

The Life of Christ – Part 14

Today we continue our study in the life of Christ, and we've been looking at the resurrected Savior. Today we want to continue that study. We've seen through the life of Christ how that He lived a sinless perfect life. He did many miracles. He chose the twelve, of which one was a devil.

And we saw how that He was crucified. He was betrayed and He was crucified. He died and He was buried. We've also seen in the first part of our study how that He was resurrected from the dead, and at least 104 times that is mentioned in the New Testament. Without the resurrection of Christ, there would be no Gospel. There would be no salvation. There would be no Christianity and no message of hope for mankind.

First Corinthians 15:1-4 says, ¹*Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; ²By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. ³For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received... This is the Gospel now... how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; ⁴And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.*

We know as saved people that Christ did rise from the dead. He said He would and He did. Jesus made this claim that He would rise again. In Matthew 16:21, it says, *From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.*

Many other scriptures talk about Jesus telling this to His disciples, and Jesus not only told His disciples that He would rise; His enemies also knew about this claim, as well. And we've discussed this before in Matthew 27:62-64 that these people were afraid, and so they wanted to make every effort... His enemies wanted to make every effort to stop this, to keep Him from rising from the dead, but bless God, Jesus rose from the grave because of the Spirit of God. He raised Himself up and we know this because the scriptures tell us this and it's for by grace through faith are you saved, and not of yourselves. It's a gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.

Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. As we study and read the Word of God, the Holy Spirit speaks to our hearts and lets us know that Jesus Christ lived that sinless, perfect life. He was born of a virgin. He came into this world for one simple reason. It's really not simple. It's a simple plan of salvation when we realize that all we have to do is accept it, but He came into this life for one purpose and that purpose was to seek and to save those who were lost. And we read in the scriptures how that no man comes to the Father but by Him.

If the resurrection was a hoax, if Jesus never really rose from the dead, then we would have to say that Jesus was a deceiver. Matthew 27:63 says, *Saying, Sir, we remember... This is His enemies speaking... that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again.*

Jesus really did rise again from the dead, as he said he would. Matthew 28:6 says, *He is not here.* This is people coming to the sepulcher to see Jesus, to see the body, but, *He is not here:*

for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

In Luke 24:44-46, it says, *And he said unto them, **These are the words which I spake unto you...** This is after His resurrection... **These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets...** That means He had to fulfill the scriptures... **and in the psalms, [He says,] concerning me.** ⁴⁵*Then opened he their understanding...* They finally saw. It was like scales dropping from their eyes... *that they might understand the scriptures,* ⁴⁶*And said unto them, **Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day.****

There are many unsaved people who read the Bible. They will read the Bible and they will look at it as a textbook or they will look at it as history, but until the scales fall from their eyes, until they receive Jesus Christ as their Savior, the Scriptures really don't come alive to these people. It wasn't alive to me until I said, "Lord Jesus, come into my heart. I receive You as my Lord and Savior."

The Bible says that, once we get saved and we pray and we ask the Holy Spirit to lead us and guide us, He's going to lead us into all truth. If you're unsaved today, you need to ask God, you need to ask the Holy Spirit to lead you into all truth. Jesus said, ***I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me.***

If you ask the Holy Spirit to lead you and guide you, then He's going to bring you to the Savior and you're going to understand that you need to ask Jesus to come into your heart. The risen Lord will come into your heart because you asked Him and you trust Him.

Well, what about the appearances of our Savior? There are at least six books in the New Testament written by five different men which tell us about the resurrection appearance of Christ. Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, and I Corinthians talk about this. At least three of these Bible writers actually saw the risen Lord. They saw Him – Matthew, John, and Paul.

Paul saw Him on the road to Damascus. This is after He had ascended back into Heaven. We'll talk about that in our next study, about the ascension of our Lord, but Paul actually saw Him. He said, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" He recognized Him. He'd never met Him until that point, but he knew immediately that He had been saying things against the Lord. He had been killing Christians, and He knew when He saw Jesus, he said, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" He recognized Jesus.

And these writers, Matthew, John, and Paul, they wrote from firsthand experience. They had seen the risen Lord. As we study these inspired documents, we learn that Christ appeared also to the following people in the following order.

First, we see witnesses. Christ was first seen by Mary Magdalene, according to Mark 16:9. We also see that Christ was seen by more than 500 people in Galilee, according to I Corinthians 15:6. He was seen by more than 500 people. Now as we think of this, we actually understand that Christ was also seen by many other individuals. Christ was seen by the ten disciples; Christ was seen by Cleopas and another disciple on the road to Emmaus, and on and on the list goes. Christ was seen by James although little is said about this appearance in I Corinthians 15:7. Christ was seen by His disciples on the day He ascended into Heaven. We'll talk about that next time. After the ascension, Christ was also seen by Stephen in Acts 7:55-56.

Many witnesses saw the resurrected Lord. But do you really believe that Jesus rose from the dead? Yes, I do. Because not only does the Bible say He's going to rise, but we have these witnesses who said he rose from the grave.

Did he come out of the grave bodily? Many so-called Christians claim to believe in the resurrection of Christ but they deny that the actual body of Christ was raised from the dead. They might say that His Spirit lives on or His influence lives on or His memory lives on. But they don't believe that Jesus lives today in a glorified resurrected body.

What do the scriptures really say about the bodily resurrection of Christ? The living Christ, as I've already said, appeared to more than 500 people on one occasion and was no mere spirit or ghost or influence or memory. He could be held by the feet, according to Matthew 28:9. Mary was able to cling to Jesus. In John 20:17, He says, *Touch me not*. And it can be translated, "Stop clinging to Me."

He could walk in the country. Luke 24:15 says, *And it came to pass, that, while they communed together...* These are the people on the road to Damascus... *and they reasoned together and Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.*

He also invited the disciples to handle Him or to touch Him, according to Luke 24:39. His disciples could see and feel that He had flesh and bones, according to Luke 24:39. He could cook fish, according to John 21:9. He could eat; Luke 24:42-43 talks about this. And we also understand that the marks and scars of His sufferings could be seen and felt, John 20:25-27.

What's the importance of the resurrection? Suppose the resurrection were nothing but a lie, the biggest hoax known to history? Suppose the disciples were deluded and deceived? They

thought Christ had risen from the dead, but they were mistaken. Or suppose the disciples were deliberately trying to deceive others? They knew Christ had not risen from the dead, but they tried to fool others into believing that He had. What would this mean? Well, it would mean that Christ had not risen from the dead. Preaching would be in vain if Christ did not rise. Faith is in vain if Christ did not rise. Those who say Christ rose bodily from the dead would be false witnesses of God if Christ did not rise. People would still be in their sins, not saved, if Christ did not rise. Those who have died believing Christ rose from the dead are perished or destroyed and are not saved. Those who have trusted in the resurrection of Christ will never be happy but will be miserable if the resurrection is not true.

But I've got news for you today. We know however that Christ is risen indeed. In I Corinthians 15:20 we read the glorious good news. *But now is Christ risen from the dead.* He is risen most certainly. As we study the scriptures and we understand that all of these people saw Him and the scriptures testify of this, we need to realize that, without the preaching of the cross, without the burial, without the resurrection of Jesus, there is no salvation, because, once again, the Bible says that the Gospel, the good news is that Christ was crucified, buried, and resurrected.

Those people who put their faith in Jesus Christ are saved because of the death burial and resurrection of our Savior. First John 5:12 says, *He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.*

First Peter 3:21-22: ^{21b}*By the resurrection of Jesus Christ: ²²Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.*

Hallelujah! What a Savior. He's living today to save you. If you've never trusted Him, you need to ask Him to come into your heart right now. "Lord Jesus, come into my heart. I receive You as my Lord and Savior. I confess my sin. I can't save myself. Save me so I can see You personally one day as these other witnesses have seen." If you'll ask Him to save you, He'll save you today.

If you're not living for Him and you are saved and you're not living for Him, you need to say, "Lord, forgive me. I want to serve You from this point on."

It's been good being with you today and let me remind you that you can download a transcript of this program by going to www.LRWM.org, or you can write to me, Lewis Woodard, 497 Judith Avenue, Fruitland Park, FL 34731.

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Until next time, this is Doug Anderson reminding you it's a good life living for the Lord. May the Lord bless you richly is our prayer.