

Jesus is Alive - Matthew 4:1-11, 1 Peter 1:22-25
Notes, Family Worship, Bible Reading

Notes from the Sermon

If you were a pioneer in 1850s America setting out on the 2000-mile journey known as the Oregon Trail, you would likely have ensured the axles of your wagon were equipped with the relatively small device known as a linchpin in order to keep the wheels from coming off. Since then, the term 'linchpin' has taken on a more general meaning, pointing to something that holds the various elements of a complicated structure together. A linchpin would be something that if you got rid of it, the whole system would fall apart, like wheels off an axle. That's what should come to mind when we start thinking about the resurrection of Jesus Christ: the resurrection is the linchpin of Christianity. Without the resurrection, there is no salvation by faith in Christ; there is no justification by the blood of the lamb because the lamb Jesus Christ would have died and stayed dead, and therefore the enemy death has not been vanquished.

From a historical viewpoint, the two primary forms of evidence to consider concerning the resurrection of Jesus Christ are the empty tomb and the physical appearances. If the Jewish Sanhedrin wanted to disprove Christianity, they would simply have had to produce the body of Jesus; this would have squashed Christianity before it had a chance to take hold in Jerusalem. However, we know this did not happen, as the Jews reportedly accused the disciples of stealing the body of Jesus and Christianity is alive today. Many books exist today that assist us in grappling with this (Your Verdict On the Empty Tomb by Val Grieve is one). If, as stated earlier, the resurrection is the linchpin of Christianity, before you consider yourself a Christian, it is important to investigate for yourself whether you truly believe in the resurrection. The finished work of the risen Christ is what our faith is built upon.

To illustrate the material, physical, bodily resurrection of Jesus, we can look at many New Testament accounts of His appearances. In Luke 24:36-49, we see Him appear to a group of disciples, where He encourages them to look at the scars on his hands and feet from the crucifixion nails. He even eats fish before them! All of the details from these appearances point to the fact that the resurrection means Jesus is alive. He appears not as a ghost, with an immaterial body, but with a physical resurrection body that is now incorruptible, no longer under the effects of sin and the fall.

In 1 Corinthians 15, Paul presents a chapter devoted to the support of belief in the resurrection of the dead. Some of the Corinthian believers had decided that while they believed Jesus rose from the dead, there would be no subsequent resurrection of believers. Paul was determined to set things straight by restating the gospel in which they believed, and subsequently reasoning that if there was no resurrection of the dead, then certainly Christ himself could not have been raised; which would mean the gospel they proclaimed was futile, and they would still be dead in their sins, as death would not have been vanquished in "the divine reversal of the human verdict." (John Stott, *The Cross of Christ*) When Jesus rose from the dead, this was God proclaiming His approval of Christ's work. "There was no penalty left to pay for sin, no more wrath of God to bear, no more guilt or liability to punishment - all had been completely paid for, and no guilt remained." (Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*) God subsequently makes that declaration also apply to us once we trust in Christ for salvation. So Christ's resurrection proves he earned our justification. We are saved by faith in Him, and can have hope because of the resurrection.

We also see hope in the way Jesus interacts with His disciples in Luke 24:36. When He appears in the room, the first thing He says to them is "Peace to you". It's important we do not miss the heart of the savior here. He knows where they're at emotionally: they'd just

seen their friend and teacher killed, thinking He was gone forever. Not only that, they had fled and abandoned Him to die alone, even denying Him. But Jesus shows them compassion. He shows them the scars from the nails, and reminds them of the hope of the perfect peace that is yet to come.

Finally, we see in the resurrection that God has a plan. Trusting in Christ alone for salvation restores the broken relationship an individual has with God because of sin; but God does not stop there. He is in the business of restoring all of creation, and He calls reconciled believers to join in His plan. Luke 24:47 points to our commission to take the gospels to all nations, and 1 Corinthians 15:58 encourages us to be steadfast and immovable in the work of The Lord, trusting in the resurrection as our basis of future hope, knowing that God is sovereign and will bring about the perfect peace of shalom when Christ comes again.

Bible Reading for the Week

Daily Bible Readings

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Numbers 27	Numbers 28	Numbers 29	Numbers 30	Numbers 31	Numbers 32	Numbers 33

Reading from this past week: Matthew 4:1-11, 1 Peter 1:22-25

Reading in preparation for this coming Sunday: 1 Corinthians 15:1-23; Luke 24:36-49

Family Worship

Song - *Behold our God*

<https://youtu.be/67TvJwTTdxA>

Gospel Project

Unit: Early Responses to Jesus

Story: People worshiped Jesus

Big Picture Question: How can we be saved?

Answer: We are only saved through faith in Jesus?

Scripture: Luke 5

New City Catechism

Question #21: What sort of Redeemer is needed to bring us back to God?

Answer: One who is truly human and also truly God.

Verse: Isaiah 9:6

Scripture

Matthew 4:1-11, 1 Peter 1:22-25

- Have you ever really researched or investigated the evidence of the resurrection?
- Do you believe the resurrection is the linchpin of Christianity?
- What do the appearances tell you about Jesus' resurrection body? (Luke 24:36-49, for example)
- What does the resurrection mean for the believer?
- What does the resurrection say about God's plan for all of Creation?

Prayer

*Pray that we deeply believe in the truth of Jesus' resurrection and that this truth would give us assurance and boldness.

*Spend time praying the Lord's Prayer with your family from Matthew 6:9-13, focusing in on the third two lines.