lambs) When Jesus died He declared "Father forgive them" and "It is finished" and If He said these things then we must believe these things. We must accept that Jesus is the Truth, He is God's own Son and forgave all of our sins even on the cross. Hell could not keep Him there and so Jesus presented Himself to the Father in Heaven and was crowned in Glory and made King, and Jesus demonstrated His life giving sovereign power by taking up His life again. The doorway to Heaven that was kept shut is now open, but the only way in is through Jesus the Son of God. By believing in Jesus our King and placing our faith in Him, we can enter through the door to Heaven as unblemished, viewed without sin having been washed in His precious blood, the blood of our King, and **IF** we now live our life through Jesus, through the Body of Christ we will reign with him as kings. When we die and God the father views us He will see us as He sees His own Son, as a perfect unblemished King; Making Jesus King of kings, King over everyone.

Jesus defeating death by rising from the dead is called the Resurrection, and today is called **Resurrection Sunday**. Today we celebrate when Jesus resurrected and received a new body. A body that looks Human, feels like flesh and Jesus could also eat with this body, it is a perfect and miraculous body, because despite being like flesh Jesus could even walk through walls! But even more amazing is this new body can never ever get sick, illness and suffering will never ever happen to this new body that Jesus now has, why? Because it is not an earthly body but a heavenly body.

Remember in the Garden of Eden when Adam sinned, our earthly bodies became cursed and corruptible meaning we get sick and our bodies die. We cannot enter heaven in these corrupted earthly bodies; to reign with Jesus in heaven we need heavenly bodies, and Jesus will give each and everyone of us one of these amazing heavenly bodies that will never get sick again, we will have bodies just like Jesus - but the condition is we **must** put our Faith in Him.

So whatever trials or illness we suffer in this life, we ought to not lose confidence in God and question if he even cares to help us. He will heal all of us that believe in him. We have the promise of a perfect Body, perfect Health for absolute eternity! But we all need to realise and accept that right now we cannot expect perfect health in a temporary corruptible world. I am sure most of you will at some-point hear the the saying "A picture of perfect Health" but this saying is a lie and not possible during this earthly life in a corruptible body in this corrupted world.

However there is one exception, Jesus has a perfect heavenly body. Yet even He bares the scars of suffering, He has the marks of the Cross eternally on his hands and feet, scars caused when he was nailed to the wooden cross. Can you imagine being nailed alive to a bit of wood - It is horrifying. **Do you think that with these scars it is right to call Jesus new body a perfect picture of Health?**

**YES.** Jesus could have healed these scars but chose to keep them and why not? These scars are perfect. They are part of His perfect plan for our salvation to enter eternity with Him. He suffered tremendously for these scars taking an eternity of sins on the Cross, past present and future for everyone. They represent His tremendous love for us.

It is on the Cross that Jesus died for our Sins.

It is on the Cross that Jesus ended the Law and became the open door leading to life.

It was whilst on the Cross that Jesus said "Father forgive them"

It was whilst on the Cross that Jesus said "It is finished" and so much more we can say about Jesus on the Cross if we give it some thought...

The Cross has become a part of Jesus; they are inseparable and is a demonstration of the life giving power of God who walks again and I am sure Jesus will be humble in showing us his hands and feet, face to face, humbly and with love, not prideful or showing off but saying "Yes, it is true , see my scars, you did well to believe in the Gospel, in the preaching of the Cross, now take these crowns and reign with me" - and for simply just believing in Jesus!

So for Christians, the resurrection of Jesus brings Hope. Life wins over death, Good over evil, Hope over despair. Jesus conquered death and that means nothing is too difficult for our God, and so we can believe with certainty that we will have eternal Life with Jesus.

**Jesus said in John 10:17-18** *"Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father."*

**But how can we know the resurrection is true? How can we be so sure that He really did die?**

**Well we have more than one Gospel account that agree very closely and many many witnesses** - such as, after Jesus died on the Cross, He was speared in the side right into His heart, by a trained centurion who was trained how to kill and wanted to make sure he was dead. Many witnesses would have seen this happen and they also witnessed water and blood come out from His body. This is a sure sign that Jesus died. The scar caused by the spear is one of the scars Jesus kept on His new body, and showed this scar to His disciples, such as Thomas - when He visited them.

The **Gospel of Matthew 27:51-54** tells us *"Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many. So when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, "Truly this was the Son of God!"* So when Jesus died, an Earthquake occurred and many graves were opened, even the Centurion who later put a spear into Jesus believed! Then by the power of Jesus own resurrection, many people of great Faith whom had died but believed in the prophecies of Jesus, came back to life and they walked out of their own graves; showing themselves to many people - this means we can be certain that Jesus will also do the same for us!

**Luke 24** tells us that Joseph and Nicodemus, whom were both very well respected leaders, helped bury Jesus. *"Joseph went to Pilate whom was the Roman in charge of Jerusalem, and asked for the body of Jesus. Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen, and with the help of Nicodemus, he laid Jesus body in a tomb that was cut out of stone, where no one had ever laid before"* and they placed a very large huge stone in front of the tomb! This stone was also guarded by well trained Roman soldiers and the stone was sealed!

**Luke 24** tells us - that *“several women watched, observing the tomb and how His body was buried. They returned later and prepared spices and fragrant oils.”* And in **Matthew 28** - we are told *“as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men. But the angel answered and said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. **He is not here; for He is risen**, as He said. Go quickly and tell His disciples that **He is risen from the dead**, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you.”* So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word.” - This is miraculous!

**John 20:11-19** also tells us that Mary Magdalene wept for a while at the tomb and saw Jesus. *“Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping, and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the tomb. And she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. Then they said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him.” Now when she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?” She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, “Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away.” Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to Him, “Rabboni!” (which is to say, Teacher). Jesus said to her, “Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, ‘I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.’”* Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things to her. But many were unbelieving.

*Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, “Peace be with you.” When He said this, **He showed them His scars, His hands and His side**. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. They finally believed.*

But there was still one disciple who had yet to see Jesus therefore he doubted if Jesus had resurrected. Because often, we do not believe until we see.

**John 20:24-29** *“Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said to him, “We have seen the Lord.” So he said to them, “Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.” And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, “Peace to you!” Then He said to Thomas, “Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.” And Thomas answered and said to Him, “My Lord and my God!” - He believed. Jesus said to him, “Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.” - that means us! Me and You, We are blessed.*

Paul also declares there were many witnesses that Jesus died and then Resurrected, that is Paul who authored the majority of the New Testament. Paul tells us in **First Corinthians 15:4-7** *“He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He was seen by Simon Peter, then by the twelve. After that He was seen by over **five hundred brethren at once**, of whom the greater part remain to the present (at the time of writing), but some have fallen asleep. After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. Then last of all He was seen by me also (that is Paul), as by one born out of due time”* - That is when Paul was blinded by a glorious great Light that came from Jesus in His resurrected body, and Paul fell on His knees whilst he heard Jesus speak to Him directly.

We also have **Luke 24:13-16** which tells us, *“Two disciples were traveling that same day (as the Resurrection) to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him.”* But then in Luke 24:30-31 we are told *“Now it came to pass, as Jesus sat at the table with them, that Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight.”*

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These are just some of the many witnesses that saw Jesus dead and then saw Jesus Resurrected. So we can believe.

In **John 20:30-31** John tells us *“And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.”*

Jesus also told us in **Mark 16:15** - *“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.”* **Mark 16:19** *“So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs.”*

**And may we all believe and be saved, and the Lord will work through us, whenever and wherever we preach! Amen**