

“Reasons for the Resurrection (复活) of Jesus”

Pastor Rand Lankheet, preached at New Horizon URC, April 16, 2017, first service.

Catechism: Q & A 45 Scripture readings: John 20:1-10, 19-20, 30-31;

Also: Romans 4:22-5:2; 6:5-11; 8:11

Introduction: Around the world today, followers of Jesus are celebrating His resurrection.

Jesus died on that cross, outside the city of Jerusalem.

But, three days later, His body came back to life.

Of course, for Jesus, this was important.... He is Lord of Life. He had to prove that. So He did.

Also, having suffered for a while, Jesus now is glorified by His Father. Raised up from the dead.

-But what about for us? How does J' resurrection benefit us, as His people?

Consider these **THREE BENEFITS: THREE REASONS WHY J' resurrection is important for us.**

1. One reason is found in Romans 4. [Read Rom 4:25--in this sermon, I'm going to the Bible verses found in the Catechism (教理问答) answer. You can see these verses, in the footnotes of Q & A 45.

Here's one reason why Jesus resurrection is important to us:

We now share in Jesus' righteousness (义) . [Repeat

-The main point taught in Romans chapter 4 is that of “justification.” (称义)

The meaning of justification is rooted in the system of banking and finance.

In the old fashioned system, bankers used a book which had two columns. One column in that book was a record of your debts (债务) ...all the money you owed. The other column was for your assets (资产) , your money, or things you could sell for money. It became the custom to write your debts in red ink. Think of your sins as debts. Written in red ink, in God's accounting books. When Jesus died on the cross, our total debt of sin was charged to Jesus. The older word is “imputed.” (把...归于) Our sins are imputed to Jesus, charged to his account, as it were. As we trusting in Jesus as our Saviour, our debt of sin is completely cancelled. All the red ink in God's accounting book is erased (被消除) .

But think about this: when your debts are erased, cancelled, what then is your balance (余额) ?

Your balance is zero. In God's eyes, that is not enough to bring us into relationship with him. As a holy and perfect God, he needs us to be a holy and perfect people.

So we need more than having our sin debt cancelled. We need positive righteousness. We need credits. We need funds and assets in the other column of God's accounting book, so to speak. In justification, God credits all the perfection of Jesus to us. To us who trust in Jesus. So that we are now not merely at zero. Credited with all the riches of Jesus' righteousness, we have positive righteousness. Then, and only then, can we have a true relationship with God. God sees us in Jesus, as completely perfect, righteous. Now the righteous God can have a loving relationship with righteous people. Because we are credited with J' righteousness.

Romans 4:25: Jesus was “raised for our justification.” (“复活, 是为叫我们称义”) In Jesus, we are righteous before God. Paul words it very strongly in 1 Corinthians 15 (vs. 17): “if Christ is not risen [from the dead], your faith is worthless. And you are still in your sins!” You see, without Jesus being raised from the dead, you and I would remain in our sins. And we would remain under God's condemnation (定罪, 咒诅) . But, Jesus has been raised “for our justification”---we are imputed with, credited with Jesus' righteousness.” /

-On this resurrection Sunday, let me ask you: Do you know yourself to be justified in Jesus?

Do you know that Jesus' perfection, his righteousness, has been credited to you?

That means, God no longer looks at your sin, condemning you.

Rather, God looks at the righteousness of Jesus, covering you.

Illustration: A change of clothing. +

What good news! Romans 5:1: “Therefore, ***having been justified*** we have ***peace with God***

through our Lord Jesus Christ.” You and I, in Jesus, now have peace with God. No more fear of condemnation. But we enjoy full peace with our God. In Jesus, God becomes our loving, heavenly Father. Who loves us now...and will love us always.

First reason for Jesus' being raised: we now share in Jesus' righteousness.

2. There's a second reason, for Jesus' being raised. Another reason for us.

We now are resurrected to a new life. A new kind of life. [Repeat.

This is mentioned in our Catechism. But it is explained in Romans chapter 6.

Here we become very ***practical***, about our daily Christian living. [Read Rom 6:5-11.

-An important phrase for Paul is the phrase, that we, as Christians, are “***in Christ***” or “***into Christ***.”

That God the Father considers us as ***incorporated*** in or into Christ.

-“Incorporated” is related to our modern word, “corporation.” A corporation is a legal term.

It means that the owner of a business, along with his various businesses are legally combined. Combined into one

that God the Father considers us as *incorporated* in or into Christ.

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It means that the owner of a business, along with his various businesses are legally combined. Combined into one entity (实业, 整体) . One corporation.

Illus: Think of a company like Pepsi, the company known for its soda pop. But the soda pop company is only one company found in the corporation. Pepsi also owns Frito-Lay, known for their chips, Lays and Frito brands. Also, the Pepsi Corporation also contains what was once Quaker Foods. That company known for its oatmeal and other food. All those companies, and more, are “incorporated” into Pepsi.

–So it is with us, in Christ. The apostle Paul will say it again and again. That we, as believers, are “in Christ.” That is to say, we are “incorporated” into him. Into Jesus. So, from God’s viewpoint (视角, 观点) , what happened to Jesus, happened also to us. Because Jesus and us are one corporation. Look at Rom 6, vs. 5---“united together ... in his death [Jesus’ death]”

So too, vs. 6 “our old man [old self] was crucified with him [with Jesus]”

So too vs. 8 “we died with Christ.”

We are incorporated in Christ in his death. When he was crucified, in some sense, our old self, the self of sin and death, was crucified. Killed. And buried.

Likewise, we are incorporated in Christ *in his resurrection from the dead*. [Vs. 5; vs. 8-9, 11.

Sharing in Christ’s resurrection life means at least 2 things:

1) the old sin nature, and our old sins, no longer have control over us.

And 2) we are given new power, Jesus’ resurrection power, over sin.

–Let’s get very practical: As followers of Jesus, all of us have our sins. Continuing sins. Certain things tempt us, powerfully. Often we give in to those temptations (试探) . We sin. And then we sometimes say, or think this: “I sinned because I just couldn’t help it.” Or we might say: “I sinned because, well, I guess I am weak. I have no willpower.”

Yes, in ourselves we are indeed weak. But never forget, we as believers are incorporated into

Christ. And Jesus’ resurrection power is strong in us. In fact, it’s the strongest thing you’ll ever know.

So you may think you don’t have the power to resist (抵挡) sin, **but you actually do have power**. Lots of it! The strongest power on earth or in heaven is God’s power. The power seen in Him raising Jesus from the dead. And that power is in you, as a believer. All Christians have that life-power of Jesus in us. Right now.

So when we sin, let’s be honest, it’s not that we don’t have the power to resist temptation.

Rather, we chose to not exercise that power. We decide that we would rather, for that moment, have a certain pleasure. Or we want to take a short-cut to seeming happiness. Or, we become lazy. Or we just feel like rebelling for a time. We say “no” to God and do the sin.

Now I don’t want us to over-simplify this. Certain temptations to sin can be complex.

Satan uses the complexities (复杂性) of our personalities (个性) , our backgrounds, our upbringings (教养, 家教) . And we have “weak points”they might be psychological (心理上的) weak points, or weak points in our upbringing by our parents. Or we have developed certain habits. Hard to break them.

There’s also brain chemistry (大脑的化学反应) at work, often. So there can be complexity.

But, most of our sins are not complex or complicated. They are usually not arising from deep psychological issues. Or matters of brain chemistry. No. In certain ways, we are simply denying the power of God in our lives. When we choose to sin. We are putting ourselves before God. We are putting our own desires before God’s desires for us.

–What might be some of your continuing sins? Or some very difficult sin? Is it gluttony (贪吃) —overeating, binge eating? Is it sexual immorality (不道德) ? Is it drunkenness? Is it not being able to control your tongue: maybe you slander (污蔑) people. Or gossip about them.

Maybe you display anger? The resurrection power of Jesus is greater than that sin.

Listen, you can overcome that sin, in/through the resurrection power of Jesus.

The resurrection power of Jesus is the strongest power on planet earth. [Read vs. 11-12,14.

WHY has Jesus been raised from the dead: **Reason 1)** so we share in Jesus righteousness.

So we are justified. **Reason 2)** So that we have power in our new life, in Jesus. Power to overcome sin. Power to live for Jesus.

3. Third reason, mentioned in Catechism, and, of course, in the Bible.

For this, [turn to Romans 8. Read vs. 9-11. He who raised Jesus from the dead...that’s God the Father. On that first day of the week, that Sunday, God the Father did something powerful. He literally gave new life to the dead body of Jesus.

That same power of God the Father, likewise, **will give life, someday, to OUR dead bodies**.

Third reason, for Jesus being resurrected—that same resurrection power will give us new physical life, someday.

Our physical bodies are “mortal.” (终有一死的) That word comes from the Latin, “mortus, mortis”--a mortuary, a place for the dead. Our bodies now are “mortal.” That is, they can die. Physically they die. But, just as Jesus body was raised from the dead, so someday, our bodies will be raised from the dead. Never to die again. Our new bodies will become “immortal.” (不朽坏的) Not mortal. Not able to die. Just as Jesus resurrected body is never be able to die.

–So, with Jesus being raised from the dead, we have a guarantee. Just as Jesus body was raised to new life, so our bodies will be raised to new life. Someday. It’s guaranteed.

–The Bible says this will happen on the last day. On the day Jesus returns to earth. In John

chapter 5, Jesus says: “...a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out....” All those who have died will come out of their graves. Everyone who has died will rise up from the dead.

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Oh, the Bible also says this: That when Jesus returns, many raised up bodies are then thrown out of Jesus' presence. "Depart from me," he will say to them. They will be thrown into the place of everlasting torment (折磨), according to the Bible.

But for us who have trusted in Jesus, "Welcome, he will say. Enter into the joy of your Lord." Why is the outcome different for us? Is it because we are better than the others? No!! It's only because we have trusted in Jesus:

Jesus who has died for our sins on the cross, and has been raised for our justification.

-Do you ever get weary of life on planet earth? I do. There's so much war, killing, death, disease, disasters. But, someday, when Jesus comes again: we enter into a new world....with new bodies....No more death or dying. No more disease or destruction. Someday, because Jesus was raised from the dead, our bodies, too, shall be raised.

And then we will be brought into the new earth, the Bible says. With our new, resurrected bodies. When Jesus comes back again. If we have already died, our souls will be in heaven, with Jesus there. But, when he comes down from heaven, Jesus brings our souls with him. And our souls will then be united with our new bodies. Catechism, A. 57 says: then "my very flesh, raised by the power of Jesus Christ, will be reunited with my soul, and [will] be made like Christ's glorious body." Never to die again.

And, then, says our Catechism, quoting a Bible verse: "after this life I will have perfect blessedness. Such as no eye has [ever] seen [before], no ear has [ever] heard [before], no human heart has ever imagined. A blessedness in which {I will} praise God eternally.

That should give each of us encouragement. In this present life.

Even when we are surrounded by so much sin and sickness; so much disease and death.

There is a new day coming. How do we know that?

Because Jesus was raised from the dead. He's already been brought into that new life.

And someday, He will bring us into that new life also. **LET US PRAY.**