

DAY OF RESURRECTION

Last week's headline declared that less than half of people in the UK who claim to be Christians actually believe Jesus Christ died and rose again to pay for their sins. The same BBC survey says 82% of those who attend church at least once a month do believe. Putting aside how people who claim to be Christians worship only once a month, how do you square these survey results? Simple. Those who do not believe in the death and resurrection of Jesus for their sins are not Christians. The Bible makes it clear.

1- CROWN OF HISTORY. The resurrection of Jesus Christ crowns the climax of history, which includes Holy Week, the last days of the earthly life and ministry of the Son of God come in the flesh, the promised Messiah. In the days of reckoning, focused from Palm Sunday to Maundy Thursday in AD33, the people were called to repentance. On Good Friday, the day of rescue, Jesus Christ gave up His righteous life to be the perfect sacrifice for sin. The Sabbath day, the Creator who became our Christ rested in the tomb after He made atonement, in an echo of creation week. On the day of resurrection, Sunday, Jesus Christ raises to life in a dramatic demonstration of His deity. And it points to the coming day when He will make all things new. Theologian JI Packer notes, "Christianity rests on the certainty of Jesus' resurrection as a space-time occurrence in history, a divine act involving all three persons of the Godhead" (Romans 1:1-4).

2- THE PURPOSE OF GOD. The miracle of resurrection extends from the eternal plan and purpose of God to be our redeemer. WA Grudem notes, "the incarnation of Christ is by far the most amazing miracle of the entire Bible, far more amazing than the resurrection and more amazing even than the creation of the universe. The fact that the infinite, omnipotent, eternal Son of God could become man and join Himself to a human nature forever, so that infinite God became one person with finite man, will remain for eternity the most profound miracle and the most profound mystery in all the universe." Understand that Jesus Christ is God Himself come in the flesh, and all the other miracles flow from this most astounding work of God. And it's all prophesied and recorded in Scripture, evidence to be believed.

3- ACCORDING TO SCRIPTURE. In the resurrection chapter, 1Corinthians15, the apostle Paul writes, "I remind you of the gospel I preached to you, by which you are being saved, for I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures." Here we see the purpose, process, and principle of redemption. Christ lived and died and was buried and rose again, to pay for sins and to give new resurrection life to all who believe in Him. As Acts 2 notes, all according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, who raised Him up, making Him both Lord and Christ.

4- THE HEART OF THE GOSPEL. The resurrection is not an add-on, but integral to the gospel. Of first importance. It is essential to regeneration, being born again from above by the Holy Spirit, when you receive new spiritual life and believe and receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. As Romans 10:9 says "*if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.*" Then in justification, you are made right with God, counted righteous, because Romans 4:25, "*Jesus our Lord, who was delivered up for our sins and raised for our justification.*" You receive God's forgiveness of sins through repentance and faith in Christ Jesus. 1Corinthians15:17 asserts "*If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins.*" And Luke 24:45 says, "*thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all nations.*"

5- IT TRANSFORMS YOUR LIFE. The spiritual benefits conveyed to believers by the Holy Spirit are not just some heavenly transactions that you must wait until eternity to realize. Rather, the resurrection of Jesus gives new spiritual life that begins the moment you believe. And He changes your life moment by moment as you trust and obey the Lord. That's your sanctification, the process and progress of becoming more like Jesus in this life as God prepares you for eternal life with Him, by the power of the Holy Spirit which raised Him from the dead. Because before salvation, the Bible says you were "*dead in sins*" but once in union with Christ by grace through faith, you are "*dead to sins.*" Romans 6 explains "*just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too walk in newness of life. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.*" All by the power of the Holy Spirit.

6- IS IT YOUR FINAL DESTINY? In John 11:25 Jesus said, "*I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in Me though he die, yet shall he live.*" Resurrection life cannot be earned, it can only be rejected or received. Will you choose eternal death or eternal life? Put all your trust in Jesus Christ, the only Way. Then, as Puritan Thomas Watson says, "all the miseries that believers are called by God to endure in this life are the only hell that they will ever endure, because of the saving work of Jesus in His death and resurrection. This is one of the most comforting and soul-strengthening thoughts upon which a believer may set his heart or mind in this life. Believers may incessantly hurt, but it will all ultimately come to an end when the believer dies or when Christ comes again in glory." Thank you, Lord Jesus! ☐