

“THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

The Resurrection — Proof that Jesus is the Son of God

By Doug Roush

Romans 1:4 states that Jesus Christ was *“declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.”* The resurrection of Jesus, more than any other single event, is the ultimate evidence that Jesus of Nazareth was, and is, the Son of God.

Although we have the Bible record of other people being raised from the dead, it certainly was not an everyday occurrence. Jesus raised Lazarus, the widow’s son at Nain, the daughter of Jairus, and perhaps others (John 11; Luke 7:11-15, 22; 8:49-56). Peter raised Dorcas from the dead (Acts 9:36-41). In the Old Testament, both Elijah and Elisha raised people from the dead (1 Kings 17:22; 2 Kings 4:32-35; 13:20-21). However, none of these resurrected individuals were thought to be *“gods.”*

The case of Jesus is different. As the body of Jesus lay alone in Joseph’s new tomb, no one took Him by the hand and commanded Him to rise. The tomb is sealed and closely guarded. No one stood outside the tomb and called for Him to come forth. No one even witnessed His actual resurrection – the angel rolled away the stone and the guards *“became like dead men”* (Matt. 28:4). The resurrection of Jesus was accomplished by the direct power of God. The fact that *“God raised up”* Jesus is declared many times in the Book of Acts (2:24, 32; 3:13; 4:10; 10:40; 13:30, 37). His resurrection is the ultimate evidence that identifies the historic Jesus of Nazareth to be, in fact, the Divine Son of God!

There was physical and testimonial evidence that confirms the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Consider the following details:

- The tomb was new. No one had been lain there before (Matt. 27:57; Mark 15:43; Luke 23:51). There was no possibility of confusing the body of Jesus with the remains of another.
- The tomb entrance was closed with a large stone, sealed, and guarded. (Matt. 27:60-66). No one could have taken the body away.
- The grave clothes were left neatly in the tomb. When Peter and John went into the tomb after the resurrection, they *“saw the linen cloths lying there, and the handkerchief that had been around His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself”* (John 20:6-8). No one stealing a body would take the time to unwrap it and neatly fold up the clothes! Only a person who would never have use of them again would leave the expensive grave wrappings behind!
- The scars of Jesus’ resurrected body were examined. On the very evening of the day of His resurrection, Jesus appeared to His disciples and *“showed them His hands and His side”* (John 20:20). Wounds in the hands and feet could be observed on anyone who had been crucified, but the wound in the side of Jesus was unique. It offered gruesome evidence to His identity, and also to what His body had been subjected.
- Many people saw Him alive. The number of witnesses to the resurrection of Jesus is overwhelming credible evidence. In a court of law, facts can be established on the basis of two or three reliable witnesses. In addition to the apostles, many, many more saw the resurrected Christ, including Mary Magdalene, Cleopas, James, 500 brethren at once, and finally the apostle Paul.

The detailed nature of the evidence provides overwhelming proof, validating the authenticity of the resurrec-

tion of Jesus. His resurrection is the ultimate proof that validates His claim that He is the Son of God, the Way, the Truth, and the Life; the only way to the Father (cf. John 14:6). The detailed and reliable evidence we have for the resurrection of Jesus validates our belief of it. Believing in the resurrection of Jesus is the key to our salvation. ***“Knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus”*** (2 Cor. 4:14). ■

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“Just As I Am”
By Frank Himmel

The song ***Just As I Am*** is one of our most commonly used invitation songs. The idea in the song is that we cannot make ourselves right with God on our own; apart from Jesus’ blood we have no hope. That is precisely the New Testament picture (Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5; etc.).

I fear, however, that some folks have an erroneous idea about Jesus saving us “just as we are.” They seem to think that He saves us without any change in our conduct. That is opposite to the New Testament picture.

Jesus’ charge to the apostles was ***“that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all the nations”*** (Luke 24:47). Forgiveness is extended to those willing to abandon sinful conduct, not to those who insist on continuing in it.

Paul wrote to the Corinthian Christians, ***“Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you...”*** (1 Cor. 6:9-10). He did not say such are some of you, but such were. They changed their conduct in connection with being washed, sanctified, and justified (v. 11).

“Just as I am,” if referring to our own helplessness, is a comforting sentiment. But to suggest it means salvation without repentance is to hold out false hope. ■

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“Once for All”
By Billy Norris

“Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints...” (Jude 3).

The original Greek word *hapax* translated ***“once for all”*** means that it is *“of perpetual validity not requiring repetition”* (*Vine*, pg. 819). The faith delivered to the saints is of such quality that it is complete (***“perfect”*** James 1:25) and will not tolerate addition or alteration. This means that any “revelations” since the faith was given ***“once for all”*** have not come from God but from the inventive minds of men. It further means that those who claim the latter day revelations and those who believe them are condemned. The warning is clearly given, ***“Whoever transgresses (goes ahead) and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son”*** (2 John 9).

We must recognize and respect the significance of this word translated ***“once for all.”*** ■

Service Times — Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM — Wednesday: 7:00 PM

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