

# The Resurrection

A Sermon by Robert Jackson

As Christians, we are always reminded about the Cross – and there's nothing more moving than to remember that Jesus died for us! But we also need to remember that the story didn't end there! The story is only complete when we consider the Resurrection – the climax of Biblical narrative.

When we need restoration or renewal lives, the most exciting thing to remember is that Jesus *rose* – he has power over death. No matter how far fall we fall or how hopeless a situation seems, Jesus has the power to restore us, because he is our Resurrected Lord.

The text for today is in Luke 24. The background to the passage is that Jesus had died, and despite many reports of his raising, two of his followers are *leaving* Jerusalem. They've had enough – they figure that it's all over – it's time to go home. Jesus accosts them and walks with them all the way to their home.

**Read Luke 24:30-46:** This is an incredible account which gives us great insight into our resurrected Lord.

## 1. New Creation

- Resurrection is clearly one of most powerful miracles of Bible. We know that God doesn't do miracle for the sake of it. Miracles show us God's nature and power: they *reveal* God to us, as well as confirming the spoken word of his prophets.
- In *Miracles*, C.S. Lewis points out all miracles can be put in 2 categories: Miracles of the *Old Creation* and miracles of the *New Creation*.
- **Old Creation:** These miracles show how God works in the here and now. They illustrate God's nature and activity toward us in the present. *Classic example:* Jesus turning water to wine. Every season, God brings the rain which waters crops, and then vines grow, which are picked, and the grapes are crushed and fermented and turn into wine. All this is from God! God is *always* turning water in wine – he is sovereign over agriculture and the water cycle. By doing it in an instant, Jesus is teaching us that God is the source of food for our sustenance, and wine for our pleasure. As a further example, biblical healings are miracles of the Old Creation. Doctors can't heal any more than surfers can create waves – all healing is from God.
- In fact, a great majority of miracles are of the Old Creation. However, some, like walking water, simply defy any human experience. They *reverse* natural laws, rather than speed up: these are miracles of the New Creation!
- **New Creation:** The miracles show us our heavenly glory; they point us to our eternity – they show how God *will* act at the end of days. Resurrection is the ultimate miracle of the New Creation. We see nothing like it on earth – it is beyond our experience and comprehension for death to transform to life...

- This miracle shows us that our heavenly glory will be one of constant restoration and renewal: To make new again. In Revelation 21, Jesus says "I am making everything new!" There will be an ultimate renewal of all things at the end of days.
- Death will be swallowed up in victory and we will share in a resurrected existence.

## 2. New Body

- It is clear from the Luke 24 passage that when Jesus rose, he wasn't the same as he used to be. In fact, that's an understatement!
  - He walked with two of his own followers for up to 7 miles, talked with them, did a mammoth Bible study with them, went to their home, sat at their table... and yet, they never recognized him until just before he left.
  - He didn't even leave – the Bible literally says that he *disappeared*.
  - And then, he reappears in the middle of a room, amid the Eleven disciples, and they are convinced they've seen a ghost!
- Biblical narrative doesn't get much stranger than this! Clearly, Jesus has changed. When Jesus rose, he didn't rise in the same perishable body, constrained by flesh and sight and matter – the body that he died in. He rose in a new kind of body – a living fulfilment of the prophecy of our own new bodies.
- Flip over **1 Corinthians 15:20, 42-45, 49**: Jesus' body was *perishable* – he died on the cross. He was *dishonoured* – mocked. His body was even *weak* – he couldn't bear to carry the cross, cried out in pain. He had a *natural body* - like ours in every way!
- But he was raised. He rose *imperishable* – he was physically consumed to heaven for eternity. He was *glorious* – He embodied our own glorious resurrection. He rose in *power* – he triumphed over death. He rose in a *spiritual body*: A *living prophecy* of the bodies we will receive – our own heavenly bodies.
- So, we have the question: What kind bodies will we receive? For some reason, the Bible gives more direct information about our heavenly bodies than any other aspect of heaven. The best summary I can give is this: They will be bodies of *Spirit triumphing over matter*.
- In this world, Jesus said "The Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." Jesus was not insulting his disciples, he was stating a fact of life! Our spirits are constrained by our material bodies – this is the human condition – every day, we need to eat, sleep, wash, clothe ourselves; we need shelter, water, medicines... our bodies are sown in weakness. Paul describes it an earthly tent that we're living in. Our spirits can't run free – we aren't free to give love to every soul; to show God to everyone who's hurting; to be there every moment for everyone that we love – we are trapped in an earthly tent.
- But imagine if the situation was reversed. Imagine an existence where spirit triumphed over matter; where we had a body so radiant and glorious that our spirits

were free to live to their fullest expression – our souls being unconstrained to worship God continually and be united with one-another without end.

- This is the body we are promised. The resurrected Christ is a living prophecy of the new bodies which await us.

### 3. New Life

- In Acts 2 Peter says that death had no power over Jesus. It's his indestructible life which gives us confidence that we too can be renewed in any and every situation.
- Through the Cross, we receive mercy and grace for our forgiveness and redemption. Through the Resurrection, we receive assurance that we can actually live a new life, as well as certainty that heaven awaits, and also power and strength to triumph no matter how far we fall. Forgiveness is not enough - we also need the strength to live a new life. *Illustration*: If you release a criminal from prison and cancel his sentence, have you ensured that he will live a new life, or could he just go back to his old ways?
- The Bible is clear that when we are baptised, we don't just connect with the Cross, we also enter into Christ's resurrection (Romans 6:1-4). His resurrection is the key to us receiving new life on earth, and a glorious eternity in heaven.
- Last Scripture look we'll at: **Ephesians 1:18-20** – The power of God – the greatest power source – unimaginably profound. It is clear that mankind has the power to blow the world apart... But no man has power over death – yet this is God's *specialty* – turning death to life – taking an impossible situation, and working it out; taking a ruined life, and transforming it; taking an empty, numb heart, and filling it with inspiration and love.
- There can be no doubt – looking at state of world, even own hearts – there is one kind of power we desperately need: Resurrection power. Every day I sense how selfish, lazy, independent I'm tempted to be – I know that it's only by the power of God working in my heart that I can live a life pleasing to him...
- This passage defines power of God as Resurrection power, and it says that it is “for us who believe”. This is the power God makes available to us who have shared in Christ's resurrection. It's not about our strength or power – its about God strengthening us in our inner being, freeing us to live confidently, and empowering us to do more than we could imagine.