

1 Peter 1:3-9 & 13

Resurrection Sunday (Practice Resurrection)

Introduction: Today people all around the world are remembering and celebrating the greatest event in human history- the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead! All human discovery and achievement, all scientific breakthrough and advance pale in comparison to this most glorious event- which was essentially, the abolition of death, and meaninglessness and the ushering in of true Hope for the world.

Typically on this day...

I could tell you that Jesus didn't swoon on the cross, but actually, truly, died. And it was seen to by professional executioners.

I could tell you he was buried in a well known location and yet three days later the tomb was empty.

I could tell you that women were the first to see him risen from the dead (Which brought no credit to the claim in those days, because of the low role of women in society). Why mention the women at all? Because it's actually how it went down.

I could tell you that 500 people saw the Risen Jesus at one time.

I could tell you that Jesus ate and drank, talked and walked with his closest friends and followers for forty days after his resurrection. His appearance was not just a one time hallucinated experience.

I could tell you that Jesus' own family members who were skeptical of him - accepted him as Messiah and God after witnessing his resurrection.

I could tell you that each of the Apostles (excluding John) died gruesome deaths for their claim that Jesus was Messiah and Lord.

I could tell you that people back then were not more gullible about these things than we are. No one in the 1st century (besides the Jews) believed in resurrection or wanted it for that matter - The Greeks had a very low view of the body and after life.. and yet the claim that Jesus rose from the dead and was Lord over all changed the world.

These facts concerning Jesus' resurrection are of huge importance, but they aren't told us in scripture as cold facts from a text book waiting to be dusted off once a year around this time. **No, the Christian life is to be one continual celebration and observance of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead!**

"The message of Easter is that God's new world has been unveiled in Jesus Christ and that you're now invited to belong to it." — N.T. Wright

In our passage Peter speaks of having a living hope, an inheritance, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Peter wants us to think about the real life implications of the resurrection of Jesus.

To Peter this is a life altering, earth shattering, historical event, so significant that it changed the course of history and the possibilities for every human that has ever lived. Peter says that Jesus' Resurrection means that we can now set our hope completely on the coming Kingdom of God - with 100 % certainty. And this is his call to all Christians - Set your hope fully on the grace that is to be brought to you at the Revelation of Jesus Christ - This is a reference to the Day that God will seal up and finish everything that he did at the Resurrection of Jesus, the day when he will make all things new. This hope is everlasting, totally secure because Jesus alone has risen from the dead, never to die again. He has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, and He alone has the keys of hell and death. Now he sits at the right hand of God the Father with all authority and power guiding all things to this end; until the time when he will bring his kingdom to reign on earth, in righteousness and peace, world without end..

"The resurrection of Christ means everything sad is going to come untrue and it will somehow be greater for having once been broken and lost." -Tim Keller

If you believe the resurrection is true. If you believe that Jesus has died to save you - to redirect your eternal trajectory irrevocably toward God. If you believe that God has accepted you, for Jesus' sake, through an act of supreme grace. You are a part of the Kingdom of God which means - a guaranteed new heavens and new earth, a healed material creation, absolute wholeness and well being- physically, spiritually, socially, and economically.

That is the Kingdom of God - Peace, Shalom - a complete healing and wholeness to all relationships in the creation. We will be reconciled to God; to nature; to one another; and to ourselves.

So this Morning I want to follow suit with the Apostle Peter and the famous American poet Wendall Berry and say to you - Live out your Hope - Practice Resurrection!

1. So what does it look like to have a living hope, what does it look like to practice resurrection?

1. To the extent that that future is real to you it will change everything about how you live in the present. - we call this Eschatological Ethics - living out the kingdom now.
2. I just want to break this down into two categories this morning -

1. The Calculated

1. If Jesus Christ is risen from the dead - that means we should calculate all things in light of the final resurrection and the coming kingdom. It means that everything we do in this life has eternal weight and merit to it. Directly following Paul's teaching on the Truth and effects of the Resurrection In 1 Corinthians 15 he concludes - "Therefore my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain." - 1 Corinthians 15
2. "The point of the resurrection...is that the present bodily life is not valueless just because it will die...What you do with your body in the present matters because God has a great future in store for it...What you do in the present—by painting, preaching, singing, sewing, praying, teaching, building hospitals, digging wells, campaigning for justice, writing poems, caring for the needy, loving your neighbor as yourself —will last into God's future. These activities are not simply ways of making the present life a little less beastly, a little more bearable, until the day when we leave it behind altogether (as the hymn so mistakenly puts it...). They are part of what we may call building for God's kingdom." N.T Wright, Surprised by Hope
3. Part of the church's task consist of implementing that achievement of Jesus and anticipating the future kingdom by doing righteousness, justice, and bringing peace to the places and people of our city where it is absent.
4. As we've been going through our series on Basic Christian living we have been talking frequently about the parable of the

treasure in the field and the pearl of great price. The exhortation of these stories are to give everything you have for the working and building of the kingdom of God. To live in as though the kingdom were here now. To begin to practice now the language and characteristics of faith, hope and love, for this is the language they speak in the courts of the kingdom of heaven.

5. "Every act of love, every deed done in Christ and by the Spirit, every work of true creativity - doing justice, making peace, healing families, resisting temptation, seeking and winning true freedom - is an earthly event in a long history of things that implement Jesus' own Resurrection and anticipate the final new creation and act as signposts of hope, pointing back to the first and on to the second..." - N T Wright

2. The Care Free

1. Why is it so hard to face suffering? Why is it so hard to face disability and disease? Why is it so hard to do the right thing if you know it's going to cost you money, reputation, maybe even your life? Why is it so hard to face your death or death of loved ones?
2. It's so hard because we think (and act, as though) this broken world is the only world we're ever going to have. It's easy to feel as if this money is the only wealth we'll ever have... If I only have one life to live I better live it to the fullest, by bringing ultimate satisfaction to myself.
3. But if the resurrection is true, then this is not my only life, nor is it my best life, but the best is yet to come. Not only is the best to come but it is "imperishable, undefiled, unfading and reserved in heaven for us, protected by God!"
4. **So love all people liberally. Show kindness to all. Forgive freely. Think the best of people. Loosen your control and worry. Give more away. Take yourself less seriously. Spend more time with people, and investing in people and less time on projects. Bless the people who hate and curse you. Read another story to your kids, spend more time playing with them. Throw a great party.. plant a garden.**

5. People say stuff like this all the time, who have no belief in God, or the Resurrection - who have no hope in a restored heaven and earth. How much more can Christians live care free? Truly, if Jesus rose from the dead, your life should be care free, not in a flippant way, but in such a great certainty and underlying hope about the future and the kingdom of God.
6. If you're lonely, in the resurrection you will have perfect love. If you're empty, in the resurrection you will be fully satisfied.
7. Ordinary life is going to be redeemed. There is nothing better than ordinary life, except that its always going away and always falling apart. Ordinary life is food and work, and chairs by the fire, and hugs and dancing and mountains- It's this world at it's best. God loves this world so much that he gave his only Son so we- and the rest of this ordinary world- could be redeemed and made perfect. And that's what is in store for us.
8. If you and I know that this is not the only world, the only body, the only life we are ever going to have - that we will one day have a perfect life, a real, concrete life - Then who ultimately cares what people do to you, and what happens in this life?
9. Because of the resurrection we can be free from ultimate anxieties in this life, we can be brave and take risks. We can sacrifice greatly. We can face even the worst thing...with joy, with hope, because it doesn't end there. Death, chaos, and destruction do not have the final word over our lives- Jesus the resurrected Lord does!
10. Because of this hope we can freely give our bodies in obedience to God, to his use, and for his glory. We can have the mind of Christ who did not hold onto his glory and comforts but laid them aside for others. We can be humble, like Jesus. We can make ourselves the servant of all, like Jesus. We can die to ourselves, our will, our self preservation for the sake of others and receive a great reward in the Kingdom of God."Only in the gospel of Jesus Christ can we find such enormous hope to live in. Only the resurrection promises us not just new minds and hearts, but also new bodies. Only the resurrection promises that the best is yet to come!

11. "On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined. And he will swallow up on this mountain the covering that is cast over all peoples, the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death for ever; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the Lord has spoken. It will be said on that day, "Behold, this is our God; we have waited for him, that he might save us. This is the Lord; we have waited for him; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation." -Isaiah 25:6-9
12. "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. 2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." - Revelation 21:1-5

Closing: If you believe the resurrection is true. If you believe that Jesus has died to save you - to redirect your eternal trajectory irrevocably toward God. If you believe that God has accepted you, for Jesus' sake, through an act of supreme grace. You are a part of the Kingdom of God which means - a guaranteed new heavens and new earth, a healed material creation, absolute wholeness and well being- physically, spiritually, socially, and economically. **Then Practice Resurrection**