

THE RESSURECTION FOR LIFE TODAY

Mark 16:1 -

THE \_\_\_\_\_ OF THE RESSURECTION

The ressurection of Jesus

in all history. When we think of the cross and the ressurection of Jesus

part of Christianity. We will primarily emphasize the ressurection for life  
today. But we cannot consider the ressurection without carefully looking at  
some of the (attacks) which have been made upon this amazing thing that Christ  
was raised from the dead.

We might begin by saying that of all the religions in the world  
that this is the only religion that claims a risen, living Lord. Now this is a  
very striking fact since all of the religions have an element of supernatural.

They all make claims concerning miracles.

They all make claims regarding scriptures which have been developed.

All we have in Christianity in common with all other religions these  
facts, however, in Christianity we have the crucified Lord, though he was crucified,

He is still the living Lord of our faith.

Now, to see a contrast of this, one might go to the island of Salom off the coast of India, and one might go there on a given Sunday, and discover a temple, the temple of Tooth. This temple of the tooth is supposed to be the tooth of Buddha which is preserved under a glass case in this golden dome temple. They tell us that on any given day, you might see an endless line of people winding their way up the mountainside going into this temple either to kiss or to touch this bit of remains which has been left of Buddha preserved in this temple. There was probably several Buddhas. There have been in records of history ~~as~~ several different Buddhas, but there nevertheless is the point here that this is the remains of a dead Buddha, and the important thing to know is that the temple here is a way to preserve and to record the death of this Buddha, or god, and the remains which they have preserved through the years for this cause.

Another interesting trip ~~xxxx~~ you may take would be to Mecca which is located far down in Arabia in that holy city of Islam ~~xxxx~~ <sup>there</sup> is a famous red tomb or rock in which they say lie the remains of Mohammed. As you know, the worshippers of Mohammed all want to make a pilgrimage to this tomb, and only the Moslems are permitted to go in, and this is the great desire of a lifetime, to come here, to make your pilgrimage, and to bow down before this dead leader. Now, they make no

pretense that he is not dead because here is the evidence that this mortal man died and is buried in tomb, and they come here to pay their worship.

3- You might in the next place take a trip to the Kremlin and go to Moscow there where you will discover have been entombed the remains of Lenin. They have used the best known embalming methods to preserve his body, and it is encased in this glass cover, and they say that endless lines of people come by many to look that way or to touch or to kiss and to here pay their homage to the founder of what we know as communism. In that illustration you have a modern parallel of a false faith which has captured and taken in literally millions of followers in our day.

As you think of these contrasts which I have given you, if there has been no resurrection of our Lord, then there would not have been any New Testament. There would have never been any band of believers, followers, if Jesus had not come forth from the grave.

Now, the followers of Jesus did not hide the fact that they were a little bit disappointed when Jesus died on the cross. They were somewhat ~~mixed~~ with mixed emotions as to what exactly they would do. Simon Peter, one of the most out-spoken followers of Jesus went so far as to say, "I go a-fishing." And most of the disciples went along with him, because they had hoped in Jesus to be their leader, and now

Jesus had been slain. Surely the Messiah had not come, and without the resurrection, there would have been no faith for the future.

Now, it is very easy for us to see at this Easter season as we think about the resurrection, that the most scholarly people in the past as well as in the present, have made an all-out attack ~~upon~~ upon this great ~~of~~ fact of history, the resurrection.

I want to trace two or three of these beliefs this morning for you because the way we respond to this event has a great deal to do with our faith. Now, if we go way back to the year 1836, there was a great German scholar, Strauss. He set his mind in that year to write a book about the life of Jesus. The entire study was to discredit all of the miraculous things about Jesus, and to discredit these things. He began writing with the assumption that miracles just didn't ~~happen~~ happen. Therefore, he had a problem when he came to deal with the accounts of the gospels. He said that everything happened according to science, and that these things happen without intervention. But here in the gospels he found things that were happening according to prophesy and he just couldn't believe that men got up and walked out of graves.

So when he came to the resurrection of Jesus, he ~~decided~~ decided that he would have to explain that in some other way than as just a miracle. He began

his thesis by underlining all of the miracles of Jesus. For example, he took the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand in which the little boy brought his fish and loaves to Jesus in this way. You remember there was a great abundance left over, so he said that Jesus was embarrassed with this great crowd, and this little boy had his lunch hidden in his cloak, so he opened his coat and took out his lunch of the fish and the loaves. And then he said that all the other people on the hillside at that time ~~am~~ had also brought their lunches, and so they opened their coats and pulled out their lunches, and there was an abundance of food for everyone and a great deal left over, and this was his explanation of that miracle.

The miracle of Jesus (walking on the water) - this scholar said that in explaining this, he says, Do you not note that immediately following this statement, the scripture says that the boat was on the shore. So he carefully describes the scene as Jesus had been walking along the shore and there was a fog settling, and the boat was up on the shore, and he was walking up on the land. So his real explanation is that the disciples were mistaken, that Jesus was merely walking along the shore, and they saw him in the fog, and they were deceived, and they thought that he was walking on the water when actually he was walking on the shoreline all the time.

Now, Strauss (explains the crucifixion) of Jesus and his death on the cross

in the same way. He says that they merely put him on the cross, and that in that hot sun that Jesus merely swooned on the cross because he ~~says~~ then quotes and says, Does not the scripture say that it was near the Sabbath and they took him down from the ~~cross~~ cross? And they must have him down from the cross and in the tomb before the Sabbath begins. And this he says rushed ~~him~~ them to the extent that they had not time to embalm the body or to give it the treatment with the spices as was the custom of the Jews before it was entombed. And that is why the women were coming ~~it~~ on the first day of the week to annoint the body with the spices, so says Strauss.

And so Strauss goes on to explain this by saying that as the women came that ~~Jesus~~ Jesus ~~is~~ in the dampness of the tomb ~~of~~ had time to revive, and so he thought to himself, Well, now I can proclaim to these that I have been raised from the dead, and then I will be worshipped as a god. So what he actually says is that Jesus did not really die on the cross, and that the resurrection is only evidence that he was revived from a swoon, and that he actually had not died at all.

But the thing that this infidel along with others who try to explain away the resurrection of Jesus fail to record is, how could these disciples who were now willing to give their lives and themselves for this living Christ because they took this story of the resurrection and told it all over the known world at that time.

Perhaps one of the most vigorous attacks against the ressurrection has been made in our own day by Bultman, a scholar in Germany. Now, he attacks

the ressurrection from a different standpoint. He does not try to disprove it, but he says there is no substantial evidence to support the ressurrection of Jesus.

You and I know the man may have had fingerprints, or he may have had a doctor's certificate that this man may have died. And yet, if a man did not want to believe that there had been a ressurrection, then no amount of proof would satisfy his lack of faith.

It is really possible for unbelief to be so strong in an individual's life that no amount of evidence really could or can change his mind about it. This is true in the ordinary things of life. You know exactly what I am speaking about.

But what we have in the gospels is an eye-witness account of men who saw, who believed, and who have given to us the truth of the account. And of course, you and I have watched men in unbelief ~~through~~ go on through life many times like these scholars that I have mentioned, and yet will not believe in the living Lord. Now, of course, Bultman is right in part of his theology in that he says that this life of Christ is the important thing, ~~but~~ that ought to be living in our life. But he wrong when he denies the ressurection story. I think this is true today. Even as Paul put it when he made it very clear that if Jesus did not come forth from

the grave, then our faith is vain. Because only on the basis of the resurrection can we have any foundation for our faith today.

There have been several attacks upon the resurrection in our own day. For example, there was Bishop Robertson of England just a while back who wrote the book entitled, "Honest to God." He wrote in his book that it is impossible for modern man to believe in miracles. For modern man to believe that Jesus came down from heaven, that he lived, was born of a virgin, spent his life among men, and then died and was raised again, this he says, is too much for modern man to believe. He goes about his explanation in an existential way of explaining the resurrection of Jesus. I guess the simplest way to state it would be that he said Jesus was placed in the grave, but the church was resurrected. So really, what he means is that Jesus did not come forth from the tomb bodily, but that the church, the body of Christ in a symbolic way, is the risen body of Jesus, and that Jesus lives through the body of the church. He is very careful to say this. The resurrection which he sets forth is the resurrection of the church.

Now, this is the only resurrection he says that we need. This seems to be an Old Testament idea which is picked up in which there is hope in the Jewish family, and there was somewhat of a cooperative hope in the family which would carry over in the future, and there would be life for the family. And of course, many of the Jews

did not have this hope of the resurrection. But in the book of ~~Revelation~~

Psalms and Job and Daniel, you have the teaching concerning the blessed hope

that there would be a resurrection. And some of them only had hope as perhaps

the rabbi had taught in New Testament time, and this may have been their only

hope for any kind of life or resurrection in the future. So this would be in a

group, not as an individual, and so this really would not be a satisfactory answer

because it would give no hope to the individual resurrection, and it denies the

resurrection of Jesus Christ, and it throws doubt upon exactly what happened on

the third day when the disciples came and discovered that the tomb was empty.

When these disciples ~~were~~ went down to the garden to discover what

was there, they actually found and discovered that there had been a resurrection.

Now, when we make the contrast with all of the scholars and other

sources to which I referred to in this message, I think it would be well for us a

moment to spend time as to why we believe in the resurrection of Jesus. Now, there

are some who take and discredit even the virgin birth of Jesus and say that there

are comparative stories in Greek mythology, but there is nothing to contrast with it

in all the world.

Testimony

Even more we can say that the resurrection of Jesus is without parallel,

even though men may try to make a contrast with other resurrections.

Now if you will turn with me to Mark 16, you will have some of the most remarkable words ever spoken. It begins by telling you how the women came to the tomb wondering in Verse 3 how or who would roll away the stone, for it was very great. And when they arrived, the stone had already been rolled back.

Verse 5 - And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side clothed in a long white garment, and they were afraid. You will notice here that they reacted in a quite natural way. You will notice here that this eye-witness account says that there was one man, and he was seated on the right side. Now, in reading in the gospel of Luke, we read that there were two men ~~present~~ present. And when you turn back to the book of Matthew, it says that there was one man, an angel, he was ~~referred to~~ referred to as an angel in Matthew's account. Now, if somebody were going to relate a fictitious story, they would have gotten together and tried to have gotten their stories straight. But this is the natural, normal way of recording the account of a witness.

You remember how things are recorded in a courtroom. An attorney may be able to cross up a witness as he asks questions of the witness, and he does so by not sticking to the main details of the event, but often he will ask enough questions that he will ask questions that ~~the~~ the witness has not agreed upon with the defending lawyer and with the others who were involved, and the ~~the~~ truth will

come out, and the man will give the account as it ought to be given. I think this is the same thing that happens when you have a jury and they listen to witnesses speak. There may be a little different story as the witnesses tell it, but the jury listening knows that each person is giving his eye-witness account. In other words, he is telling it as he experienced it, and so it may have some slight variation.

I think this is the way that we have these accounts, that one of these women says that she had talked with him and that this man told her that He was not there. And Mary Magdelene remembered this story just exactly how it happened to her. And they did not try to get together on their stories, but each individual as she had the experience of meeting the living Lord related his account.

We are told in (every account) here that the tomb was sealed and we are also told in every account that the tomb was guarded, heavily guarded. These Roman soldiers hired by the government were placed there to guard his grave. ~~There~~ All that these guards had to do then was get together and say, We saw his disciples come and take ~~him~~ away His body and remove it, or, Someone stole it while we were there, and they could have sought to discredit the resurrection through that way. But they did not do that because they could not really produce a body, and they did not undermine the witness of the apostles.

Only a miracle of God brought forth Jesus from the grave.

Now, I believe in the resurrection of Jesus because of the story

given us in the gospels. I think that all of us today can safely base our belief in the resurrection of Jesus because of what we find here in the Bible.

Furthermore, I base my belief in the resurrection on the life lived by these disciples following the resurrection of Jesus. These disciples went forth and were willing to pour out their lives for this. Now, if they had gotten together and this was some fictitious story which they were supporting and living by, they would have never been willing to have given their lives to it. Do you think that these disciples would have given up their houses and their lands, and fled and gone across seas and faced the wild beasts at Ephesus and some of them died on flaming crosses to please the Emperor, if the resurrection had not been a fact? These honest men, some of them fisherman, some of them tax collectors, they were not deceived, but they were honest men, and they went forth giving their lives to this fact. There really is not a fact of the resurrection that is more important to me today than that these men believed it, they lived it, and they based their entire hope upon it. What they saw and what they felt transformed their lives. And you and I can risk our hope and future upon this same basis.

No matter how much we believe in the resurrection because of the scriptures and the gospel, and no matter how much you believe the resurrection because of the life and the witness of the disciples, no man can really come to believe in the resurrection until he is confronted with it and he personally believes and meets the living risen Lord.

It is not then that there is just an empty tomb, but it is this, that Jesus lives, and he lives now. He comes into our presence through the

spirit, and if you have had this experience, you know that you have been in fellowship with Him and it has been real and genuine.

There ought to be a certainty in your heart that you know that you have met him, that He lives within your heart, that though you die, you will go saying, "I know in whom I have believed." And you will be really more certain of Him than you will be of your own life, certain that He lives within your life.

Now, when this becomes real within your heart, then you will come to the place where the resurrection is a triumphant victory. In Russia there has been a systematic attempt for many years to wipe out Christianity. They have tried to stamp out all religions in Russia. There happened an incident or an event at Easter time many years ago down in the province of Ukraine an interesting event. Down in that province many of the Christians that were left had been imprisoned, and some had

*Man Builds Bridge - Ribbon cut - it is finished, to travel - carry across - Good Friday  
Good Builds Bridge - Resurrection is Ribbon cutting - ready for you to cross - Travel -*

persecuted. A young officer sought to persecute them further. Some few had given up their faith, but many of the older people had held fast to their belief. It happened that on a Saturday evening just before Easter, the day before Easter Sunday, this young leader was carrying out a tirade against Christianity especially, and he had much to say against their Easter ideas. He ~~ikm~~ knew that it was customary for the Christian as he greeted another Christian on Easter morning to say, "He is risen." And the other Christian would reply, "Yes, He is risen indeed."

This young officer after he had ridiculed the idea, asked the question, "Has anyone in this hall still the faith and belief in such a thing as the resurrection?" There was not a sound. Some of the younger people stamped their feet in the manner of derision, and then an old man stood up and made his way to the front, and as he came, this young Russian officer thought, "Well, this old man will make a fool out of himself, and this crowd will turn and ridicule him." The old man on reaching the front, said, "He is risen." And when the old man said that, it seemed almost as a united throng, the crowd said, "Yes, He is risen indeed!"

the  
With that, a young Russian officer stomped out of the room shaking his head.

Though men may try to destroy Him, and men may deny Him, the risen Christ still ~~goes~~ marches on. Now, this is the meaning of the resurrection.

He lives today.

