

The Resurrection and Its Significance to Us

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Preacher: Steve Tyburski

[0 : 00] Welcome to Moncure Baptist on this fine Easter morning, the day we celebrate the resurrection of Christ.! I'm Steve Taberski. Let me tell you a little bit about me. I just retired August 1st, 2024, after 40 plus years in the utility industry.

I started in 1983 with Carolina Power and Light as an INC technician at the Sharon Harris Nuclear Power Plant. Now an INC technician is a person who stands for Instrumentation and Control Technician.

In other words, I maintained the instruments and the control systems that the operations used to run the power plant. And as a technician, I always wanted to understand what it was I was working on. I wanted to know how it worked, how it did what it did. I wanted to know why it did what it did. I wanted to know how it fit into the big scheme of things. I also wanted to know what's the worst thing that could happen if I don't do something right.

And when the plant's up and running, yeah, when the plant's up and running, you know, we're all the time working on things that could actually shut it down. It was, it has a lot of protective things in there that will cause it to shut down.

[1 : 37] And even back in the early days of my career, they said that the revenue was about a million dollars a day is what the Sharon Harris plant brought in.

I don't know what that is today, but it's a lot of money and it would be a lot of heartache for the company and for the technician who actually caused the plant to shut down.

So I always approached my job with trying to have a full understanding of what it was I was working on. Later on in my career, I transitioned to be an instructor. I was instructing the electricians.

The electricians of the power plant did the same thing that the INCTECs did, only on different equipment. They maintained the higher powered equipment that the operations uses to run the power plant.

And as an instructor, I always approached that job is thinking that I'm going to give the technicians what I would want as a technician.

[2 : 45] I wanted to know how it did what it did. I wanted to know why it did what it did, how it fit in the big scheme of things. So that's how I approached being an instructor to make sure I fed those guys what they needed.

I was thinking about today's sermon. I have the awesome privilege of standing up here on Easter and giving a sermon about Christ's resurrection.

And I thought, I want to approach it the same way I do an instructor, get to some basics. We're going to talk about, you know, we're saying Jesus rose again. Well, who is Jesus anyway?

Did he rise? How do we know that he really rose from the dead? What's it all about anyway? So, you know, so what's, how does that fit into my life? What's the big picture?

Now, when you're teaching adults, I always learned when I start to teach an adult, there has to be something in it for them.

[3 : 51] Because adults, they're going to know what's in it for me. You're not going to keep their attention if they think, I don't really need to know what he's up there saying.

I'm not going to waste my time trying to learn something new that doesn't really benefit me. Well, the things that we're going to talk about today will benefit you because they, they will give you life. If that's not interesting or to you or something that you feel like you need, well then just tune me out and you won't, you won't have to listen to me much longer.

But before I get started in doing this, let's pray. Father, I thank you for the opportunity to stand here in front of the people that you love, people that you died for.

And I pray, Father, that you would speak to us today. Use me, Lord, to proclaim your word in such a manner that people understand it.

[4 : 50] Help me, Lord, not to stutter and stammer like I do. Help me, Father, to have a sharp mind and a tongue, Lord, that proclaims your word truthfully.

In Jesus' name, amen. Amen. So, this Jesus, who, who was Jesus? Some people say that he's a myth. Other people say that he was just a good man, a prophet even.

Others say that he was God. Some say, no, he's just the son of God. Most of the information we have on Jesus comes from the scriptures. There are some historians, Jewish historians like Josephus and I forget the other guy's name.

I couldn't pronounce it anyway. Who said stuff about Jesus. So, we know that he existed. Matter of fact, I was reading an article recently, a Time Magazine article of the 100 most influential people of 2024.

And I was interested in that because I wanted to see if my name was in there anyway. But I, you know, I didn't make it. I said, well, I'm not in there. So, let me look. Certainly, John Howard or Matt Garrett will be in here.

[6 : 09] But neither one of those guys made the cut either. And I'm sad to say that most of the names on that list, I had no idea who they were.

And I'm thinking, man, I'm really not up on current events evidently because the most influential people of the year, I don't even know who they are. But there was also a link in there and it was the 100 most influential people in all of history.

And I am happy to say that I knew almost everyone. I knew something about every one of those people on that list. So, they were influencers.

They were people that made a difference. Some of them were famous. Some of them were infamous. People that, you know, you would think, well, they don't deserve to be on the list.

But they were influential in some way. And Time Magazine's number one most influential person in all of history is Jesus. It was Jesus that we, you know, from his birth we split our time.

[7 : 22] We talk about time before Christ and then Amino Domino at AD, the after Christ, the year of our Lord. So, we split time. The name Jesus brings all kinds of turmoil.

You know, some people just hate him and other people love him. And there's hardly any middle ground. But what we know of Jesus when we look at the scriptures is that Jesus is the creator. Some people say, no, no, no, no. God created. It says right there in the Bible, Genesis 1-1. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. It does say that. Also, in Genesis 1-26, God said, let us make man in our image.

So, that was God the Father, God the Son, making man in our image. But in John 1, it says, in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

And then John 1-14, later on says, and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

[8 : 36] So, we know that the Word there they're talking about is Jesus, because Jesus is the one that became flesh. He was the Son of God that became flesh. And then in John 1-3, it says, through him, the Word, all things were made.

Without him, nothing was made that was made. Colossians 1-16 says, for by him, all things were created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities.

All things were created through him and for him. And again, this is, Colossians 1 is talking about Jesus. Hebrews is talking about Jesus. Again, it says, in those last days, he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.

So, Jesus existed, and Jesus is the Creator. Another thing we know about Jesus is, Jesus is God.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And we know that the Word is Jesus. So, Jesus is God. Jesus said in John 10-30, he says, I and the Father are one.

[9 : 57] So, this same guy who is Jesus, who died and rose again, is God himself. So, the death, let's talk about the death of Jesus.

It's very well documented in the Scriptures and in secular history that Jesus was executed. But why? Why was he executed?

Well, you and I are sinners. And the Bible says the wages of sin is death. So, we have to pay for our sin with death.

But, in Romans 5-8 it says, But God commendeth his love toward us, and that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 1 Peter 2-24 says, Who his own self bear our sins on his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness by whose stripes you are healed.

1 Corinthians 15-3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.

[11 : 13] A couple more. And there are numerous Scriptures. These are the ones I picked out that I really like, favorite ones. 2 Corinthians 5-21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

In 1 John 2-2 And he is the propitiation for our sins. Not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world. So, Jesus was executed. He died for our sins.

He died for sin. He died for you. He died for me to pay for our sin that we had created, that we had. Another thing we know about Jesus from the Scriptures, and also Josephus wrote about Jesus' resurrection. He rose again from the dead.

Now, how do we know? How do we know? Well, there were eyewitness accounts of seeing Jesus after he rose.

[12 : 20] They wrote about him. They're extensively written about in the first four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, how these guys saw Jesus risen again.

The first person, people that he showed himself to were women. And that's recorded in the Gospels. The women who came to the tomb found him gone, and then he appeared to marry Michael.

The women were the first ones to witness Jesus' resurrection. The disciples, he met with them. His half-brother, James, he met with James.

Now, James and the rest of Jesus' siblings thought that he was crazy. And it's recorded in the Bible that, you know, this guy's off his rocker, really.

But, Jesus met with James after the resurrection. And James' life turned around. I used to have a youth pastor that said that he was like a Gospel rabid dog.

[13 : 33] You know, he went to tell people about Jesus. And it's recorded that he was seen by over 500 people at one time.

And later, he revealed himself to Paul, who was on the road to town to get Christians rounded up to throw in prison, and they were in prison because they didn't believe in this heresy, this sect of new religion.

So, these people, how it affected Paul, how it affected James, how it affected all of them, is further proof.

And not only did they say they saw him, but their lives changed because of it. It was a life-changing event. If it was all made up, certainly somebody would have come up at some point and said, you know, I'm, you know, psych, we're just making this up.

Jesus, we didn't really see Jesus. But even to the point of death, James and several of the disciples were put to death. Never is it recorded anywhere that any of them recanted having said that they saw Jesus.

[15 : 02] Proof beyond a doubt that Jesus rose again. Also, when you think if you think they tried to make this up, you would think that the gospel writers would have made themselves look a little bit better.

In the gospels that over and over again, the disciples didn't look too bright. They looked like idiots because they didn't understand what he was doing.

They also wouldn't have said that women, they wouldn't have recorded women being the first people to see the first witnesses. Because in that culture, and you ladies have it made today in our culture because we listen to you.

What? We listen. We let you vote. We let you witness things. Oh, man, you guys got it made. But back then in that culture, women and children, they weren't allowed to testify to anything because they weren't considered viable people.

They were just there. So that just the recordings then proved that, you know, they wouldn't make something up that's embarrassing to them.

[16 : 19] They wouldn't make something up that wouldn't sound credible because it said women did it. And Paul, just like James, was one of those gospel rabbit dogs, never missing an opportunity

to tell the good news that Jesus died for you.

And he loves you. And he wants you to have salvation from death. So what's the significance of the resurrection itself?

I mean, he died for your sins. Okay. If I accept that. So, well, the real significance is if Jesus hadn't risen from the dead, he would have been just like any of the other pseudo messiahs that had come along.

People claiming to be a messiah that they died and was buried and they're gone. But Jesus proved who he was, who he said he was by rising from the dead.

It was prophesied that he would rise from the dead in the Old Testament. He fulfilled that. He said, I'm going to be buried, but on the third day I'm going to rise.

[17 : 38] He did that. He proved that he could. He proves, so he proves that he is God. And it gives us assurance of a future resurrection for us as well.

Because he tells us in the scripture that we too will rise again one day. So it gives us a hope. And Paul recorded that if Jesus hadn't risen from the dead, then our faith is in vain and we're still in our sins.

So, the resurrection of Christ is very significant. And that's why we celebrate it. Because it's what we stand on.

We know we're different than all the other religions out there. We have a savior that has risen from the dead. It brings me to my last point.

It's about choices. You know, when I was a kid, my father would say to me, son, you sleep with dogs, you get fleas.

[18 : 45] In other words, choose the people that you're going to hang around with. Because you'll get things that you don't want. You'll get to places that you don't want to be if you choose the wrong crowd.

I know some of you in here have siblings or family members or maybe even yourself chose the wrong crowd to hang out with.

And it got you where you didn't want to be. It was your choice. You chose it. Even though maybe you were warned, you still chose it. And there's all kinds of things.

Children choose to disobey the parents sometimes. They know better, but they just decide I'm going to do what I want to do.

People choose to smoke. Even though you know it's hazardous to your health. It even says on the side of the pack of cigarettes, the Surgeon General has determined that smoking is hazardous to your health.

[19 : 46] And there are people who will choose to smoke anyway. Some of you might in here still smoke. Even though you know and you've been warned, it's hazardous to your health.

It's going to kill you. People choose to drink. Even though you know it's not good for you. It makes you do things you wouldn't normally do if you were in your right mind.

And then people choose to drink and drive. And kill people. Kill their own family. Kill other people's families. Change people's lives.

But they chose to do it knowing that they shouldn't do it. Same way with speeding. People choose to lie on their taxes even though they know the IRS might come after them.

They choose to do it. Well, Jesus gives you a choice to choose to accept His death for your sins.

[20 : 54] He's not forcing it on you. He has freely given Himself to pay for your sins. I heard a couple of stories.

I just remembered. I was supposed to tell. One was a... Yeah, it's one of the funny ones. This preacher was up preaching, you know, and he's doing his thing.

And everybody in the audience, well, there's a girl up in the balcony that was really into it. And she was leaning forward and listening to him preaching. And she fell over the balcony.

But her dress caught on the railing. And so she was dangling with her dress up over her head on the balcony. And the preacher saw it. And he said, everybody, bow your head and close your eyes. Won't you anybody turn around and look? I pray that God will strike you blind if you turn around and look. And these two young fellows were sitting over there. And he leans over to his buddy and says, I'm going to risk one eye.

[22 : 00] He leans over to his buddy. He leans over to his buddy. He leans over to his buddy. So he was... Even though he was warned, he chose to do what he chose. But Jesus...

One more little story here. There was a court of law going on, this young lady. Some of you may have heard this story. One lady was obviously guilty. Everyone knew she was guilty. The judge knew she was guilty. And she was standing before him. Well, it just so happens that he was her father. And he knew that she deserved to be punished to the full extent of the law. She was guilty, guilty, guilty. She needed to be punished. But he felt like if he hit her with the full brunt of the law, he felt like, I'll kind of be compromising my love for her a bit. [23 : 09] Because she really deserves to have the book thrown at her. But on the other hand, if he shows her mercy and lets her off with a little lenient thing, and he really is compromising justice that he's been sworn to uphold.

So the judge made his decision. He threw the gavel down. He said she's guilty. And he gave her the highest fine that the law would allow. And then he stood up and took off his robe, and he went down and he paid her fine. That's what Jesus has done for us folks. He took off his heavenly robe. He came down and paid the fine. Then he rose again. That's what we're celebrating. So you have a choice. You can choose to accept it or not. John 3.16 says, For God so loved the world, he gave his only Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Romans 10.9 says, That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, shall believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, and you shall be saved. [24 : 26] Revelation 3.20 says, Behold, I stand at the door. He's standing at your heart's door knocking right now. He says, If you'll open the door, I will come in.

The choice is yours. The evidence is clear. Jesus existed. Jesus is the Creator. Jesus was God. Jesus died for your sins and he rose again. He's standing at your heart's door right now knocking. I want you to choose to open the door. The choice is yours. I would suggest that you choose wisely. Hebrews 2.3 says, How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? You might smoke all your life and think, Well, I got away with it. Nothing bad ever happened to me. I chose to smoke and nothing happened. But I'll guarantee you, you choose to reject Christ and you choose to reject his salvation, you won't get away with that one. [25 : 40] The choice is yours. Let's pray. Thank you, Father, for this message, for the simplicity of the Gospel, Lord. I tried to make it as simple as possible.

But your word, Lord, is true and it's sharp. And I pray, Father, that today, if there's someone out here, Lord, that he's chosen to run away from you their whole life, Lord, may they be able to weigh the evidence and say, I can't run anymore. I need to trust Christ so that I can have life. Have mercy, Lord, on all of us. In Jesus' name, Amen. What's the associate's yours? The 28th.