

Resurrection Living!

The resurrection of Jesus Christ stands as the pivotal point of history! On one side of Christ's resurrection is dark, dreary, and defeat – the power of evil still reigns. Death still has the final word. On the other side is blessed, beautiful light, with the assurance that Christ has won the battle. Death has been defeated. – HALLELUJAH!

Eternal life began in such a way, that even physical death cannot hinder! Jesus said, *"I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:"* (John 11:25). And, then that profound statement is followed by this question, *"Do you believe this?"* God help us to face this question squarely, *"What does the resurrection of Jesus Christ mean to me, personally?"* Is Easter just a procession of pageantry – a symphony of word and song – an arrangement of flowers and decorations – fussy sentimentalism of bunnies and eggs? What I am really asking is, *"What does the fact of Christ's resurrection mean to you? Has it changed your attitudes about death – and Life? Has it changed the kind of life you live – the hopes you cherish?"*

The real *"Easter Parade,"* is procession of liberated, loving, laughing men and women, who march triumphantly across the pages of the New Testament with an abundant quality – (not quantity) – of Life! Not only was the *"fear of death"* discharged from those early Christians, but they also lived a *vibrant* life! That procession moves exultantly through the pages of history up to our present day!

We use to sing,

*"Death hath no terrors for the blood bought one,
O glory hallelujah to the Lamb"*

The thrill of victory was in their hearts. Their banner was *HOPE!* Their chant resounds, *"Christ is risen, Hallelujah, He is risen, indeed!"*

Death had been faced and conquered for them. They were alive, because Christ is alive! The early Christians sang a hymn, boldly *"Not Christ, but death – died yesterday!"* That procession, is not past, it is not over, but beckons us to join the celebration!

The resurrection was not only just for Jesus in Joseph's tomb, but, through Him, it is for *"whosoever will" – TODAY!*

1 Corinthians 15 is the *"Resurrection Chapter"* of the Bible. It reaches a climatic crescendo as the thoughts soar in fantastic rhetoric – explaining the triumphant fact that Jesus Christ has done battle with the powers of evil, and won victoriously! The Cross and the Resurrection of Jesus Christ were more than events in history. There was a spiritual conflict – and Jesus Christ won!

It is all summed up in verse 22, of 1 Corinthians 15, *"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."* Jesus Christ was the *"New Adam,"* the beginning of a new creation! Those who are *"in"* Christ Jesus, are recipients of His Life, His Love, and His forgiveness. The same victory over death that Christ Jesus experienced, is, also, those who are *"in"* Christ Jesus. This is not merely a *"quantity"* of Life, it is a *"quality"* of Life!

Jesus said, *"I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."*

Believest thou this?" (John 11:25-26). Jesus is telling us, "If you believe in Me..." - that is, if we surrender our rebellion, our independence and our will, He will give us Life - *Real Life!*

Scripture teaches that the death of the Christian occurs long before his physical death - it is the death of our inner-self. "Eternal life" is a life fully open to God, filled with His power, and open to His direction.

1 Corinthians 15:45-50 reads, "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."

1 Corinthians 15:54 states, "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, **Death is swallowed up in victory.**"

Verse 55 continues, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Verse, 56 says, "The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin - **is the law.**" Note, The sting of death - is sin - that is, separation from God, hostility toward God's guidance. Sin is self-will, rejecting God's will. The word "death" means "separation" - here, it refers to separation from God! This death (separation) has power only over those who are not in right relationship with God!

Verse 56, states that the "Law" -- man's effort to be good enough through his own adequacy - "the power of sin is the Law" - that is, trying to order one's own life in order to fulfill God's justice. The result of this attempt to keep God's Law: Self-oriented, ego-satisfying, and self-justification! The "Law" could not achieve a personal knowledge of God. Godly assurance can only come through an experience of God's forgiving Love.

"The power of sin is the Law" - but, the alternative clearly stated in verse 57, is, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." The real key to the resurrection Life of Jesus Christ is **VICTORY!** The evidence of Christ's resurrection is a victorious Life! It is not just a confidence against death, but an overwhelming resilience - an abounding vitality! It is not just victory over physical death, but deathless Life now - Alive Forevermore!

Of course, Christ takes the fear of death away. He met death and overcame death. Christ came to liberate us from death's devastating, unbearable anguish. He broke the bonds of death and threw wide-open the gate of the tomb. But, more than that - far more than that - Christ makes it possible for us to arise to an eternal dimension of life now, in this life on earth!

There is no need to spend any more time in morbid warring, or trying to squeeze some kind of substance of life into a brief period of years of moral existence.

1 Corinthians 15:51-52 promises, “Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.” Jesus said, “Because I live, ye shall live also.” Do you believe that?

Faith is our response to God’s offer of love. Faith is our joyous acceptance of the gift offered by Christ’s resurrection. Faith is saying “Yes” – allowing Christ’s resurrection power to come into our life! The fact of Christ’s resurrection had made possible “Resurrected Living!” Because Christ’s faced and conquered death, not only did He make available “Life” for the hereafter, but “Life” for here and now! Jesus Christ provided His Life as supply to make us “ALIVE” in a whole different dimension of life – here in our life on earth! The Spirit of the Living Christ invades our lives and refashions us into His own likeness. He gives joy for the challenges of everyday living. We are being groomed by Christ to live forever with Him. This resurrection power is not a mere survival of death, it is *New Life NOW*, in fellowship with God! It gives us courage to face the power of death, unafraid, to realize that it has no power over us.

Christ’s resurrection is not just an endless life after our physical death, but rather, it is a Life of endless victory now! Christ’s resurrection can give us joy over unhappiness; fellowship over loneliness; honesty over moral pride; truth over error; and love over hatred.

We cannot live in continuous victory on our own power, it takes the resurrection power of Christ Jesus – and He offers it to you now.