

# Resurrection Sunday—2021

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## ***“Resurrection Victory”***

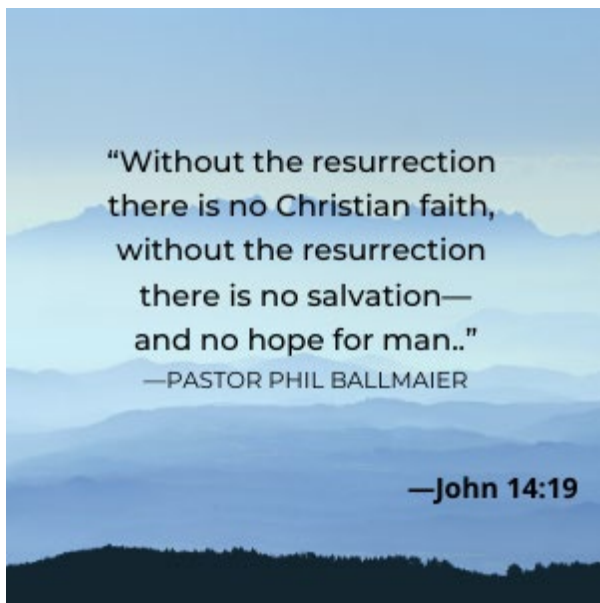
A message by Pastor Phil Ballmaier

(4/4/21)

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This morning we have come to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

As we say almost every year—***the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the single greatest event in the history of the world***, and the cornerstone of the Christian faith. It is so foundational to Christianity that anyone who denies the physical, bodily resurrection of Christ cannot be a genuine Christian—it is an essential doctrine of the Christian faith for salvation.



As Paul the Apostle said:

*"If Christ is not risen, then our preaching is useless, your faith is meaningless, we are still in our sins, those who have died believing in Christ are lost and we are of all men the most pathetic."*

However, Paul went on to say,

*"But now Christ is risen from the dead and is the first fruits from the grave of those who have died believing in Jesus."*

The resurrection of Jesus has both *eternal* and *practical* implications for the Christian.

Jesus told His disciples—*"Because I live, you will live also."* (John 14:19) Now, in saying that the Lord Jesus wasn't just speaking of eternal life in heaven *someday*—but a life of victory and power on earth *right now*.

The resurrection was never intended by God to be one day on a calendar—He intended it to be a dynamic everyday way of life.

So then—what's the problem? Why are so many Christians living in defeat when, as the apostle Paul told us—*"We are more than conquerors thru Him [Jesus Christ] who loved us [by dying for us and rising from the dead]."* (Romans 8:37)

Well, I think that one author put his finger on the problem—

*"Every year, people climb a mountain in the Italian Alps and stand at an outdoor crucifix. There they remember that the Lord Jesus died. A tourist noticed that a little trail led off from the shrine of the cross. He made his way down the trail, and, to his surprise, he found another shrine overgrown with brush. This shrine symbolized the empty tomb. Unfortunately, it had been neglected. Reflecting on the experience, the tourist said it reminded him of many Christians who stop at the cross and never proceed to the empty tomb".*

I think that this writer has put his finger on one of the greatest problems facing the church in America—too many Christians living on the *wrong* side of the resurrection.

By that I mean they believe that Jesus died for their sins, they believe that His crucifixion on Calvary's Cross purchased their salvation—and so they've put their faith in Jesus and are saved.

**The problem is that their Christianity focuses on the 'crucified Christ' but stops short of the risen Christ!**

Please don't misunderstand what I'm saying—they believe in Jesus' resurrection, but they just have never been able, from a practical standpoint, to move into the fullness of all that that life represents. Like the children of Israel trapped in the wilderness—they were delivered from Egypt, and they believed in the Promised Land—they just didn't have enough faith to enter into it (Hebrews 3:19).

So they were what we'll call for a lack of a better term—*"In-betweeners."* A spiritual in-betweener is someone who is saved (delivered from Egypt—i.e., 'the world')—but who hasn't gone all the way into the life of the Spirit (the promised land).

Spiritually speaking, this is a terrible place to be in—as someone has said,

*"These are the Christians who have too much of the Holy Spirit in them to allow them to be comfortable around worldly people—but too much of the world in them to feel comfortable around Spirit-filled Christians—and so they're stuck between two worlds."*

Unfortunately, many Christians wander aimlessly in a spiritual wilderness of carnality and compromise their entire Christian lives and wind up dying there without ever entering into the 'promised land' of their Christian faith (life of the Spirit)—

The difference between living on the wrong or the right side of the resurrection—is the difference between the disciples lives *before* and *after* Jesus rose from the dead.

**John 16:19-20 (NKJV)**

<sup>19</sup> Now Jesus knew that they desired to ask Him, and He said to them, "Are you inquiring among yourselves about what I said, 'A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me'? <sup>20</sup> Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy.

Notice Jesus said that after His death on the cross His disciples would have, sorrow, weeping, and lamenting—But after His resurrection Jesus said they would have **joy**—a lasting joy that no one would be able to take from them.

➤ **Which side of the resurrection are you living on?—*"I'm not sure, how can I know?"***

➤ **Well what qualities, in general, characterize your life?**

**Is it:**

- joy,
- excitement, and
- enthusiasm for the things of God—OR

**Is your Christian life characterized by:**

- defeat,
- emptiness,

- weariness and pessimism?

What changed the disciples from sorrow to joy? → It was seeing the resurrected Christ—

**John 16:20 (NKJV)**

<sup>20</sup> Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and lament...and you will be sorrowful [at His death], but your sorrow will be turned into joy [after His resurrection].

The point I'm making is that too many Christians are living like Jesus is still dead and buried—instead of alive and living in their hearts through the power of the Holy Spirit. Don't misunderstand what I'm saying—they believe that Jesus *is* risen but they don't *live* like He is risen.

Look, the Bible says that we are “in Christ” once we're saved, and that everything Jesus experienced we have experienced because we are in Him.

- So, because He died—so we died.
- Since He was buried—so have we been buried.
- Because He was raised from the dead—so have we been raised from the dead.

**Romans 6:1-4 (NKJV)**

<sup>1</sup> What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? <sup>2</sup> Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? <sup>3</sup> Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized ['dry baptism'] into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? <sup>4</sup> Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

**Colossians 2:12 (NKJV)**

<sup>12</sup> buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with *Him* through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

**Ephesians 1:17-20 (NKJV)**

<sup>17</sup> that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, <sup>18</sup> the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, <sup>19</sup> and what *is* the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power <sup>20</sup> which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated *Him* at His right hand in the heavenly *places*,

**Romans 8:11 (NKJV)**

<sup>11</sup> But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you...

**Philippians 3:10 (NKJV)**

<sup>10</sup> that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,

Look, there is no reason a Christian, who has the same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead living inside of them, has to live a life of defeat and depression when they can live a resurrection life of victory and joy. So, why are they?

The reason many Christians don't live a resurrection life because, as we said—they're ***stuck between the crucifixion and the resurrection—in a spiritual wilderness of sorts.***

Or in other words, they've applied the truth of the cross to their lives by faith and are *saved*—but they've never applied the truth of the resurrection to their life by faith where they are living in spiritual *power* and *victory*. Again, that was the place, spiritually speaking, that Israel found itself in the wilderness—delivered from Egypt (a type of the world—i.e., 'saved') and yet they were too carnal and unbelieving to trust God to bring them into the Promised Land.

For the Christian, our spiritual promised land consists of all the great and precious promises that God has given to us in His Word. (2 Peter 1:4)

We enter our spiritual promised land when we apply the resurrection of Jesus to our lives by faith and enter into the life of the Holy Spirit where we now begin to experience all of the fruitfulness, blessings, joy and victory that the children of Israel began to enjoy once they left the wilderness and entered the promised land by faith.

Let me put it this way—living in the spiritual wilderness and not in the promised land—or as we have put it, living on the wrong side of the resurrection—is like living your Christian life stuck in Romans 7—but never entering into Romans 8!

In Romans 7 Paul talks about the classic battle every believer in Christ faces with their fallen nature in wanting to do God's will—

**Romans 7:19, 22-23 (NLT)**

<sup>19</sup> I want to do what is good, but I don't. I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway... <sup>22</sup> I love God's law with all my heart. <sup>23</sup> But there is another power within me that is at war with my mind. This power makes me a slave to the sin [nature] that is still within me.

Romans 7 is a Chapter of defeat and ends with a cry of defeat—*"O wretched man that I am!"*

Yet the next Chapter, **Romans 8, is a Chapter of victory** and ends with a cry of victory—*"We are more than conquerors...!"*

➤ You say, *"What happened? How did Paul go from miserable failure to glorious conqueror so quickly?"*

**In Romans, Chapter 7 Paul uses the personal pronoun "I" and "me" 46 times.**

**The focus of Chapter 7 is "self"**—it was Paul's testimony of when he tried to defeat sin in his life through his own strength, raw determination, and hard work. This is why it is a Chapter of defeat ending with a cry of defeat—*"O wretched man that I am!"*

**In Romans, Chapter 8—a tremendously uplifting and victorious Chapter**, the key word is **"Spirit"**—as in The Holy Spirit!

The word **"Spirit" is used 23 times** in Romans 8—more than in any other chapter in the Bible! That's why it's a chapter of victory that ends with a cry of victory—*"We are more than conquerors* (through our relationship with Christ and the indwelling Holy Spirit)."

*This is an absolutely critical principle for victory in the Christian life—and one that is stated throughout the Bible in both the Old and New Testaments—“the battle belongs to the Lord.”*

This is a principle that we all must remember when it comes to victory over whatever difficulty, bad habit, or problem we’re facing—the battle belongs to the Lord and He alone can give us victory! Which means, He wants us not to put our confidence in our strength to be victorious over the enemies we face in our Christian lives—but to rely solely on the Holy Spirit’s power!

In other words, He doesn’t want you to promise to ‘*try harder*’ or make some lame New Year’s resolution to change by giving up drinking or smoking or looking at porn or whatever—trying to use the flesh to defeat the flesh.

He wants you to get *serious* about your walk with Him and *surrender* your life to the power of the Holy Spirit—which is the only way you’ll ever know true and lasting victory in your life. Peter alluded to this same principle when he said—

**2 Peter 1:3 (NKJV)**

<sup>3</sup> as His divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue,

“**His divine power**”—the word ‘**power**’ is the Greek word *dynamis*—the same word we get the English words ‘dynamite’ and ‘dynamic’ from.

It’s the same Greek word used in Romans 1:16 and Acts 1:8—

**Romans 1:16 (NLT2)**

<sup>16</sup> For I am not ashamed of this Good News about Christ. It is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes—the Jew first and also the Gentile.

**Acts 1:8 (NLT2)**

<sup>8</sup> But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

The same power that *saved* us, is the same power that *equips* us for service and *conforms* us into the image of our Savior Jesus Christ. (2 Corinthians 3:18)

In other words, it’s the power that gives us total victory over our fallen sinful nature and makes us all that God wants us to be—

**Galatians 3:3 (NLT2)**

<sup>3</sup> How foolish can you be? After starting your Christian lives in the Spirit, why are you now trying to become perfect by your own human effort?

The bottom line is that the Christian life is a *supernatural life*—not a glorified self-help program. (Elaborate)

**Ephesians 3:20 (NLT2)**

<sup>20</sup> Now all glory to God, who is able, through His mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think.

The idea of God's mighty power at work within us—is a reference to Jesus Christ who lives within us thru His indwelling Holy Spirit (John 14:18).

This is exactly the point Peter is making in 2Peter 1:3 when he says, “as His divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and godliness.”

In the Greek the “His” points back, not to ‘God’ in general, but to Jesus in particular (v.2)—which, I believe, is Peter’s way of saying the very thing that Paul said in Galatians 2:20—

**Galatians 2:20 (NKJV)**

<sup>20</sup> I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

The power to live the Christian life doesn’t come from a *principle* but from a *Person*—Jesus Christ!

He won the victory on Calvary’s Cross—He vanquished principalities and powers (the devil and his demons) thru His death and resurrection. Since we, as Christians, are in Him—all the victory and power we need to live the Christian life comes through Him—we just need to ‘*look to Jesus*’ by faith to live His life thru us. (Hebrews 12:2)

As Paul said, “*The life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God...*” It is *faith* that releases the power of God into our lives to be *saved* and to *live* for Him in our daily Christian lives—not relying on the strength of our flesh.

The resurrection guarantees a life of victory—but that doesn’t mean we have no responsibility to do anything in gaining that victory:

**Colossians 2:6 (NKJV)**

<sup>6</sup> As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him,

**Galatians 5:16 (NKJV)**

<sup>16</sup> I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

This implies purpose, responsibility, and effort on our part—

**1. Take Responsibility For Your Sin**

You’re not a victim and you don’t have the ‘*disease*’ of alcoholism or low self-esteem or a sexual addiction or any other addiction.

The medical community made these behaviors into medical ‘diseases’ so that insurance companies would pay for “treatments.” But the result was that people released themselves from the responsibility of their actions— I mean, if you catch a *disease* it’s not your fault—you’re a *victim* not a guilty sinner!

**A disease is something you get—a behavior is something you do—own up to it and repent!**

Repent for making excuses and not forsaking the ‘idol’ in your life (drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, pornography etc.).

**2. Purge Your House and Anyplace Else You Spend Time**

Purge your home, car, office, etc. of the thing(s) that have a hold on you (cigarettes, alcohol, internet, cable TV, certain foods, etc.) Acts 19:18-20

### 3. Plan Your Day Ahead of Time.

Plan where you are going to go (or not go)—and stay on your schedule

Victory comes by living on ‘purpose’ (Daniel) and planning your escape before the temptation strikes (Joseph).

### 4. Start Each Day In Prayer

**Give yourself totally to God as a ‘living sacrifice’** and trust that Jesus will live His life through you.

→ *“Draw close to God and He will draw close to you.” (James 4:8)*

### 5. Confess Your Sin

Be accountable. Confess your sin to a close Spirit-filled friend.

Ask them for prayer support—James 5:16 (Aaron and Hur)

### 6. Remember To Walk in Victory

Remember, God has ‘deposited into your account’ all the power you need to live a life of victory but you draw on that power by faith—Galatians 2:20

### 7. The Best Defense Is A Good Strong Offense—

Come to church, stay in the Word and in fellowship with the people of God.

Let’s all begin to purpose and pray for God’s grace to begin living our lives—on the *right* side of the resurrection!

**The resurrection was never intended by God  
to be one day on a calendar—  
He intended it to be a dynamic everyday way of life!**

Remember, victory it is your spiritual birthright—you were born to be more than conquerors in Christ!

Happy Resurrection Sunday!

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If you would like to know more about what it means to be a Jesus-follower—please reach out to us. It would be our greatest privilege to lead you into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

Reach out to us [here](#).

Want to know more? Click [here](#).

"Yet in all these things  
*we are more than conquerors*  
 through Him who loved us.  
 For I am persuaded that  
 neither death nor life,  
 nor angels nor principalities  
 nor powers, nor things present  
 nor things to come,  
 nor height nor depth,  
 nor any other created thing,  
 shall be able to separate us from the love  
 of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

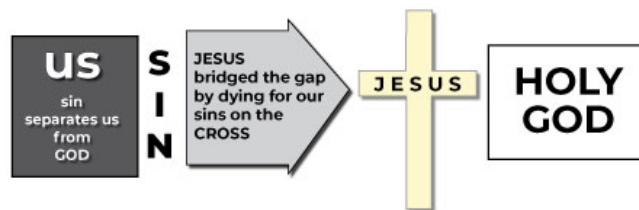
—ROMANS 8:37-39

## THE WRONG WAY TO GOD



"I AM the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to The Father except through Me." *John 14:6*

## THE ONLY WAY TO GOD



"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." *John 3:16*