

The resurrection: offering ultimate hope (Luke 24:45–49; John 20; plus)

Though the death of Jesus on the cross was at first devastating to the disciples, dashing their hopes and causing fear, all that changed when they were confronted by the resurrected Jesus. The resurrection was for them and is for us a source of joy and peace in a troubled and troubling world. The resurrection of Jesus Christ gives us a basis for great, eternal hope, which transcends the temporal fears and sadness which can plague even the follower of Jesus Christ.

I. *The resurrection gives hope, because the resurrection declares that sins are forgiven.*

1. *This is the message that was preached after the resurrection.*

Jesus commissioned the disciples to proclaim repentance and the forgiveness of sins (Luke 24:45–48), a proclamation based upon both the death and resurrection of Jesus. Peter preached this at Pentecost, emphasizing the resurrection more than the death of Christ, and concluding with the exhortation to repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:24–32, 38).

2. *This is the “theology” of Paul explaining that the resurrection declares that sins are forgiven.*

See Romans 4:23–25 which concludes with the statement that Jesus “was delivered up because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification” (NASB). The preposition, often translated as “for”, does not express purpose but cause. Because of our transgressions, Jesus had to die to pay the penalty of sin for us, and because that death worked the believer’s justification, providing the righteousness of Christ to the believer, God raised Jesus from the dead.

3. *The resurrection is a message of hope for us today.*

The resurrection gives a greater hope because sin is our greater problem. Unforgiven sin leads to eternal separation from God. No temporal problem comes close in seriousness. But it also requires repentance, a turning from sin and false gods and a turning to the living God.

II. *The resurrection gives hope, because the resurrection prepared for the gift of the Holy Spirit.*

1. *This was promised in the “commission” to the disciples and preached from Pentecost onward.*

See Luke 24:48–49; Acts 1:4–5, 8; 2:31–32, 38. Christ’s resurrection was the pathway to exaltation and His pouring out of the promised Holy Spirit.

2. *The Holy Spirit is a seal and a deposit guaranteeing the inheritance of true believers, a seal and deposit which only is available because of the resurrection.*

See Ephesians 1:13–14; 2 Corinthians 5:5; Romans 8:9, 16. A seal secured, identified the owner, and/or authenticated something. The Spirit as a deposit is a guarantee that more is coming and a taste of what salvation is like.

The gift of the Holy Spirit, which only comes because of the resurrection, puts all temporal fears and worries into perspective. A great inheritance is prepared for the believer.

III. *The resurrection gives hope, because the resurrection demonstrated the power of God that is now at work for believers.* See Ephesians 1:19–20.

1. *The resurrection power of God is at work toward believers in various ways.*

By the resurrection power of God as a believer ...
you can stand firm in spiritual conflict (Ephesians 6:10);
you can endure and be patient with joy (Colossians 1:11);
you can serve others (1 Peter 4:11);
you can proclaim Christ (Colossians 1:28–29);
you may look forward to a transformed, resurrected body (Philippians 3:20–21).

2. *The resurrection power of God is at work in various ways toward believers.*

The immeasurable power of God works not only for good to those who love Him, but also against those who reject Him. The resurrection of Jesus offers new life, a message we are to proclaim.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ gives hope to all who believe in Him, prepared the way for the gift of the Spirit, and shows us the power of God that is at work toward you, the believer, even today. Rejoice that Jesus lives! And let all which you do be for the glory of God in Christ Jesus whom He raised from the dead.

Questions for further thought and discussion:

- First Corinthians 15 is the classic chapter in the New Testament on the resurrection. What additional explanation can you find in this chapter that establishes the necessity of the resurrection of Jesus for the believer’s hope?
- In some segments of modern Christianity the work of the Spirit seems separated from Christ and His death and resurrection. What requires these truths to be kept together and why is it important?
- In which areas of your life do you sense the need for power of God? What will you do about it?