

He is Risen



CHRIST COMMUNITY CHURCH

NEWSLETTER

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Coronavirus and Victory in Jesus

This time of the year is always very exciting – the Change of the season, more daylight, warmer weather, and people walking outside. This time of the year always encourages my heart. This year, however, we are dealing with the complicated and disruptive reality of facing an enemy we don't know how to defeat. During this season, when people are normally outside enjoying life, we are all quarantined in our homes for an undetermined amount of time. How should we as believers respond to this type of situation? Interestingly, the spring season is also a time when we reflect on our resurrected Savior. His victory over death, hell, and the grave gives us great joy as we experience the challenges in this life (e.g. the coronavirus). In this newsletter, we want to direct our attention to the resurrected Christ and remember the victory that we have

in Him. I want to challenge us to remember three foundational and bedrock truths that can anchor our souls during this devastating time.

Trials are Inevitable

The difficult truth of living in this world is that we will at some point experience trials and tribulations. I don't mean to sound too churchy, but I recall as a child, "seasoned" saints warning me that if I keep on living I will eventually experience some trying times. Well, I can testify that those saints were right! Life is filled with setbacks, obstacles, disappointments, frustrations, pain, agony, and suffering. Job, a man who had his fair share of sufferings, states emphatically that, "Man who is born of a woman is few of days and full of trouble." (*Job 14:1*) Job is able to identify with our feelings of despair. He was a righteous man and lived by faith. However, that did not make him immune from the trials of this life. In fact, on some level, he experienced trials because of his righteousness (*Job 1:8*). The fact of the matter is, when we pass beyond the coronavirus, there will be another situation waiting for us. This will be our experience until we leave this life.

God is Greater Than Our Trials

Trials are inevitable and that can lead to a great sense of despair. However, we also need to reflect on the fact that our God is greater than our trials. The Bible declares, "Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary: His understanding is unsearchable." (*Isaiah 40:28*) In fact, when Abraham and Sarah were getting older and had concerns about their ability to give birth, God reminds Abraham that He is "God Almighty" (*Genesis 17:1*). You may be thinking that if God is so powerful, why doesn't He stop the coronavirus? We have to remember two truths. First, God does great work in us as we go through trials. The first eight verses of Romans 5 remind us that trials produce character and perseverance in us. Additionally, trials force our attention towards God. It's amazing that sometimes it takes an event like this for God to get the attention of the world. Furthermore, God reminds us that His ways are not our ways. This crisis is a great opportunity for us to trust our loving God.

The Resurrection and Coronavirus

Ultimately, God demonstrated that we are victorious through Christ's resurrection from the grave. The resurrection is the guarantee that we will overpower every trial in our lives. Christ's resurrection is different from a resuscitation. To be resuscitated is simply to be brought back to life, but only to die again. Certainly this is what happened to Lazarus (*John 11*), the widow's son (*Luke 7:12-16*), and Jairus' daughter (*Luke 9:49-56*). These individuals were brought back from the dead, but eventually died. The resurrection, on the other hand, is the defeat and conquering of death (*1 Corinthians 15*). Jesus conquered death, hell, and the grave. His victory ensures our victory. In this world we will have problems (*John 16:33*). However, we can be encouraged because Jesus conquered our enemy, death.

Since Jesus lives, we who have placed our faith in Him will also live (*John 5:20-27*). The resurrection ensures every person that placed their faith in Him will not always face trials. We can look to the day when we are freed from the worries of this life. Rest in the confidence we have in Jesus. Praise the LORD.

What the Resurrection Means to Me

by Kelly Parker



By far, my favorite thing about Christianity is the resurrection! The truth that Jesus rose from the dead to new life sets Him apart from every other faith system on the planet. By defeating death, He demonstrated that all the claims He made about Himself were true and that He was in fact, God in the flesh (*John 1:1, 14*).

The resurrection is proof positive that Jesus is alive! No one has ever found His remains and no one ever will because Jesus overcame death and is now seated at the right hand of the Father (*Ephesians 1:20*). That's a reason to get excited!

We should live each day in light of the miraculous reality that Jesus is alive. Jesus' resurrection impacts our lives today in several ways:

Power

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." - Acts 1:8

One of the benefits we receive as a result of Jesus' resurrection is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Though Jesus departed physically when He was resurrected, He didn't leave us all alone. He left us with His Spirit to empower us, encourage us and lead us into all truth. In fact, the same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead is at work in us this very moment (*Romans 8:11*)! We have the power we need to walk in victory and be effective witnesses for Jesus, all because of the resurrection.

Hope

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. - 1 Peter 1:3

Sometimes when we talk about hope, we're talking about the feeling that something we desire may happen. But that's not the kind of hope Jesus offers in the resurrection. What Jesus gives us is the ability to look forward with great confidence to a future event that will happen. As a Christian, we can have unwavering hope that Jesus' resurrection is proof of our own future resurrection.

Victory

"O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." - 1 Corinthians 15:55, 57

The resurrection is a reminder that when we stand with Jesus, nothing can succeed against us, not even death. If you don't mind using your "holy imagination," just picture this for a moment: At the end of time, we will stand arm-in-arm with believers worldwide from every point in history, past, present and future, and shout, "We won!" We will see clearly that even through all the ups and downs of life, it was the death, burial and resurrection of our Savior that purchased our victory.

We're so blessed to know a Savior that would suffer on our behalf, die a brutal death and raise Himself to new life, all so we could be raised with Him. Let's remember to live our lives considering the **power, hope and victory** we have in His name.

BIBLE QUIZ

Let's do a little research!

1. How many pieces of silver did Judas received for betrayal of Jesus?
2. What was the inscription above the cross?
3. What happened in the Temple as a sign that the death of Jesus had made a way for the individual believer to approach God?
4. When Jesus died there was darkness in the land. How long did it last?
5. On what day was Jesus' resurrection?
6. Who was one of the first to see the risen Christ?

ANSWERS: (1) 30 (2) Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews (3) The curtain was torn from top to bottom (4) 3 hours, from noon to 3pm (5) The third day (6) Mary Magdalene



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