

Encouraging Reminders from the Resurrection

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- [0 : 0 0] You're listening to the sermon podcast of Grace Reformed Church in Spring Hill, Tennessee. To learn more about us, visit our website at gracereformed.org.
- And now, today's sermon. Before I begin this morning, this is a day, as it is every week, that we at our church celebrate the gospel and celebrate the resurrection of Christ, so this isn't new for us.
- But today is unique in that we get to celebrate new life and that Daniel and Amber Smith have brought into the world Gracie this week.
- And so we are hopefully they're able to live stream and know that we love them and we're so thankful and we get to meet them. And there's a lot of new life in here. There's a lot of new babies that have been born in the last few weeks that are here.
- And we're so thankful to the Lord for providing that to us. And again, just as a reminder, kids, enjoy. We're glad that you're here. I'll have some things for you. I know some of you were taking notes, so I look forward to giving you some things to write down.
- [1 : 0 2] Just don't ask me how to spell it as my son did this morning because I am worse at spelling that. I think it's the worst thing I do. It was so embarrassing. He came and asked me while I was ironing my shirt, and I said, I don't know, son, you'll have to wait.
- And he walks away and goes, hey, Siri, how do you spell hallelujah? To which then I proceeded to burn the shirt I was wearing that day because I was laughing. I was laughing. So shirt number two today.
- Several years ago, our president declared that March 31st would be a day that not really any of us in here would want to, well, none of us in here would want to celebrate.
- And forever, it's stamped in our history of our country. This is why we have weekly prayers for our leaders and those who are governing over us in places of authority.
- We need the Lord to help them and help us as he uses them to guide and navigate these troublesome waters, but also to remind us that we live in an evil and broken world that's under evil spiritual powers.
- [2 : 1 5] It's days like these that are refreshed and renewed by Romans 13.1, where Paul reminds us, let every person be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.
- And even though we don't agree and understand, we can take comfort in knowing that this is not outside of God's control. I do believe, though, that this is a reminder from our Father that those to whom we submit to, we do not put our faith in.
- There is no power that is outside his power. And even though he has called us to submit to these governing powers, they are reminders that our faith should never be placed in men or women, but only in a Savior.
- It reminds us that while we wait for God to fulfill his rescue plan, there remains chaos, because he's saving those who are lost from a curse, who remain in the chaos.

And this rescue mission is being attacked at every corner. The day of judgment is coming where all humans, evil and those who are of the evil realms, of the spiritual realm, will be placed under the judgment.

[3 : 34] We know this evil realm within its experience, because even in Matthew, he records for us in chapter 8 and verse 29, there's an interaction that we know that humans are under judgment, but the realm that rebels against him in the spiritual realm is too under judgment.

It says, as Jesus approaches these two men on the road who are controlled by a legion of demons, it says to them, what have you do with us, O Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?

They know there's a time coming. Well, they will face the consequences of their rebellion. They're aware of their destiny. And this is why also Jesus speaks of their leader, he referenced to them as a thief in John 10.

He says, the thief comes only to steal and to kill and to destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. As with Judas, Satan continues to use humans to put evil across our world.

And we're going to all face it for the rest of our life. We're going to face loss and destruction and even death, as Jesus warns. And this is why we gather weekly to hear of the risen king.

[4 : 53] You see, the reason why Sunday is so special and the resurrection of Jesus is so wonderful is because what he was rose for is so evil.

And it's good to be reminded of why it is that we celebrate his resurrection this morning. And every Sunday. If you're visiting with us this morning, we normally are working through the books of the Bible.

We're currently working through 1 and 2 Peter. And as we work through them, we see the amazing love of God through all of Scripture as he redeems sinners. But today, I wanted to take a moment and really talk more specifically about the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and its benefits to us.

And while we live still in a broken and evil world, we need to be reminded, not only weekly, but daily of the hope that often feels like slips through our fingers is solidified in a person as we sang who is reigning right now.

He rose and has the rightful seat as the king. And so we're here to celebrate that this morning. And so this morning, we're going to be reminding ourselves of these three encouraging certainties that flow from the resurrection.

[6 : 07] So kids, if you have your notes, here's your three points I want you to write down. And all of you who love taking notes, God excited is here. I heard the pinks click.

Here are the certainties that we have, the encouraging certainties. One, the forgiveness of sin. The forgiveness of sin. I'll wait for the parents to catch up because I know all the kids already have that.

Number two, the freedom from death. The forgiveness of sins. The freedom from death. And number three, the filling of the spirit.

If you didn't get those, we'll repeat them later in a moment. Turn with me to 1 Corinthians chapter 15 this morning if you will. Often when we think of Christ in our culture, Christ is presented to us as benefit.

We add Jesus to our life because he benefits us. Sin is not healthy and helpful. So we are helped by morality. We are helped by confidence.

[7 : 18] But that is not why Jesus rose from the grave to provide for us a moral guide and confidence in ourselves. No, it's when we are in the most hopeless sense of our state of understanding that we are under God's judgment that we need the encouragement of his forgiveness.

This is verse 15. So 1 Corinthians 15 verse 12. Paul is writing to the church who is afraid that the resurrection, those who are going to get new bodies, are not for those who die.

And he's here to remind us of what the resurrection is. Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised.

And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise, if it is true that the dead are not raised.

For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins.

[8 : 36] Look at verse 21. For by as one man came death, by a man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.

Paul points us to the miracle of Jesus, of coming back from the dead as the reason why your sins are forgiven. And this may not matter to a lot of us this morning, but it will I think later today and later this week as we wrap our minds and our hopes around the concept of what Christ accomplished at his resurrection.

You see, later this week or later today, when we fall into temptation, when we allow our flesh to not be loving and kind, when we become envious and angry and we become lustful, that that moment when your conscience barks at you, you have two decisions to make.

You are either going to be reminded of the wonder of Christ or you are going to fall deeper and deeper into shame and try to hide from yourself, from others, and from God your shame.

Here is why it is important for us to believe what Paul is saying, that if Jesus didn't raise from the grave, you have no hope. To understand that when Jesus was put on the cross, he was what's called a replacement.

[9 : 57] And in order to be a replacement, he has to be a perfect and accurate one. He was receiving punishment. You would never take a criminal out of prison to pay for the crime of another criminal because he's in prison for his own crimes.

You understand? So that when Christ is put on the cross, he has to be pure and he has to be without shame or without guilt. And the only way to know if Jesus is without shame and without guilt is to put him to death and see if his claims are true.

Because if he was without shame and without guilt and perfect before the Father and he receives the punishment of our sin, it means he has the right to be raised from dead and conquer it because he is not held there by his own shame.

So when Jesus raises from the grave and he stands before his disciples and he grabs their hand and he sticks it in their side and he says, hold my hands.

This is real death. This is real suffering paid for on your behalf. And I conquered it. I beat it because I came back from death.

[11 : 10] He does not have the right to do that nor the power to do that if he is a sinful human like we are. And Paul is saying because he rose from the grave, he beat death.

And because he beat death, he has the right to stand before you and say, dear child, look at me. You are forgiven.

No judgment anymore. No condemnation, not only for what you've done in the past, but what you will do in the future because I proved I can beat death.

I can receive the punishment of sin, which is death, and I can beat it. And therefore, we don't sing to a God who died as an example.

We don't sing to a martyr. We sing to a God who was risen. This is the whole point of today's worship service. Behold our God who did not die and stay dead, but rose from the grave with authority, the authority to say to you, you are forgiven.

[12 : 19] It's wonderful. But here's where the enemy steps in today and twists, which we are warned he does, and twists the resurrection of Christ where it's about Christ and what he has done and what he has accomplished.

It's so easy. Our hearts and our minds always want to know, can I be involved? I want to have some moment of credit. We don't say it psychologically, but in our hearts and our minds we do.

So here's the two responses that normally we hear when we think about the resurrection. The response is either defeat and distraction.

So when we are faced with sin and we see the consequences of our sins, we don't know what to do with it because the resurrection hasn't gripped our hearts. Our faith has wavered or we have not been taught well, and we become defeated in the realization that once again, I do not have the capacity to not only cleanse myself, but I can't change from my evil ways.

I might be able to change my habits, but my heart still betrays me. Many of you here have changed your habits, which are not helpful and they're not beneficial, but that does not mean that your heart has changed.

[13 : 38] So in order for us to deal with our defeated nature, we then turn to distraction. The distractions aren't always bad. It's not addictions. Some of us do.

Some of us turn to addicting ourselves to things that we can forget about our life and it's disaster that it is, or some of us turn to legalism or pietism. We turn to the achievableness of the law.

See, John, I have done these things. Therefore, God has forgiven me. We'll even turn to our own repentance. Because I have repented, God has forgiven me.

Child, he's already forgiven you. It's your decision to either accept his forgiveness or reject it. The second response often can be self-justification.

By my own efforts, I can remove the stain of sin. Yes, it is true that his death on the cross removed my past sins. But from this moment forward, I need to, I've had a new fresh start.

[14 : 41] I've had a forgiveness. We use the modern concepts of three strikes. I've got one strike. I have to make sure I don't get two more. And we always look to our obedience as the means of I am right before God because of what I have done.

But that is not what we are told. Because we've been set free from the punishment of our sins, we have also been set free from the future of our sins and the future of our death.

Which leads us to the next point. So the forgiveness of sins and secondly, kids, if you didn't get it, the freedom from death. You're a fearing. 1 Corinthians, stay with me there and we're gonna look at verse 50.

1 Corinthians chapter 15, verse 50. Famous but yet wonderful reminder from Paul. I tell you this, brothers.

Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold, I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep but we shall all be changed.

[15 : 48] In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet, for the trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised imperishable and we shall be changed.

For this perishable body must be put on the imperishable and this mortal body must put on the immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable and the mortal puts on the immortal, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory.

Oh death, where is your victory? Oh death, where is your sting? The sting of death is sin and the power of sin is the law.

But thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast and movable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that the Lord, that your labor, that in the Lord, your labor, is not in vain.

What a great way to describe the sting of death. This week we were building little small RC car tracks and my friend picked up a log in Texas and all of a sudden, this is a grown man, pretty tough guy if you ask me, is whining profusely about his hand.

[17 : 13] He's like, Ben, I don't know what happened and all of a sudden we see crawl from out underneath the log, the scorpion. Now the sting of that is painful and it was prevalent for a while for him.

But imagine what Peter or Paul is describing here as about the sting of death because many of you in this room have felt the grieving power of the sting of death because of loss.

And all of us face not only those whom we love who might die and have died, but we also face the wonder of what happens to us when we die. And Paul says, because of Christ's resurrection, we don't have the sting anymore.

The sting of death is gone. This is why Paul can say in 1 Thessalonians 4.13, but we do not, we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep or those who have died, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope.

For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. He doesn't say we do not grieve.

[18 : 26] We grieve. He says we don't grieve like the unbeliever because our grieving is temporary because the sting has been removed.

It's interesting how he words this. He creates a hope that there's changing for. There's something about us that changes. We all feel the mortality of our bodies.

I felt it this week. As I get older and I try to act like a younger man, I wake up the next morning realizing I am not that young anymore. There's soreness in places I didn't know you could be sore.

The mortality of my body is degrading. Not only that, I feel that the closer I get to Jesus, the more sin he exposes and that I feel like I'm getting more sinful, not less because the light shines more and it makes me long for a body that wakes up and no longer is in a war.

I don't want to fight the flesh anymore. I don't want to wake up and cognitively have to think to myself, be ready, the attackers are coming. They want to destroy my faith and my heart and my love.

[19 : 37] He says, there comes a day when the immortal is replaced. When the mortal is replaced. This body of death is replaced with a body of life that is without sin.

And that's where we place our hope. We don't actually have to be afraid of dying. I don't like the thought of pain in death.

I would prefer not to have pain in death. But I actually am not afraid of dying because I believe that it is just purely as a caterpillar goes through the transformation of leaving one mechanism, one body into a beautiful body.

We too go through the same transformation. But it's through death. Someone sent me this. I was driving home this week from Texas.

A little tired because we had a good time. The joke that was sent to me was, I want to go like my grandfather went. In his sleep. Peaceful.

[20 : 46] Except for everyone else in the back seat was screaming. I tried to make sure I stayed awake. I don't mind going in my peaceful sleep but I don't want others to travel with me.

here is why the forgiveness of our sins and the freedom of our death matters. It's not so that you can go home and just not care about the future because it's all secure.

You see, there are those who live next to you and across from you who do not have the same forgiveness and the same freedom. This is why he says in verse 58, Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord the labor is not in vain.

You see, you've been set free from the bondage of your sin. You've been set free from the fear of death so that you can go use your life for the work of the Lord so that others might experience the same freedom and the same joy.

I think that as we focus, if we lose the focus of not only our forgiveness and our freedom, we will then fill our life with that which only matters here in this life, that will burn, that does have no effect on anyone other than ourselves.

[22 : 20] He helps us focus our attention on the afterlife. Let there be rest when Christ returns, but until he returns, use your life as that which is consumed by his work.

So we can focus on the work given to us by the king to spread the light because we no longer have worries of trying to cleanse ourselves. We've been cleansed, not so that we return to sin, that's foolish. And we don't have to worry about death because we know that we are freed from the burden and the sting of death, so therefore we can die with freedom, giving our life for the king knowing that it will be used to rescue others.

Paul says, remember Christ's resurrection and your life will not be in vain. What a great encouragement. And this leads us to our third and final point and I just have to say I didn't know if I would get here.

Children, you guys have done amazing jobs so thank you so much for keeping your parents quiet. the filling of the spirit. Christ's resurrection wasn't his part in our life.

It wasn't that he cleansed us and set us free and now says now go do your part. That could be the confusion of what I just said. Let me clarify. Some of you may have heard this burden that your life now is to be a living sacrifice.

[23 : 42] You're supposed to lay it down for the work of the kingdom and you're like, John, I can barely get up in the morning. How is it I'm going to do that? It's the third encouragement from the resurrection.

Turn with me to Romans chapter 8 if you don't mind. We're going to look at three verses here that are so unbelievably encouraging. I remember when I was in Bible college we were studying the book of Romans and while in class we read this and the teacher didn't really stop to talk about it but I, for whatever reason, had never seen it and I remember running out into the parking lot calling my dad and said, Dad, have you ever seen Romans 8, 9 through 11?

It's unreal. It was so encouraging because I was feeling so dry and empty yet studying the Bible. Now, I didn't know you have never had that experience but I have.

I want to encourage all of us this morning. You cannot let your feelings and experience dictate the truth.

What you feel and what you experience will often lie to you, will often deceive you because you have a mortal body. So we have to allow truth to guide our minds which then guides our hearts which then guides our actions.

[24 : 55] So read Romans 8 and verse 9 and following. It says this, You, however, are not in the flesh but in the spirit. Meaning as if literally you travel in the mechanism and the power and the vehicle of the spirit.

Your flesh does not drive you. The spirit drives you. If in fact the spirit of God dwells in you, anyone who does not have the spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness.

Here it is. If the spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his spirit who dwells in you.

Now, let's just back up for a moment and just dumb it down to a few words. the same power that raised Jesus' body from the grave is inside you right now.

And you're like, John, the only power I'm feeling right now is a growling stomach. It is the point. He's saying, stop listening to your flesh, your emotions, your heart, your desires, your anger.

[26 : 19] He says, you cannot allow those to control your mind because that's not the reality. They have so much power over us. We've all felt it. How many of you got angry this morning before we even got here?

You don't have to raise your hands. That's okay. The flesh is so powerful. And he says, but there's something inside you that is more powerful. This is what you need to hear.

It is the reason why even though your flesh fails you, even though at times you give in to the power of the flesh and your mind has thoughts that you are grieved by, his power is stronger to save you because it conquered death by raising Jesus from the dead.

He goes, it lives inside you. That's how you know you're safe. You're free from your sins. You're free from death. Not because of your power.

What a great encouragement. It's not try harder or give up because you can't do it. He's saying, God raised Christ from the dead and then cleansed your sins and didn't leave you there powerless.

[27 : 29] He came and lived inside you. So when the enemy comes and he starts to speak to you and says, you're a fake. You're a fraud.

You're a phony. How dare you think anyone should try? People at church should mock you. As a matter of fact, don't go to church because they'll figure out who you are. Oh, and on top of that, you know everyone there is fake too.

They're playing all these lies. You stop and say, oh, Jesus, my king warned me about you that you would come to steal my joy.

You would come to steal my forgiveness. You would come to kill my faith. You would come to kill my life. You would come to take my life. You would come to take my life. But you will not win because greater is he that is in me than he that is in the world.

And how do we know that? Because he rose from the grave. Hundreds saw him and today he lives seated at the right hand of God saying, child, I am king.

[28 : 33] I am king of not only the universe but of your life. Walk by faith, trusting in my power and you will make it to the end.

If we use that message, we might have just the small amount of energy to look to the neighbor next to us who is mocking us, who is laughing at us, who can't see the logic behind our life.

And we open up our mouth and we let the power of the gospel hit their ears so they might too receive the same forgiveness. The resurrection is about what Christ has done for us.

Not only in cleansing us, not only rescuing us from our body, but also empowering us to do the work of the king. So if you stand here as Paul does and say, I am a weak man, I am a weak woman.

He says, my grace is sufficient for you for in your weakness I am made strong. Amen. Well, I want to thank you as a church and I want to thank you children for spending your time with us this morning.

[29 : 52] As your pastor, I long for the day that I get to watch you grow as disciples to baptize many of you. and so it's just been a special moment and a special day here at our church.

I'm going to pray for us and then we will spend time around our father's table this morning. Let's pray. O king, not only are you ruling our hearts, but you also rule this world.

While we wait for you to finish your resurrection of those who have died and rescuing those who are lost, Lord, may we look to your power this morning and your forgiveness and your freedom that we might have the energy to love others and share this good news.

Help the weak, encourage the faint-hearted, and continue to grow us in our faith. In Christ's name, amen. Thanks for listening to the sermon podcast of Grace Reformed Church in Spring Hill, Tennessee, where everyone is in equal need of grace.

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[31 : 11] And wait! Thank you, We're in Genesis and chapter 1. Amen. We are in Genesis and chapter 2. We're in Genesis and chapter 1. Amen. details from Faith, of course, today at tat nahmen are at casting, the time of Acts, we have Titian.

The first time was companionship in Utah. This is anal in Genesis and chapter 1. We are in Genesis and the early group