

STONE HARBOR

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Dear Readers,

What follows is one man's weekly attempt to know the truth of God's Word and bring it to His people for their good and ultimately for His glory. Please regard these only as notes belonging to a busy pastor uploaded as they stand (for better or for worse, complete or incomplete, almost always with grammatical errors, and always with room for refinement in content, structure, presentation...) to support the ongoing study of God's Word. I firmly believe that the community of faith which is the body of Christ can and should bring their gifts to bear for the good of the rest of the body and that any one teacher can be taught by the others with an understanding of the truth. Therefore, should you have insight that would sharpen any of the thinking expressed here, know that I would be pleased to receive it. Clearly, the input that is most welcome and most helpful is that which is more concise than verbose, Biblically grounded and expressed with the goal of displacing misunderstanding and apprehending the truth of God's Word. Your thoughts of that nature are most welcome, certainly appreciated and will be thoughtfully considered. You are invited to send those insights to me at johnny@stoneharborchurch.org.

In pursuit of truth and growing a shepherd's heart,
Johnny

Transformation Card

This page provides an overview of the message and resources for individual and group study.

Date: Apr 4, 2010
 Series: None
 Part: None
 Section: None
 Topic: The Resurrection of Christ
 Message Title: **The Facts and Implications of the Resurrection**
 Short Title: Resurrection Facts & Implications
 Text: 1 Cor 15
 Key Words:

Message Outline

Resurrection Facts and Implications

- I. **The Facts** of Jesus' Resurrection
- II. **The Reality** of Jesus' Resurrection
- III. **The Implications** of Jesus' Resurrection

Related Scripture

1. Mat 28
2. Mark 16:1-8
3. Luke 24
4. John 20-21
5. Acts 1-2
6. 1 Cor 15
7. Rom 8

Questions for Thought and Discussion

1. Tell the story of the resurrection of Jesus. Now read the Biblical accounts and take note of the parts you had forgotten about or remembered differently. What is noteworthy?
2. Why do you believe in the resurrection of Jesus?
3. What new confidence did the message provide in the veracity of the resurrection of Christ?
4. What happened to Jesus after He was resurrected?
5. What difference does Jesus' resurrection and His subsequent ascension and enthronement make in the world? In your life?

Memory and Meditation Verse

“For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now...” (1 Cor 15:3-6a (NASB))

Easter 2010

We are some of the most fortunate people in the world! That is right, us, with all our problems, unmet wants, less than perfect health... because we know the living God we are some of the most fortunate people in the world. We are good, truly good.

But each of us could be better, truly better, if we would see things from God's perspective. Because we live in the physical world that still waits for the final redemption of God we have to endure the dust that our complicated life kicks up. This clouds our vision and we squint and strain to see the very positive spiritual reality that lies somewhat obscured by that dust.

God has a topside view with eyes that see through the dust and He has recorded His report of spiritual reality so that we would have His eyes telling us what we can't see with our own. His report is in the Bible: 66 books written by more than 40 different human authors all men inspired by the Holy Spirit over a period of 1,500 years presenting the revelation of God and His dealings with man in one unified message we call the gospel.

This good news is that God has created all things including mankind. And mankind was created unique of all other created things in that we bear the image and likeness of God. Even though mankind rebelled against their creator King causing our estrangement from God instead of the intimate communion with Him that He intends for us, God promised that a uniquely qualified person would come into the world to restore what was lost and even advance the goodness of creation such that we could live for all eternity reconciled to God in perfect and rewarding and fulfilling relationship with Him in a world where there is no more pain and no more suffering.

The prophet Isaiah looked into the future and described this as a time when the wolf would dwell with the lamb... (Is 11). We know it as the time inaugurated by the man Jesus Christ. He is uniquely the Son of God and born into the world with out sin by virtue of the fact that He was conceived by the Holy Spirit. In every way when we look at Jesus we see both the perfect representation of God and the perfect man as God had intended. He knew such sweet and real fellowship with God that he could say, I and the Father are one... and that He could call the Spirit of God "His Spirit."

He lived in human hardship but always in fellowship with God and confidence in His love for Him that would never end. This freed Him to live out the most rewarding and significant life of any person who has ever lived, for His life and ministry lead to the salvation of all of God's people. He laid His perfect life down as a substitute payment for the debt that our sins had accrued to our account.

But not only that, He demonstrated the power of God and the purpose of God to bring life out of death. How? By His bodily resurrection. Death and the grave could not hold our Lord Jesus. For the plans of God can not and will not ultimately be thwarted. And God has intended to redeem us out of our spiritual death into spiritual life which is life indeed.

Big claims, a lot of words. What speaks to their truth is the wonderful gift God made sure the world had -- the gift of the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Today we'll first remember the facts of Jesus' resurrection by looking at the accounts of it in the gospels, then we'll listen in to the argument for why we should believe that His resurrection actually happened, and finally we will explore some of the implications of Jesus' resurrection. My hope is that

God would be glorified and that we would be edified (built up, stabilized, empowered...) as we understand **the facts, reality and implications of Jesus' resurrection.**

We begin with...

The Facts of Jesus' Resurrection

Lean in that you might know the Biblical record of the resurrection of Christ.

Biblical Record of Jesus Resurrection

Matthew 28

- [Read]

Mark 16:1-8

- Concise summary of Matthew

Luke 24:1-49

Additional Details

- Women reported to the 11 and “all the rest” presumably of His disciples
- Peter ran to the tomb after the women spoke of His resurrection (12) and found only the linen that had wrapped His body
- Jesus traveled with two of His disciples to the town of Emmaus (7 miles from Jerusalem) who were speaking of Jesus' arrest and crucifixion, “but their eyes were prevented from recognizing Him.” (24:16)

View from the Street (i.e., two non inner circle followers of Jesus take on events)

- “But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel.” (21) Implicit here is that their hopes were dashed because He was killed.
- Apparently adding confusion to the two men's understanding of the events surrounding Jesus' death was the report of the women that the tomb was empty. I sense in the language that in our vernacular we might have said, “He was crucified, they put Him in the tomb, but the women came all excited and said the tomb was empty and they had seen an angel... man we just don't know what is going on.”
- Re: the woman's report of the empty tomb: “...they had also seen a vision of angels who said that He was alive.” It is interesting that the accounts of the angel's interaction with the women were not described as a vision in Mat or Mark but as an actual appearance – albeit a very other-worldly appearance. (See Mat 28:3). I hear the disciples processing the women's report of the angelic appearance and due to the supernatural nature of it, assuming the women must have seen a vision and not an actual sighting. Skepticism is not new to our generation.
- Read Jesus response to their processing beginning in v. 25-35

Other Appearances (36ff)

Jesus clarified the bodily nature of His resurrection (36-43)

- He appeared to His disciples who “thought that they were seeing a spirit.” They were startled and frightened (37).
- Note again the human mind processing supernatural reality. It seems that we try to understand Jesus with our natural minds and in doing so we diminish Him to something less than He is. Here the bodily resurrected Jesus is diminished to some sort of a “spirit” so that the disciples could get their minds around Him. The problem is clearly not in the reality of the resurrected Jesus, but in the limitations of human mind to rightly process that reality.

- Responding to their mental discontinuity Jesus in a very loving and somewhat humorous way brought them into the understanding that He had not been raised a spirit, but in body as well. Read 38-43
- What a gift. He remedied their “doubts” (38) by allowing them to see His physical body with their own eyes and to watch Him do the very natural bodily act of eating.
- He was raised not just spiritually but with a body. And they were eye witnesses of this miracle.

Jesus explains that what they were seeing was what Had been spoken of.

Jesus links what is happening (His death and bodily resurrection) to what He had already shared with them in the course of His earthly ministry with them, and what had already been said of Him in the OT Scriptures – neither of which they understood with clarity.

- Read 44-45
- His resurrection is simply what He had told them would happen (“My words” of v.44) and what the OT said would happen; neither of which they had apparently understood would play out in His bodily resurrection.
- So what did Jesus do to remedy their misunderstanding? He “opened their minds to understand the Scriptures (45).” This is my new prayer for myself and for you, “Lord, open our minds that we might understand the Scriptures.”

Jesus Clarified His Larger Mission as Well as that of His Disciples

With the authority and voice of God determining what will be Jesus says beginning in verse 46... [read 46-49]

John 20-21

[Invite congregation to read on their own for still more resurrection events]

There are more details to the events surrounding Jesus’ resurrection but hopefully you are sufficiently oriented. Let’s now turn our attention to the argument for...

The Reality of Jesus’ Resurrection

My goal in this section is that we would have increased confidence in the reality of the resurrection. I hope that we can believe that Jesus is who He claimed to be and that His teachings are true and His commands binding upon us BECAUSE of the reality of His resurrection.

I’m leaning heavily on two sources of input to this discussion. The first is the Apostle Paul in 1 Cor 15. The second is a Pastor Timothy Keller from New York City, and his book, *The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism*. Chapter 13 is titled “The reality of the Resurrection.” Dr. Keller in turn gleaned much from reading N.T. Wright’s *The Resurrection of the Son of God*.

Let’s listen first to Paul. All of 1 Cor 15 speaks of the resurrection of Jesus and of our future resurrection that we can expect. I encourage you to read it this week while this message is fresh in your minds. For today let me read for you some excerpts from 1 Cor 15 that particularly

inform our discussion regarding the reality of the resurrection. Read verses: 1-8; 12-26; 32. (Total = 3 min).

You can tell from the text that the resurrection of Jesus was crucial to Paul. See: 19, 32b. It informed not just his intellect but his practice. He didn't just know it for knowledge sake but it caused him to make huge sacrifices and costly decisions to communicate the gospel. Tim Keller makes this clear on page 202 of his book Reason's for God.

So what gives us reason to believe in this supernatural event? Why should thinking modern minds believe that Jesus was raised from the dead.

First of all, Keller sees that the resurrection of Jesus explains the "birth of the church." (p. 202). And he feels that the burden of proving the resurrection to skeptics need not only rest on the shoulders of Christians. Rather he argues that skeptics are equally obligated to come up with some reasonable alternative to how the church of Christ was formed if Jesus was not raised from the dead.

Keller offers the alternative that he feels is common to those who think Jesus' resurrection just could not have happened. (See pp. 202 – 203)

This alternative view challenges the empty tomb and the eyewitnesses. Keller's first counter to this alternative includes the fact that the 1 Cor 15 passage was written very close in time (15-20 years) to the historical event of Jesus. The thought of His resurrection was not something that developed over time by wishful thinkers, but rather it was reported right away by eyewitnesses. Paul's reference in 1 Cor 15:5-8 to the many eyewitnesses was in effect an open invitation for his hearers to corroborate the truth of the resurrection he preached. Had the first century hearers of the gospel wished to check the truth of the resurrection reports they would have needed only to contact one or more of the hundreds of people still living who were eyewitnesses to that event. "Tell me, off the record, you didn't really see Jesus raised from the dead in bodily form did you?" Think of the response they would have gotten from either one of the disciples who Jesus appeared to on the road to Emmaus: "Oh my gosh, let me tell you, it was incredible, we were walking along the road bumming because we thought He was dead when all of a sudden this guy come up and begins walking with us, we did not know it was Him at first but later when we got to Emmaus we were breaking bread with him and this miraculous work took place in us and He revealed Himself to us and we recognized Him. Then He vanished. It was amazing. Yeah we saw Him raised from the dead and it changed our lives!" I imagine it would not take to many of those encounters to establish that Jesus did indeed rise from the dead.

Also countering the skeptics' alternative to the resurrection as an explanation for the birth of the church, Keller additionally points out that "the accounts of the resurrection in the Bible were too problematic to be fabrications" (p. 204). Who was it that first reported Jesus' resurrection? It was women. And "Women's low social status meant that their testimony was not admissible evidence in the court" (p.205) The thought here is that if you were fabricating a story that you wanted people of your day and culture to believe, you would not put the testimony in the

hands of people who's word would not be trusted. Then only reasonable explanation as to why it was women who first saw the empty tomb and the resurrected Jesus is that it was actually women who did see just that.

Because of the early preaching of the resurrection and the empty tomb and the identification of many eyewitnesses to these events they must have been true or they would have been refuted. Jesus body would have been hauled out of the tomb to dispel the claims of the empty tomb, or the named eyewitnesses would have been interrogated and the truth that they had not really seen Him discovered. But this was not the case: they body of Jesus was not produced and the eyewitnesses of His resurrection did not recant their testimony. This leads Keller to conclude: "Whatever else happened, the tomb of Jesus must have really been empty and hundreds of witnesses must have claimed that they saw him bodily raised" (p. 206).

Keller continues his reasoning for several more very informative reasons why we can believe in the reality of the resurrection.

- He refutes the argument that someone stole Jesus' body and the more simple thinking people of the first century were just more willing to accept that He was resurrected than we are today. C.S. Lewis is quoted as calling this "chronological snobbery" thinking that the first century mind was more willing to believe the supernatural than we are today. Keller documents how this just is not so. The first century man in the region where the Church was established would have been just as skeptical and difficult to convince as modern western mankind.
- He refutes the idea that the followers of Jesus may have been suffering from hallucinations of their beloved Jesus and they mistook their hallucinations for the real resurrected Jesus.
- He also has a very interesting discussion on the rapid spread of Christian worldview that was a radical departure from the worldviews of the cultures out of which it came. He argues that such a change in worldview could not have come about in such a short period of time unless the resurrection was indeed true and broadly recognized as true by the verification of so many eyewitnesses. Apart from the resurrection, the worldview represented in the church would not have sprung up as it did. "... the Christian view of the resurrection, absolutely unprecedented in history, sprain up full-blown immediately after the death of Jesus. There was not process or development. His followers said that their beliefs did not come from debating and discussing. They were just telling others what they had seen themselves" (p.209).
- Keller quotes French mathematician, philosopher and Christian Blaise Pascal as saying, "I [believe] those witnesses that get their throats cut." And then concludes, "Virtually all the apostles and early Christian leaders died for their faith, and it is hard to believe that this kind of powerful self-sacrifice would be done to support a hoax."

And that will have to do from Tim Keller for today, please refer to his book for a much more thorough discussion. Now let's turn our discussion to...

The Implications of Jesus' Resurrection

Jesus' resurrection was not an end in itself simply testifying of the power of God – though it does do that very well. Rather in addition it leads to the further important activity of Christ's ascension and enthronement in heaven as the king of the kingdom of God (KOG).

If you want a fabulous treatment of this I refer you to Pastor Kit Culver's Easter 2009 sermon. It was his thinking that caused me to look beyond the resurrection to the resurrection's implications. I give you today only a sketch of what he said there.

Jesus was Resurrected in order to Ascend to Heaven

- Luke 24:50-53
- Acts 1:1-11

His ascension was unto a defined role.

Jesus Ascended to Heaven in order to Take the Throne of the Kingdom of God

[Luke 22:69](#) -- " But from now on THE SON OF MAN WILL BE SEATED AT THE **RIGHT HAND** of the power OF **GOD**."

[Acts 5:31a](#) -- " He is the one whom **God** exalted to His **right hand** as a Prince ...

[Acts 7:55](#) -- But being full of the Holy Spirit, he gazed intently into heaven and saw the glory of **God**, and Jesus standing at the **right hand** of **God**;

[1 Peter 3:22](#) -- [Jesus] who is at the **right hand** of **God**, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.

[Colossians 3:1](#) -- [*Put On the New Self*] Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the **right hand** of **God**.

[Hebrews 10:12](#) -- but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, **SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD**,

[Hebrews 12:2](#) -- fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the **right hand** of the throne of **God**.

These indicate that Jesus is a reigning king. He is in fact The reigning king of the KOG. He is the ultimate Son of God ruling the Kingdom of God on behalf of God the ultimate King. But just as much as He is rightly seen as king, He is also seen as our great "high priest." 18 times in the book of Hebrews Jesus is designated as the high priest. But He is seen as a high priest not in the line of Aaron or from the tribe of Levi from whom all the priests were to be chosen according to the Law, but Jesus was seen as a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek ([Hebrews 5:10](#)).

Melchizedek was this interesting figure who appears and then disappears from the Scripture with out record of where he came from or where he went. Abraham gave him a tenth of the spoils from a battle where Lord had given him victory. But the unique thing about this mysterious figure is that he was both a priest and king. These were offices God has according to the Law specified for separate people. Priests were to come from the tribe of Levi. Kings were to come from the tribe of Judah. Priests were to perform priestly duties only not kingly duties; while kings were to perform kingly duties only and

not priestly duties. But here Jesus is called a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek who was (according to Gen 14:18) "...king of Salem... priest of God Most High." He was king and priest! Jesus is King and Priest.

Jesus Took the Throne in order to be our King-Priest

As High Priest He Mediates between God and His People Interceding for Us

If you are a believer in Jesus, joined to Him by faith, **your sins have been atoned for!**

- Just as in the OT (LV 15, 23) the high priest once a year would take the blood of a sacrificed unblemished lamb into the holy of holies and make atonement for the sins of the people of God (POG), so now we see Jesus, the ultimate high priest, bringing His own blood into the heavenly presence of God and once for all making final atonement for the POG. He is our ultimate High Priest!
- [Acts 5:31](#) -- " He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

If you are a believer in Jesus, joined to Him by faith, **He continues to intercede for you!**

- [Romans 8:34](#) -- ...Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.
- [Hebrews 7:25](#) -- Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

As King He rules the KOG and has Sent His Spirit

Implications of Jesus as Reigning King

- He Has All Authority
Mat 28:28
- The Curse Has Been Reversed
Gen 3:15
- Satan No Longer Has Free Reign
He still prowls... but as a 'tethered cat' defeated and dying from the mortal wound Christ has dealt him.
- Jesus Reigns from Heaven as He Served on Earth, i.e, as a Shepherd using His power & resources for our good
Explaining the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, Peter says of the enthroned Jesus in [Acts 2:33](#) --
"Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear.

The resurrected, ascended, enthroned King Jesus poured forth His Spirit thereby in the most complete way creating the union between God and man that God had always intended. Jesus living on earth was called Immanuel, God with us. Jesus enthroned in

heaven as King of the KOG now has given us the Holy Spirit, God in us.

Jesus was resurrected and we celebrate that today but we can appreciate even more fully that His resurrection lead to His ascension and enthronement where He now sits as our King-Priest having already given us the gift of His Holy Spirit to dwell within the living temples of His people. We have much to celebrate today and everyday.

Conclusion: Living with the clarity of God in a dusty world

The dust has not yet fully settled and the last rain has not yet come and cleared the air that we can see with our physical eyes the reality God has effected in Christ's death, resurrection, ascension and enthronement. We still look into the affairs of God through turmoil's dust.

Yet God's voice from the pages of Scripture testifies of resurrection of Jesus.

- Rising out of the clanging mechanics of our life we hear the story of the resurrection as a sweet sound distantly familiar and fond to our soul's essential longings
- It presses in the reality of the resurrection based on the testimony of eye witnesses who were so convinced that they radically restructured their lives based on its veracity
- Shaking us out of life preoccupied with dust obscured reality the voice of God from the pages of Scripture reminds us that Jesus has experienced victory of true life over death and that He has taken us as His bride and has seated us in the heavenly places with Him for all eternity. It is already done, it is not yet fully realized.
- Are you a believer? Have you been joined with Jesus by faith and the wonderful gift of His indwelling Spirit? If so, then you are a new creature in that union with Christ, then you are secure in His hand. He has taken you as His bride. He will never let you go! He will never allow anything to separate you from God who is love.

Therefore live in this dusty world but do so with an ear to the voice above the dust speaking of the reality that He sees clearly. That voice will give us the confidence to live lives rich in the awareness of God. Alone, separated from God, we are weak and fragile; but as those joined to Christ and thereby to God we are dignified as His sons and daughters and set free to make Him known by representing Him well in the lives He has called us to live. Jesus resurrection changes everything. For it means that He is who the Scriptures reveal Him to be and God is reconciling the world to Himself as He said He would. It means that we are safe in His hands and therefore free to give ourselves for the good of others because God's got us, and even our physical death will not separate us for Him. Let's agree with Keller, "If the resurrection of Jesus happened... that means there's infinite hope and reason to pour ourselves out for the needs of the world" (p.212).

Listen to the voice of God in the pages of Scripture speak of the resurrection, ascension and enthronement of Jesus your King-Priest. Listen as a pilot listens to his instruments and his air traffic controller in a poor visibility landing; better listen as a child separated in the crowd from their loving father. He calls: turn right, stand by the lamp post directly ahead of you, stay right there, I am coming to you.

[Acts 1:11](#) -- They also said, " Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will **come** in just the **same way** as you have watched Him go into heaven."

[Revelation 22:20](#) -- He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming quickly " Amen **Come, Lord Jesus.**

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