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# Sermon Notes

October 8, 2023

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

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## Christ Arose!

Acts 2:22-32, 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, 7

### Death

- ❖ Death is always an undesirable thing
  - the enemy of all sinful human beings
  - the wages of sin
  - Hebrews 2:14-15
- ❖ Christ followers do not deny the dreadful nature of death
  - what sets Christians apart from others is what they have to say about death
  - Jesus was *to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead* (Romans 1:4)
    - the greatest good news in all of human history
    - the promise of salvation for all who believe in it, repent of their sins and embrace Christ as Savior

### The Plain Facts

- ❖ Each of the 4 gospels has a narrative account that gives us different facets of what happened at the time of Jesus' bodily resurrection

- ❖ the first full-blown, public declaration of Jesus' resurrection is given by the Apostle, Peter on Pentecost
  - Peter shows from the OT why Christ's resurrection is both reasonable and rational
  - it is impossible for death to keep its grip on One who is
    - in such union and communion with God
    - so anointed by God
    - son intrinsically holy
  - Psalm 16:8-11
    - David's words cannot be about himself
    - David is talking about God's Holy One

### The Miraculous

- ❖ The presence of the miraculous continues to be a stumbling block for those whose worldview sees the universe as a closed system governed by immutable laws and principles
  - natural laws are the normal means through which God controls His universe
  - however, as sovereign Creator, God is free to work outside of these laws in any way at any time He chooses
- ❖ The resurrection of Jesus is a miracle that is extraordinarily different from the normal, everyday course of affairs
  - in 1 Corinthians 15, Paul writes to "resurrection doubters"
  - Paul writes things his readers then and now must know about the validity and vital nature of Jesus' resurrection

## Why This Matters

- ❖ If Jesus is not risen from the dead
  - we are still in our sins
  - we have no hope of rising
  - Christ is not reigning and will not return
  - Christianity is not what the 1st century church thought and taught
  - Jesus can be your hero, but not your Savior
- ❖ But, Jesus **IS** risen from the dead
  - securing the sinner's hope of salvation
  - the centerpiece of the **ONLY** gospel that saves
  - our only hope of eternal life with God
- ❖ Because Jesus is raised from the dead, Christians
  - are justified and do not remain in their sins
  - are born again to a living hope
  - experience the same resurrecting power that brought Jesus back from the dead
- ❖ Despite the importance of the resurrection to Christianity, some within the church continue to discredit, deny, dismantle and destroy belief in the reality of a real, physical, bodily, supernatural resurrection of Christ from the dead
  - such scholars and theologians speak of the risen Christ but deny that the resurrection is something that happened in historical time and space
  - “Jesus is risen in our hearts”

- “dialectical theology” seeks to reconcile contradictions by finding truth in both sides of a conflict
  - R. C. Sproul, “If the 20th century has choked on the virgin birth, modern theologians have tried to apply the Heimlich maneuver to dislodge the resurrection of Christ.”
- ❖ When the apostles first preach Christ, they speak in plain words and meaningful sentences that reveal a fully developed, clear and cogent gospel proclamation
    - a tireless proclamation in the face of ridicule, persecution and even death
    - for those who follow in the Apostles' footsteps, the content and object of one's faith is preeminent
  - ❖ There is no middle ground between resurrection and meaninglessness
    - life only has meaning if something follows life
    - if life ends in annihilation, then the grave is our ultimate reality
    - Paul says life only **HAS** meaning **BECAUSE** of the resurrection
  - ❖ We have the testimony of credible eyewitnesses: Jesus is alive!

## Personal Reflection

1. Does your life have meaning and hope because of Jesus' resurrection or are you living life your own way, trying to do your best and hoping things will “turn out OK”?
2. If you have questions or doubts about any of these matters please speak with a trusted Christian friend or church leader.