

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is a vital part of the Christian religion—it's not an option, a secondary issue, or a non-practical truth, but Christ's resurrection is very important to Christ and His people—but before I come to that, I want to say three things about it by way of introduction...

[1] It's literal—that is, Christ was literally crucified, literally died, and He literally rose from the dead—just as His death was bodily, so His resurrection was bodily—He was physically and literally killed, and was physically and literally raised...

[2] It's verifiable—by this I mean, the literal resurrection of Christ is one of the most historically provable facts of history, 1Cor.15:3-5—"Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and He was buried, and He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once..."

[3] It's essential—by this I mean, the literal and historical resurrection of Christ, is essential to the gospel of Jesus Christ—the resurrection of Jesus Christ is not a secondary issue, it's not something we can take or leave—it's foundational and essential to the gospel...

Paul Washer—"The historical resurrection of Jesus Christ is one of the great pillars of the Christian faith. Without belief in this fact, a person is not a Christian. Without proclaiming this fact, the gospel has not been preached. Therefore, any preacher, theologian, scribe, or so-called prophet who does not hold unwaveringly to the physical, historical resurrection of Jesus has nothing to say to the church. We need not learn from them, understand them, or bring them into fellowship. They are not Christian..."

Let me say in general, Christ's crucifixion, resurrection, ascension and ongoing intercession, are all equally essential to our salvation—thus, there is a sense in which we can never really separate any of these from the others—Christ's resurrection means nothing without His crucifixion and intercession—they all relate to each other...

Thus, I'm not here attempting to elevate Christ's resurrection over His other works, for in fact, these all form one work—but, what I want to do this morning, is examine four aspects of our salvation, that are directly attributed to Christ's resurrection—or put another way, Four ways in which Christ's Resurrection relates to our Salvation (3 or 4 of these things are clearly found in Col.3:1-4)...

Col.3:1-4—"If then you were raised with Christ (regeneration), seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God (sanctification). When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory (glorification)..."

Peter Lewis—"Salvation consists of being united with the risen Lord Jesus Christ. The whole of the Christian life, from its first beginnings to its full and final glory, can be defined in this way..."

## I. The Relation of Christ's Resurrection to our Salvation

### A. It relates to our regeneration

1. Col.3:1—"If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God..."
2. Notice—Christians have been "raised with Christ"—that is, they were raised with Him when He rose from the dead...
3. Now—before I go further, I think it's necessary here to remind you that, our union with Christ is threefold...

4. [a] Eternal union—this refers to the fact, that the elect were chosen by the Father, from everlasting, in Christ...
5. [b] Federal union—this refers to the fact, that in time, in Christ's life and death, we were in Him as our Head...
6. From eternity, Christ agreed to come in time and secure redemption for those chosen in Him from everlasting...
7. He came to represent them—He lived and died as the federal (covenantal) Head of those given Him by His Father...
8. Thus, every person chosen in Him from eternity, was in covenant union with Christ, in His life, death, and resurrection...
9. [c] Saving union—this refers to our union in time, when the benefits of these other aspects of our union are applied to our souls...
10. Thus, though we were elected in Christ, and represented by Christ in His historical work, we are all born lost...
11. Now with these distinctions in mind—I trust things make more sense—when Christ died, we died, and when He rose, we rose...
12. But—the benefits of this federal union, are not applied or experienced, until, we are savingly united to Christ...
13. Thus—the first aspect of our saving union with Christ, is what's called regeneration, which is a spiritual resurrection...
14. This personal resurrection is in virtue of Christ's resurrection—we are spiritually resurrected through His bodily resurrection...
15. 1Pet.1:3—"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead..."
16. We are regenerated, through virtue of our union with Christ, and thus participation with His death and resurrection...
17. [1] This is a sovereign work—by this I mean, God acts by Himself in uniting us to Christ in our regeneration...
18. Perhaps put another way—regeneration is a gracious work of God, wherein God unites the dead soul to Christ...
19. A.W. Pink—"The subject of the new birth is wholly passive: he does not act, but is acted upon. The sovereign work of the Spirit in the soul precedes all holy exercises of heart – such as sorrow for sin, faith in Christ, love toward God..."
20. [2] This is a powerful work—this is necessary because, by nature we are spiritually dead, and living in odds to God...
21. In fact, there is a sense in which, in regeneration there's a greater display of God's power than in all other works...
22. In the first creation, God creates from nothing, but in the new creation He creates spiritual life from depravity...
23. A.W. Pink—"Regeneration is not like the changing of water into wine, but of contrary into contrary – of hearts of stone into flesh, of wolves into lambs..."
24. [3] This is a life-giving work—by this I mean, once united to Christ, the soul now repents, believes, and lives for Christ...
25. The immediate result of regeneration is new life—the newly regenerated soul, now repents and believes on Christ...
26. In regeneration, the dead soul is raised in newness of life—spiritual life is infused into the dead and depraved soul...
27. John Owen—"Regeneration consists in a new, spiritual, supernatural, vital principle, or habit of grace infused into the soul, the mind, the will, and affections, by the power of the Holy Spirit, disposing and enabling them in whom it is, unto spiritual, supernatural, vital actions and spiritual obedience..."
28. Eph.2:4-6—"But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ, and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus..."

29. [a] Sovereign—"But God, who is rich is mercy, because of His great love with which He loves us"—sovereign mercy and love...
30. [b] Powerful—"even when we were dead in trespasses"—we were not only void of life, but hostile to truth...
31. [c] Live-giving—" [He] made us alive together with Christ, and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus..."

B. It relates to our justification

1. For this point, we need to leave Colossians 3, and turn to Romans 4, where we find Christ's resurrection tied to our justification...
2. Rom.4:23-25—"Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification..."
3. [a] He was crucified because of our offenses—that is, He was crucified because He bore our sins and our guilt...
4. Though our Savior had NO sins of His own, He was punished because OUR sins were charged (imputed) to Him...
5. It was our iniquities that nailed Him to the cross—it was our sins that necessitated Him to endure that suffering...
6. [b] He was raised because of our justification—that is, He was raised because His death fully paid for our sins...
7. Christ's historical death was an actual atonement—it fully paid the penalty our sins deserved—Christ paid it all...
8. Hymn (690)—"Jesus paid it all, all to Him I owe; sin had left a crimson stain, He washed it white as snow..."
9. Here, it's important to remember the historical distinction between the two states of Christ—His humiliation and exaltation...
10. His humiliation begins at His incarnation and ends with His death and burial—His exaltation begins with His resurrection and peaks with His second coming...
11. Thus, while His suffering ended with His death—the three days His body remained in the grave, was a part of His humiliation...
12. His three days in the grave are still a part of His payment for our sins—they are the last part of His humiliation...
13. Thus, His resurrection is the open declaration of God, that His sacrifice was accepted and the payment sufficient...
14. Perhaps, we can put it like this—His resurrection is the open proclamation that our sins have been atoned for...
15. Thomas Boston—"When the just Judge opens the prison door, it says that the prisoner's debt is fully paid, and he has received satisfaction for all demands from him. Christ's resurrection was in effect a discharge of all the debt he had taken upon him to pay..."
16. Thus, I want to here suggest a beautiful application of this point—saints read their justification in Christ's resurrection...
17. Justification is a legal declaration that we are acquitted of our sins and accepted as righteousness for Christ's sake...
18. Justification takes place in the courtroom of heaven—it's legal and judicial—it's a formal declaration or pronouncement...
19. But—here's the question—how are Christians to know they've been justified, they can't see the legal records...
20. Thus—in Christ's resurrection, we have tangible assurance that our debt has been fully paid by our SURETY...
21. Let me illustrate—think of a young man who purchases a car, and has his father agree to serve as his surety...

22. For various reasons, the young man is unable to make the payments, and the car is repossessed by the original owner...
23. Well the father and son visit the car dealer, and the father tells his son to wait in the car as he sorts it all out...
24. Well, after about 30 minutes the son beholds his father coming out of the dealer, smiling with a set of keys...
25. As soon as the young man sees the father emerge from the dealer—he knows that his account is paid in full...
26. Well—this is similar to our Savior's resurrection—as soon as He came out of the grave, we can be assured, our debt has been paid...
27. MLJ—"The resurrection is the proclamation of the fact that God is fully and completely satisfied with the work that His Son did upon the Cross..."
28. Now, some of you will know, that our justification is comprised of two things—forgiveness and acceptance...
29. This is because our sins are imputed to Christ and His righteousness is imputed to us—we are forgiven and accepted...
30. [1] Forgiveness—in Christ's resurrection, Christians can be assured that all of their sins have been forgiven...
31. What a beautiful way to look at the resurrection—as an evident token that our sins can no longer condemn us...
32. [2] Acceptance—in Christ's resurrection, Christians can be assured that they are adopted and accepted by God...

C. It relates to our sanctification

1. By this I mean, the power of Christ's resurrection not only gives us initial life (regeneration), but continual life (sanctification)...
2. Every Christians is presently in union with the resurrected Christ, as He sits at the right hand of God in heaven...
3. Col.3:2-3—"Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God..."
4. That is, the ongoing spiritual life that we receive, is derived from the exalted Christ, with whom, we are in union...
5. Now—I want to suggest that Christ's resurrection has direct relation to our sanctification, in two ways—reckoning and strengthening...
6. But, before I examine these, let me first quote from Sam Waldron's Modern Exposition of the Baptist Confession...
7. Sam Waldron (ch.13 *Of Sanctification*)—"The basic activities which the Word of God demands of us in the prosecution of ongoing sanctification can be summarized under two headings: confident reckoning and strenuous working..."
8. Now—Scripture attributes both of these directly to Christ's resurrection, which is essential to both activities...
9. [1] Confident reckoning—to reckon is to "consider" things as they actually are—it's knowing who and what we are...
10. Thus—"reckoning" is not positive thinking, it's not hoping something will be true—it's knowing what is true...
11. Essential to "gospel reckoning" is not only understanding what is true, but then deeply pondering it as true...
12. Rom.6:10-11—"For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord..."
13. Notice, what we are to reckon (v11), is the result of our union with Christ's crucifixion and resurrection (v10)...

14. [a] We must reckon ourselves dead to sin—"reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin"—that is, dead to sin as a master...
15. Christ died for sin once, never to deal with sin again, so too, we have died to sin as a master, never to be enslaved again...
16. Just as Christ died once for sin, so every Christian has died to sin, sin is no longer our master, it no longer rules us...
17. CHS—"The true believer in the day when he first came to Christ died to sin as to its power. Sin had been sitting on a high throne in his heart, but faith pulled the tyrant down and rolled him in the dust, and though it still survives to vex us, yet its reigning power is destroyed..."
18. [b] We must reckon ourselves alive to God—"reckon yourselves...alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord"—when Christ rose, we rose...
19. Not only has the old man that was a slave to sin, died, but a new man, that is alive to God, has been raised in his place...
20. Now—before I leave this point, I want to suggest a few simple helps to assist us in reckoning ourselves dead and alive...
21. [i] Understand the truth—no one can reckon themselves dead to sin and alive to God, without understanding what these entail...
22. [ii] Believe the truth—you have to believe it's true of you—you have to regularly ponder and think about it...
23. [iii] Live in light of the truth—that is, live as one who has died to sin and is now alive to God in Jesus Christ...
24. For example, think of a slave in first century Rome—let's say this man buys his freedom and is no longer a slave...
25. It may take a while until his thinking aligns with reality—he's so accustomed to obeying the voice of his master...
26. If his master were to command him to do something, he might be tempted to obey his voice out of mere habit...
27. But, he's no longer a slave, and he needs to think and act differently—he needs to say, NO, to his old master...
28. [2] Strenuous working—but if we thought that sanctification only entailed reckoning, we would be mistaken...
29. For, the same book of Romans that exhorts us to reckon ourselves dead and alive, also exhorts us to work hard...
30. But, our working, is only the result of us abiding in Christ—that is, deriving strength from the glorified Christ...
31. Phil.3:10—"that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection"—that is, know Christ and His power more increasingly...
32. Every Christian is presently in union with the resurrected and exalted Christ—they share in His resurrection life...
33. Paul desired to know Christ (more intimately), and to know the power of His resurrection (more effectually)...
34. [a] Increasingly know and feel your weakness—you must be convinced that your enemies are too strong for you...
35. Ps.38:19—"But my enemies are vigorous, and they are strong; and those who hate me wrongfully have multiplied..."
36. [b] Humbly and believingly plead for strength—you must pray that God would, by His Spirit, give you strength...
37. Ps.138:3—"In the day when I cried out, You answered me, and made me bold with strength in my soul"—he cried out with a sense of weakness, asking that God would strengthen him...
38. This He does by the Holy Spirit, who takes grace from Christ, and works it within our weak and needy souls...

D. It relates to our glorification

1. Col.3:4—"When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory"—this is the final goal of our union with Christ...
2. The resurrection of our Savior, relates to our resurrection in two ways—it is the pledge and pattern of our resurrection...
3. [1] Pledge—that is, Christ's resurrection is the guarantee that His people, will in time, follow Him into heaven...
4. 1Cor.15:20—"But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep..."
5. The firstfruits is only the first part of something—it guarantees a remaining crop, that there's plenty more to come...
6. Thus, if Christ is the firstfruits of the resurrection, that means there's more to come—the resurrection of the just...
7. [2] Pattern—that is, Christ's resurrection body is the prototype or model, that our bodies will be conformed to...
8. 1Cor.15:49—"And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man..."
9. Phil.3:20-21—"For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself..."
10. Obs.1—Salvation is all in Christ—salvation, in all of its aspects, is only found in Christ, and had through union with Him...
11. For those not in Christ, the benefits of His resurrection have never been applied—you've never been regenerated, justified, sanctified, and nor will you be glorified...
12. Oh my poor sinner friend, you must confess you have never experienced the power of Christ's resurrection...
13. You have never been regenerated, justified, or sanctified—and thus, you have NO HOPE of being glorified...
14. Obs.2—Salvation is all of grace—that is, salvation in total, is experienced by those who are in union with Christ...
15. Because every Christian is in union with Christ, every Christian experiences the benefits of His death and resurrection...
16. Put another way—Christ's death and resurrection ensures that every Christian is regenerated, justified, sanctified, and glorified...