

Jesus appears to them with just a word, “cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find.” [John 21:6] Then the Bible tells us, “They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes” that they had caught. In that context then, Jesus further taught them more about becoming future fishers of men all in dependence on Him and through the power of the Holy Spirit Whom He promised to them. In the Acts 1 passage our text is in the context of Jesus pledging the Holy Spirit to equip His disciples for their gospel ministry, and it is in the context of Jesus commissioning them to be His witnesses round about the world.

There is something in our text, Acts 1:3, which also really brings out Jesus showed Himself alive promisingly so. The last phrase of the verse tells us that in those forty days of His resurrection appearances, Jesus was “speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.” The kingdom of God refers to all God’s glorious activity in and through His Son, Jesus Christ, and all that God would bring about initially and finally and eternally in and through Him. God’s kingdom is about salvation totally and freely given for Jesus’ sake, and faith in Him; its about His Church being gathered and built up and increased to a multitude that no man can number; its about the conquest over sin, Satan, death, and hell, and the coming of the new heavens and the new earth one glorious day soon to be! The kingdom of God is all about the Messianic kingdom, the glories of which are inexpressible, and the eternal security and blessedness of which all the good words of every known language are still insufficient to tell.

Jesus arose is not a negative truth but the most glorious gospel truth there ever could be. But it also makes rejecting and turning your back on this gospel and continuing in unrepentance and unbelief the most heinous of sins, and something most foolhardy indeed. Jesus lives and this is something He would make known to us from His Word still today, passionately so, positively so, and promisingly so. Don’t live and die as if this gracious and glorious gospel isn’t true because it is true, and the Saviour lives, as all will find out one day, in the great day of the final resurrection and last judgment. Amen!

Hans Overduin, Radio Pastor

April 8, 2007

Publication No.305

BANNER OF TRUTH RADIO BROADCAST

Radio Ministry of the FREE REFORMED CHURCHES of North America

Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee that it may be displayed because of the truth. (Psalm 60:4)



HOW JESUS PROVES HIS RESURRECTION

It is Easter Sunday. This day the Christian church in a concentrated way remembers and celebrates Jesus’ resurrection from the dead. This is the great gospel truth that underscores and reinforces the whole Christian message putting it on a plane above all other religions of this world. Jesus, our Saviour, lives! He arose from the dead, as He said. This is the supreme gospel truth, as Luke also tells us in Acts 1:3 concerning Jesus, the once crucified Saviour of sinners: “....He showed Himself alive after His passion [suffering] by many infallible proofs, being seen of them [His disciples] forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.”

What hope, what comfort, what prospect Jesus’ resurrection from the dead may give God’s people, and how His resurrection from the dead should so draw and attract all who are yet unsaved to come to Jesus for His salvation so gracious, grand, and glorious for now and forevermore! The teaching of Jesus’ resurrection is not a dead truth but a living truth, not a boring truth but a beautiful truth, not an empty truth but an essential truth, not a vain truth but a victorious truth, not a trivial matter but a triumphant matter! Jesus’ resurrection from the dead is something every true Christian glories in and something every faithful church will ever maintain and prize as truth more precious than all the treasures of this world. Listen to the preaching now about Jesus risen from the dead as true and triumphant Saviour of sinners. Hear now how Jesus showed Himself alive by many infallible proofs, indeed, passionately so, positively so, and promisingly so. I pray the fruit of this message by the Holy Spirit will be that each and all who hear it will be so convinced and convicted and comforted and enthused with the gospel fact that Jesus lives! Because He lives, there is hope still for all who will hear and listen to the gospel. “I know that my Redeemer lives, and O what comfort this sweet sentence gives!”

Come then and consider with me, especially from Acts 1:3, how that Jesus showed or presented Himself alive after His sufferings by many infallible proofs, passionately so, positively so, and promisingly so.

That Jesus arose and showed Himself alive passionately so, by which I mean eagerly and powerfully so, is clear when you just consider the history and facts of Jesus’ resurrection. On the Sunday Jesus arose, He showed Himself no less than five times to some of His disciples and friends. He first showed Himself to Mary Magdalene, then to the group of women who came from the empty tomb, then to Peter alone, and after that to the two walking from Jerusalem to their home in Emmaus, and last to the whole group of disciples in

the upper room in Jerusalem, with only Thomas not present. There is so much that can be said about each of these appearances of the resurrected Saviour, but the point now is, just thinking of Jesus' five resurrection appearances the first day He arose, surely it is true He showed Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, indeed, passionately so! Acts 1:3 mentions that Jesus was seen by His disciples during forty days, and the Bible records for us altogether eleven of His resurrection appearances during that time, not saying how many appearances there were that are not recorded.

Jesus has risen as He said, and He has with many infallible proofs made it clear He lives. He Who died on the cross also arose again from the dead three days later. The phrase "infallible proofs" here in the Greek is one word used to speak of the strongest conclusive and convincing evidences possible in any case. Before Jesus' ascension we know that the disciples and followers of Jesus who first refused to believe even that it could be true that He arose from the dead finally became so convinced of it through His resurrection appearances that their lives were never the same again. How thankful we may and should be for the Bible's clear and unmistakable revelation and evidence of Jesus' resurrection from the dead. Are you so very thankful for this gospel fact?

Here we come to our second point, that Jesus presented Himself alive not only passionately so, but positively so. What I mean with this point is that Jesus' focus in showing Himself alive and proving to His followers that He was the once crucified but now resurrected and ever living Saviour was to encourage and strengthen His people in the way of the gospel.

That Jesus was out to encourage we can know from the resurrection appearances told to us in the Bible. Jesus said to Mary Magdalene, "*Woman why weepst thou?*" With this question we can be sure was the further teaching of the Saviour that now with His finished and God-approved saving work on sinners' behalf, what a triumphant, ever present, living, loyal Saviour all Jesus' followers had with Him as their Saviour and Lord! So also the resurrected Saviour said to the women who had come from the tomb to tell the disciples the message of the angel that Jesus lives, "*All hail!*" or you could translate, "*Rejoice!*" or "*Be glad...and do not be afraid!*" Jesus' resurrection means so much good for us, even for as many as trust and follow Him and belong to Him in true faith, no matter how sinful you have been or how miserably you have failed, or how weak you are in yourself. Surely such resurrection encouragement the Lord Jesus showed to Peter too in His private interview with Him! Think also of the way the risen Saviour ministered to the two from the village of Emmaus causing them to turn from rather depressed and dejected hopeless disciples to two people whose heart burned within them with joy and peace and conviction about Jesus the Saviour! Going through every recorded resurrection appearance of Jesus, you will see He came with so much encouragement in the gospel way.

Not only did Jesus bring encouragement, but showing Himself alive positively so, notice how He presented Himself alive further to train and to

educate His followers in the way of the gospel founded on His death and resurrection. Mentioning again those two from Emmaus, what do we read in Luke 24 that really caused their hearts to burn within them? It was as Jesus, while walking with them, opened to them the Scriptures, was it not? We read in Luke 24:32 after the two from Emmaus discovered their companion was none other than the risen Saviour Himself, then "*they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?*" Later that same evening when they were in Jerusalem again with the other disciples, excluding Thomas, and Jesus suddenly appeared in their midst, we are told in Luke 24:44 Jesus educated them saying, "*These are the words which I spoke to you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the Law of Moses, and the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning Me. Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures.*" How positively purposeful were Jesus' resurrection appearances, encouraging and instructing His followers in and with the gospel.

I cannot go through all the resurrection appearances to show this further, but clearly Jesus showed Himself alive, just from what I have shown, passionately and positively so! What a Saviour is Jesus Christ the Lord, the once crucified and now risen and ever exalted Saviour! Do you so glory in Jesus being alive on this Easter Sunday? This is what Jesus positively aimed for among His followers from that first Easter Sunday and throughout all those forty days. Even so it gives me reason to call out in His Name also now in this message: 'Are you discouraged? Then call out to Jesus the Saviour for His mercy and help! Are you tempted and burdened with guilt, even perhaps despairing for your own salvation before God or that of your loved ones too? Confess and tell all to Jesus the Saviour! He is alive and well, ready to forgive, ready to help, ready to save! Are you confused and disheartened, troubled and dismayed? Then call to this living Saviour for light and salvation, for direction, hope, peace, and understanding. You will find it all with Him, even exceeding abundantly above all that you could ask or think! Are you lonely and distressed? Then come to Jesus and tell Him your needs and ask for His saving presence and power. Ask and it shall be given you, seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened to you. Just going over Jesus' resurrection appearances this becomes the message so loud and clear.

Is there someone who responds saying, "But how can I know this gospel about so great and gracious a Saviour may also be the gospel for me?" That question brings us to our last point yet where we notice Jesus Christ showed Himself alive by many infallible proofs, not just passionately so and positively so but promisingly so too. That He presented Himself alive promisingly so we may know in that with His resurrection appearances to His disciples Jesus was equipping them and enlisting them to become ministers and missionaries of the gospel beginning in Jerusalem and then to the ends of the earth. With the one resurrection appearance with the seven disciples by the Sea of Tiberias, after a night of fruitless fishing having caught nothing,