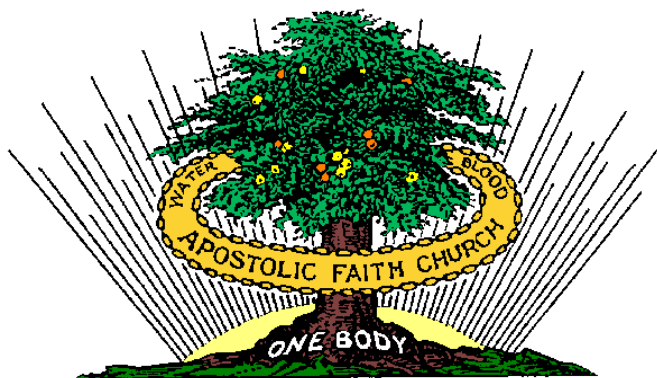


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Showers of Blessing

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He is Risen! The Tomb is Empty!

“He is not here: for He is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay!” (Matthew 28:6, KJV). It was early in the morning when the Angel of the Lord said these words to Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and the other women with them. They had prepared spices which they brought to the tomb to anoint the body of the Lord Jesus. They found the stone was rolled away. “He is risen! The Angel said. The tomb was empty!

These profound words brought astounding joy, not only to the women at the tomb and later the disciples of the Lord, but to the whole world! The resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ became the cornerstone of Christian hope and faith, the fulfillment of a divine promise, and the guarantee of eternal life for all who believe.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned... (John 3:16-17, KJV).

Apostle Paul emphasizes the centrality of the resurrection of Christ in Christian doctrine: “And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain” (1 Corinthians 15:14, KJV). The resurrection of Christ is not a made up story as the chief priests sought to lie and paid the Roman soldiers huge sums of money to spread lies (Matthews 28:12-15) – it is a true historical and physical reality and even more real in the life of a believer and foundational to our Christian faith, transforming life and everything as the world knew it, forever.

The resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ resulted into the following assurances:

1. Victory Over Death

Death was swallowed up in the victory of the Cross. “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” (1 Corinthians 15:55, KJV). For the believers in Christ, this means that death no longer has power over us as we are now partakers of eternal life with God. Apostle John declares “And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life” (1 John 5:11-12).

2. Jesus Christ is Alive!

Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dies no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he lives, he lives unto God. Likewise consider yourselves also to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord (Romans 6:9-11, KJV).

The Word declares that it is Christ Jesus who died, and more than that, who was raised to

life again, and is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us (Roman 8:34, NIV). We have something to celebrate about: He is Alive! And in verse 11 of chapter 6 Apostle Paul declares likewise consider yourselves also alive in Christ! Praise the Lord! Bill and Gloria Gaither wrote a song "Because He lives, I can face tomorrow, all fear is gone! And life is worth a living, because He lives." But more precious than that, our lives transcend this age into eternity with Christ. Glory be to God!

3. Assurance of Justification

By rising from the dead, Christ confirmed that His sacrifice for sin was accepted by God. Apostle Paul writes of the Lord Jesus: "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Romans 4:25, KJV). Our standing before God is secure, not because of our self-righteousness, but because of Christ's finished work of the cross, sealed by His resurrection. Hallelujah!

4. Newness of Life

Through faith in the risen Christ, as believers we are empowered to live transformed lives. "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4, KJV). The resurrection brings the power to break old habits, overcome sin, and live in righteousness through Christ.

5. Hope and Victory in Suffering

In a world filled with suffering, sorrow, and uncertainty, the resurrection gives us victory through Christ under the shed blood on the cross. Christ's triumph on the cross assures us that suffering is temporary and that victory is assured.

As Paul declares: "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies... And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose... In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us Romans 8:11, 28, 37, KJV). Because – He is Risen! The Tomb is Empty, He is Alive!

Hymn No. 110 in the AFC Hymnal declares:

Christ the Lord is Risen Today!... Raise your joys and Triumphs High...

Love's Redeeming work is done; Fought the fight, the battle is Won!

Christ hath burst the gate of hell... Now we soar where Christ has led;

Made like Him, Like Him we Rise; Immortality is the Prize!

King of Glory! Everlasting life is this!

Rev. Jeremiah Sande, Deputy ICO.

