

1 FALLEN WORLD

RISEN CHRIST

- Death has never been the same

2 In the line of Duty

- February 2011, while responding to a suspicious person report, a 46-year-old police officer in St. Petersburg, Florida, is shot to death by a teenager.
- The officer's death hits that community very hard, not only because it is the death of a police officer, but also because it's the third officer within 30 days to die in the line of duty.
- The last time a police officer died was 30 years. Now there were three.

3 We Live in a Fallen World

- The wounded officer was taken to the hospital, where he was pronounced dead.
- Then, as his body was wheeled out of the hospital to go to the medical examiner's office, about two dozen of his comrades lined up outside, saluting as the body passed by.
- As they then dispersed, a reporter asked one officer for a comment.
- The officer simply said, "We live in a fallen world," and then he quietly walked away.

4 Good & Bad

- We don't know anything about that officer's religion, but it's possible he had a church background, for the idea that we live in a "fallen" world is a foundational belief of Christianity.
- However, even though we live in a "fallen world" not everything is marked fallenness.
- Most of us experience life as a mixture of the good and the bad.

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7 The Real World

- So then, what do we call life that contains both "good" and "bad?"
- We call it "the real world."
- No one's life is totally "good" or totally "bad." It is a mixture of both.
- While it may not be the kind of world we wish, it's the world we have been given.
- The BAD side sometimes intrudes into the GOOD side, and a policeman is shot in Florida.

8 Where to Place Death?

- Now let's go back to that two-column list once more.
- In which column would you put death?
- Certainly the police officer, thinking of the death of his comrade, was putting it in the BAD column.
- And no doubt most of us would put it there as well.

- But on this side of the resurrection should our view of death be somewhat different than those who have no hope.

9 The Resurrection of Christ

- In writing to the Christians in Corinth, the Apostle Paul talks about the resurrection of the dead, apparently in response to some who were saying there is no such thing.
- He argues that there is such a thing as the resurrection of the dead, and for proof, he points to the resurrection of Jesus.
- Listen to Paul's argument from 1 Corinthians 15 again, but this time from The Message, which is a biblical paraphrase by Eugene Peterson:

10 The Truth

- If all we get out of Christ is a little inspiration for a few short years, we're a pretty sorry lot. But the truth is that Christ has been raised up, the first in a long legacy of those who are going to leave the cemeteries. (1 Cor. 15:19–20, The Message)

11 The Last Enemy

- Death initially came by a man, and resurrection from death came by a man.
- Everybody dies in Adam; everybody comes alive in Christ.
- But we have to wait our turn: Christ is first, then those with him at his Coming, the grand consummation when, after crushing the opposition, he hands over his kingdom to God the Father.
- He won't let up until the last enemy is down -- and the very last enemy is death.

12 Significance of the Resurrection

- One of the most interesting things about the resurrection of Christ is that Jesus spoke about it to his disciples on several occasions.
- After Peter gave his confession that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God, Jesus starts to explain to all of them what must happen.
 - From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life. (Matthew 16:21 NIV)
 - As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus instructed them, "Don't tell anyone what you have seen, until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead." (Matthew 17:9 NIV)

13 Significance of the Resurrection

- More examples of Jesus predicting his death & resurrection . . .

- Now as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside and said to them, “We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will turn him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified. On the third day he will be raised to life!” (Matthew 20:17-19 NIV)
- When Jesus had finished saying all these things, he said to his disciples, “As you know, the Passover is two days away — and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified.” (Matthew 26:1-2 NIV)
- The next day, the one after Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate. “Sir,” they said, “we remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said, ‘After three days I will rise again.’” (Matthew 27:62-63 NIV)

14 Resurrection Morning

- There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men. (Matthew 28:2-4 NIV)
- The angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. (Matthew 28:5-6 NIV)

15 Significance

- Jesus’ death and resurrection wasn’t a random act of violence, but an event that Jesus predicted had to occur.
- He died for our sins and was resurrected by God’s power so that we who believe, should no longer need or have to fear death.
- For to be sure, he was crucified in weakness, yet he lives by God’s power. Likewise, we are weak in him, yet by God’s power we will live with him . . . (2 Cor. 13:4 NIV)

16 Significance

- Jesus predicted long before it happened his rejection, suffering, death, and resurrection.
- Moreover, Jesus’ ministry was confirmed by God with all kinds of signs, wonders, and miracles.
- So then, we should be very skeptical of the rest of his teachings and promises.
- Absolutely not! We should all the more be embracing everything Jesus said.
 - On how to live to please God.
 - On how not to worry because God will take care of us.
 - On how physical death is not final.
 - On how he has promised to return and restore all things.

17 Following a Risen Christ

- Because we follow a risen Christ, we know that sometimes it's not possible to immediately know whether something is BAD or if it's GOOD.
 - We've learned that Jesus has a way of transforming or redeeming things that at first we thought were BAD into something that is GOOD.

18 Following a Risen Christ

- When we follow a risen Christ, we know that the events of today are not the end of our story.
 - Our lives are stories with many chapters.
 - And we know that our temporal lives are but a prelude to a life hereafter.

19 Following a Risen Christ

- Following the risen Christ and being faithful to his teachings will -- in and of itself -- prevent us from making dubious choices, committing unethical practices.
 - In short, following Jesus makes our lives a whole lot better by cutting off potential stupid and bad stuff from ever happening in the first place.
 - When we made a decision to follow Jesus, our lives just got 500 percent better.

20 Following a Risen Christ

- We can follow the risen Christ by living as he lived -- to serve the Father's interest. There's a joy and a peace that transcends all understanding.
- Following a risen Christ means we no longer let a fallen world define us.
 - We live in a fallen world, but we're citizens of another world and we live by its rules, ethics and values.
- Following a risen Christ means that we do not despair or sorrow as others may despair "as those who have no hope."
 - We follow Jesus in the context of hope—there is a better world just up ahead.
- Following a risen Christ means that no matter what we may be going through God is in control.
 - In other words, because he lives we can face tomorrow.

21 Conclusion

- Resurrection Sunday is not just about celebrating a miracle that happened to Jesus 2,000 years ago.
- We gather to declare that because he lives and has defeated death, we have a wonderful destiny that words can't describe.
- Though we currently live in a "Fallen World" and BAD things still happen, we follow a "Risen Christ" who has released us from the fear of death and given us proof through his resurrection that a day is coming when BAD things will be no more.

22 God's Promise

- And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them.
- They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.
- He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."
- He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." (Revelation 21:3-5 NIV)

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