

THE TRANSFORMING POWER OF THE RESURRECTION

A FAMILY DEVOTION

(Resurrection Sunday – 12 April 2020)

Call your family together for a Family Devotion. (The time you would have gone to church) Set 60-90 minutes aside for Praise and Worship, Word Reading and Study and Prayer. Encourage the involvement of every family member.

We have prepared a video with Praise & Worship and a Message

The transcript below will assist you. **Marius Gradwell**

Good day! Thank you for allowing me into your home.

Let me ask you to consider a very personal question: what do you think happens when you die? Do you think there is an afterlife? Do you think we continue after death? Do you think that it is impossible for anyone to know? Or do you think life is like an on-off switch and when you die it is click! you are gone!?

(Illustration: EE 3 encounter at varsity)

The Bible speaks clearly and authoritatively about what happens after death and tells us we do not have to live in uncertainty – we can know.

The Bible is full of strong and specific promises that this life is not the end for those who trust in Jesus Christ. Promises that go beyond death, beyond the grave. Promises that when death hits the “off” switch on our lives, God reaches out and hits the permanent “on” switch and we live again, never to die. It is called “resurrection” and it is an amazing hope that is based entirely on what we are celebrating this weekend – the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Today I want us to look at 1 Peter 1:3-5. It is full of “on” switch promises for those who put their trust in Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 1:3-5 NLT *All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is by his great mercy that we have been born again, because God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. Now we live with great expectation, (4) and we have a priceless inheritance—an inheritance that is kept in heaven for you, pure and undefiled, beyond the reach of change and decay. (5) And through your faith, God is protecting you by his power until you receive this salvation, which is ready to be revealed on the last day for all to see.*

We see that God has turned the power switch on so that the life of the believer is transformed in every direction: our lives now, our lives after death, and everything in between now and then. So, we could break up these verses this way:

Verse 3 –deals with Now

Verse 4 –deals with Then (what awaits us after death)

Verse 5 – deals with everything Between Now and Then

These verses describe God turning on an “on switch” of life that can never, ever be turned off and Peter is clear about where all this life comes from and what it is based on. Look with me at the flow of thought in verses 3-4

According to His great mercy, He has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you...

1. The hope of the resurrection is possible only because of Good Friday

On Resurrection Sunday we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ, but to understand what Passover is, we need to understand Good Friday. Jesus could only be resurrected from the dead because he died. But why did he have to die? Die on a cross?

Crucifixion is the cruellest death ever invented and the OT says that everyone who hangs on a tree is cursed by God. So, how can Good Friday good?

The Bible tells us that all mankind is fallen. We are sinners separated from God and cursed by God because of our sin. It is appointed to man to die once and then the judgment. What comes after death? Judgment. Eternal judgment for our sin.

Why was Jesus cursed? Why did he die? The answer is: he took our place, he took our punishment, the Innocent for the guilty.

Good Friday is good because, on the cross, God glorified Himself by demonstrating His wrath against guilty sinners and by manifesting His love for them at the same time. It is called Good Friday because on the cross we see the justice of God maintained and the mercy of God obtained.

Let me say a word to anyone listening who has not accepted what Jesus has done for you. The Bible says that judgment waits for all those who die apart from Christ. Someone will pay for our sins, either we will pay, or we will reach out in faith to Christ and receive mercy purchased for us at the cross. If you haven't yet done that, as I share the promises that God gives to the one who trusts in Christ, please open your hearts to consider Christ, consider the love that sent him to the cross, consider the wrath that awaits those who carry their sins on their own shoulders, consider the mercy he offers you as a gift, and consider receiving that gift from him by faith.

And for those who trust in Christ, God turns the power switch of transforming life on in every direction: now, then, and everything in between now and then.

2. Through Jesus' death and resurrection, God turns on the power to the new life of a living hope (Now)

Verse 3... According to His great mercy, He has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead...

Notice that God's life-transforming power is not limited to when we die: He has caused us to be born again now. We are made alive now in a way that we were not before. Going back to the Fall, God warned Adam and Eve that if they ate the forbidden fruit, on that day they would die. Not physically, but spiritually. Therefore, we were all born into this world spiritually dead.

God's power makes us alive to God and born again to a living hope. When the Bible speaks of hope it does not mean something we hope will happen but may or may not. It means something that is certain but not yet. We are born again to a living hope – it is a hope that is linked to resurrection life and it wells up within us now as a hope that is flowing with the power of life. Through the death and resurrection of Jesus God turns on the power to the new life of a living hope!

3. Through Jesus' death and resurrection, God will resurrect us to a perfect and permanent inheritance (Then)

What is the living hope hoping in? Verse 4 tells us:

...to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you...

The believer has this blessed hope: death is not the end; it is really the beginning. We will one day be resurrected in bodies that will not have an "off" button on them. Life will so powerfully flow through us that we will never wear out, never weaken, never need to be replenished, and never die.

Death is like the ultimate "elephant in the room". We know we all will one day die, but we do not like to talk about it or think about it. Funerals confront us with the reality of death, but unless it is someone very close to us, we tend to move on quickly. And there is a good reason: death was not supposed to be. Death was not in God's original creation – death entered after the fall. The Bible describes death as an enemy. In fact, it will be the last enemy God destroys. Jesus has removed the sting of death, but it is still an enemy.

Death will eventually silence the voices of all those we love most. One day it will silence ours. But Jesus' resurrection assures us that if we are trusting Christ as our Saviour, we will be resurrected too and reunited with those who also died trusting in Christ. That is why we want to share Christ with our loved ones and pray for them so that their voices are not silenced forever – we will be with them forever.

And when we rise, it is not only to an unending, unfading life that never rots, never rusts, never fades, and can never be taken from us, but also, it is to an "inheritance". Inheritance has to do with family. We hope to leave an inheritance to our children after we are gone – an inheritance is not just treasure, its family treasure passed on with love.

Through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we have been adopted into God's family, we have received power to become sons and daughters of God. Jesus' inheritance is our inheritance, and heaven will not just be an amazing destination, it will be home.

Deep in our hearts we all want a home where we belong and where we are loved, and we are safe. Some of us experience a degree of that in this life, and sadly some do not. But Jesus came to ransom us back to God so that we would be His beloved children and so that His kingdom would forever be our home. We will not just be resurrected; we will be resurrected to an inheritance – we will be home.

Look at the end of verse 4: "*all of this is kept in heaven for you*". Not just kept in heaven, kept in heaven for you. You are being thought of, your entrance is being anxiously awaited, and your inheritance is being guarded for that day. The amazing thing about the gospel is that God so loved the world that He sent His only begotten Son. Jesus was not held to the cross by nails, he was held by love. Greater love has no one than this, that he lays down his life for his friends. When we stand on the threshold of death, we can also be assured deep in our heart, we stand on the threshold of life. The threshold of our eternal home.

4. Through Jesus' death and resurrection, God's power will guard our lives every step (Between Now and Then)

Verse 5 ...who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time...

Finally, God's power has not only turned the on switch to a living hope and will one day turn the forever on switch on to eternal life, but that power is guarding us every step of the way between now and then.

Often what we fear most is not the trial or hardship we are facing now, but what we might face tomorrow: what if a trial is too much for me to endure? What if something devastates my faith and I walk away from Jesus? What if my children endure suffering? I am not sure how they would bear up. The path from now to then is not guaranteed to be easy or trouble-free.

But our inheritance is being guarded, and so are we. God will keep us between now and then. It is been said often before but it is true: we may not know what the future holds, but we know Who holds our future. The same personal love that is keeping the inheritance for us is keeping us for the inheritance.

Conclusion:

What a glorious hope we have in Christ! What a joyous message that he is not dead, he is risen! And what a strength to know that because of his resurrection God has promised us the power of forever life too – and it does not start when we die, it started the moment we placed our faith in Jesus.

And if you aren't trusting in Jesus – let me pray with you as you call out to Jesus in prayer to save you, forgive you, and take away all uncertainty about what comes after you die.

Dear Lord Jesus I admit that I am a sinner in need of salvation. I believe that you took my sin upon yourself, was judged and punished for it by dying on a cross. I now turn away from being my own God, doing my own thing. I open my heart and all my live to you. I receive the forgiveness of my sins and the gift of salvation and sonship through Jesus Christ. Because you rose from the dead, I also believe that I am born again by your Holy Spirit through your resurrection power.

I now encourage your family and household to celebrate and seal your faith in the Transforming Power of the Resurrection by Breaking Bread together. Let us read...

1 Corinthians 11:23-26 TPT *I have handed down to you what came to me by direct revelation from the Lord himself. The same night in which he was handed over, he took bread (24) and gave thanks. Then he distributed it to the disciples and said, "Take it and eat your fill. It is my body, which is given for you. Do this to remember me." (25) He did the same with the cup of wine after supper and said, "This cup seals the new covenant with my blood. Drink it—and whenever you drink this, do it to remember me." (26) Whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are retelling the story, proclaiming our Lord's death until he comes.*

Question: How will you apply **The Transforming Power of the Resurrection** in your day to day life between now and then?