

Easter Sunday 2025

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[0 : 0 0] When you get the notes offline, I won't put them up this morning, but there's a picture like this. And it's a great picture because it talks about the crosses and it talks about the stone being rolled away and all that.

But in reality, those crosses would not be there. Because when you crucify somebody, you nail them to a cross on the floor and then you pick the thing up with the man on it and you drop it in a hole in the ground.

It's one of the most agonising parts of the horrible torture that it is. And then at the end, when all the people who are on the crosses have died, you then take the crosses out and lay them back on the floor to get the person off the cross.

But if the crosses were on the floor, it would lose some of its symbolic strength, wouldn't it? So you'll see a reference to that in the notes. The resurrection, though.

Where do I start? We established, if you look online, you will find that in 2023, we did a study that showed how you can depend on the fact that it actually happened.

[1 : 0 6] And there are 13 points. And if you put those 13 points together, you have to conclude that the resurrection did take place. It was a historical event, even though it's denied.

And it's the principal reason why or one of the principal reasons why Christians are ridiculed because you don't believe in a resurrection, surely. And I remember listening to a debate between Dawkins and a mathematician whose name has just gone to Lennox, John Lennox.

I remember listening to this debate between John Lennox and Dawkins. And in his summing up, John Lennox said that he believed in the resurrection.

And Dawkins said, well, there you go. He believes in a resurrection as if that was the most asinine thing that anybody could ever put their trust in. So we we need to understand that it really happened.

But this morning, that's not the line I'm going to take because we've already done it. So when you get the notes, do look on on the website, on the on the podcast and do look on the WhatsApp group because the notes will be there.

[2 : 1 7] And I've included links to the 2023. I've included a recording of the talk and a link to the notes so you can chase that one. Plus, if any of you've got questions about it, come and see me afterwards.

What I'm going to look at this morning, I'm going to take a different view. I'm going to look at what did the resurrection give us? Because it's one thing saying, you know, he rose from the dead.

But to understand why is that important? Amongst other things, the Bishop of Durham, who's the one who said the virgin birth wasn't important just before lightning struck York Minster in direct response to his sermon.

But the same man also said it wouldn't matter if they found the corpse of Jesus and found a grave where he was buried. It wouldn't matter. Well, it wouldn't matter to him.

It would matter a lot to me. Because if they find his corpse, that means he wasn't raised. And therefore, the teaching of Paul that we'll look at in a moment that says, if there was no resurrection, your faith is void.

[3 : 27] You might as well burn your Bible. He didn't say that. That's my interpretation. But seriously, if there was no resurrection, you may as well make a bonfire out of this.

Because everything hinges on the resurrection. And Paul says that. The Apostle Paul says, if there was no resurrection, you are still in your sin. There is no connection between you and God if there was no resurrection.

So understanding that it did happen is important. But understanding why it's important. What did it give us? Apart from a miracle of a guy who apparently got murdered coming back to life.

Apart from that, what did we get from it? The first thing, and I'm only going to lightly refer to this because I don't want to consume the whole morning with sort of proofs.

But at the beginning of verse 22 of chapter 2 of Acts, Peter says, and he's preaching the gospel. This is after Pentecost.

[4 : 33] And they've been filled with the Holy Spirit. And he's preaching the gospel. And he speaks of the fact that Jesus being handed over for execution was a planned thing.

It wasn't just that a group of guys managed to get hold of Jesus, managed to wrestle him away, managed to nail him to a cross and murder him.

It was actually a fulfillment of a carefully planned operation by God. So if you turn there, Acts 2. For those of you who might be new to your Bibles, you've got the four gospels and then Acts.

And Acts chapter 2. And in verse 14, Peter starts to preach this sermon. And in verse 22 of Acts 2, he says, Men of Israel, listen to these words.

Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through him in your midst, just as you yourselves know.

[5 : 33] This man delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God. You nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put him to death.

So this was the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God. This wasn't some incident that just happened randomly. And what confirms that is that it all happened at Passover.

Passover was the feast that had been given to the Jews centuries before, where a lamb, which was a metaphorical example of the Messiah, the lamb that would pay the price for their sins for the coming year, a lamb would die and therefore the people would walk in forgiveness for another year.

Their sins would be forgiven because of the death of the lamb. You remember John the Baptist, when he first introduced Jesus to people, he said, behold, the lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

So you've got Jesus the lamb. And God planned that his son, his lamb, would take away the sins of the world at Passover.

[6 : 47] Passover was established on the day and the date that it was established, centuries of years before this final Passover where Jesus went to the cross.

And it was minute by minute perfection. But he died in the late afternoon before the Sabbath started. He then rose again on the third day is what we read.

So just for a minute, let's let's put ourselves in the feet, in the shoes of the disciples. This Psalm 16 is what in this passage from Acts.

If we had read on further, in fact, we'll do it. Let's you should still have it open to Acts 2, shouldn't you? It says this, verse 24, but God raised him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for him to be held in its power.

So it talks about Jesus and said death could not hold him. Death wasn't powerful enough to hold him. And then in verse 25, for David says of him, I saw the Lord always in my presence, for he is at my right hand, so that I will not be shaken.

[8 : 02] Therefore, my heart was glad and my tongue exalted. Moreover, my flesh also will live in hope, because you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or hell, nor allow your Holy One, Jesus, to undergo decay.

You have made known to me the ways of life. You will make me full of gladness with your presence. so Peter is alluding to this quote from Psalm 16 and if you turn to Psalm 16 you can confirm for yourselves that I'm not making this up Psalm 16 and the key verse is verse 8 so this is written a thousand years previously and verse 8 says I have set the Lord continually before me because he is at my right hand I will not be shaken therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoices my flesh also will dwell securely for you will not abandon my soul to Sheol or hell nor will you allow your holy one the Messiah to undergo decay so Peter is saying that this psalm has informed the Jews beforehand that Jesus is going to rise that he's going to go to the grave but his soul will not undergo decay now there are lots of people who say that David here was speaking of himself when he wrote this psalm but this could not be true and Peter goes on to describe this David did die therefore he in fact you can still go and visit his grave ostensibly to this day there are some people who disagree as to exactly where he's buried but there is a kind of shrine to him and a tomb where his body is supposedly laid so he did undergo decay this couldn't have referred to David so what it means is that the Lord was using

David's voice to speak in the first person about himself is that complicated for anybody that David was saying under instruction from the Lord or dictation from the Lord or somehow the Lord was filling his mouth and he was speaking as if he was Jesus saying I am not going to undergo decay I am going to be raised so this thousand year old promise was kept on the day of the resurrection which still leaves us why I mean Jesus himself prophesied that he would rise if you remember from our studies in Matthew so far I won't go and rehearse it all but several times he said I must be killed I must be I must be taken captive by the very religious people that I'm here to bless and I must be killed but on the third day I will rise and so he said this prophetically so he not only fulfilled a thousand year old scriptures but during his life he said this is going to happen to me and the disciples in every case were a bit confused what do you mean rise from the dead we don't get it the mountain transfiguration as they're coming down the mountain the disciples were discussing this and the scripture tells us they were confused what does it mean to rise from the dead we don't get it we don't understand it and so when it happens they're all very much taken aback what's the significance of it happening um Linda's already stolen a little bit of my thunder this morning you thought you might but that's great because you see one of the ways the holy spirit uh speaks to churches is that it confirms things out of the mouths of two or more witnesses and so when someone stands up and speaks a scripture and then the man who's given the sermon says funny that that's the scripture I was going to speak on this is a sign that the holy spirit is in control even of idiots like me he's in control so um there is this well let's look first at the promises about resurrection turn uh to first corinthians 15 you've got acts and romans and then corinthians first corinthians chapter 15 and we'll start and you might as well put a little bookmark in this chapter because we're going to return there but first corinthians 15 beginning at verse 12 you have this sort of uh what would you call it i think i would call it nailing someone's foot to the floor right over the over the the matter of the resurrection the apostle paul kind of nails our foot to the floor and says you don't have an option about believing the resurrection because the resurrection is vitally important and he says this starting in verse 12 now if christ is preached that he has been raised from the dead how does some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead but if there is no resurrection of the dead not even christ has been raised so that's the starting point if resurrection can't happen then christ couldn't have been raised it's all a bit of fiction it's all a myth and verse 14 and if christ has not been raised then our preaching is in vain and your faith is also vain moreover we are even found to be false witnesses of god because we've testified against god that he did raise christ whom he did not raise if in fact the dead are not raised

for if the dead are not raised not even christ has been raised so he's belaboring that point and if christ has not been raised your faith is worthless and you are still in your sins then those who have fallen asleep in christ have perished if we have hoped in christ in this life only we are of all men most to be pitied so we have two options this is either true and therefore we are to be congratulated because we not because of anything we've done but we're the recipients of an amazing blessing or alternatively we are to be pitied and unbelievers do pity us you know these christians they believe in a resurrection what's that all about well what paul's saying is yeah you are to be pitied if the resurrection didn't happen because you've put your faith in something that's a complete myth do look at the links and do go to the uh the examples i've given in the previous talk to confirm that this is a historic event that did happen it's probably the best attested historical event ever and even jesus enemies admitted that he'd been raised from the dead so it wasn't just the christians that put about this story it was his enemies also could find no explanation for the missing corpse when you think about it they could have completely stopped the church in its tracks if they'd have just produced a corpse and they couldn't do it so i'm going to presume that in the room we agree that it happened and we've already talked about the fact that he died at passover so he fulfilled that feast and he was identified in the book of john in john 1 29 he was identified as this passover lamb john the baptist said behold the lamb of god who comes to take away the sins of the world now this this feast of passover was followed very closely by another feast which we've already heard about from linda this morning the feast of the first fruits and you'll find that in leuiticus 23 um and i'm going to talk about it but feel free to read about it next time in fact you've already had some scripture read to you about it leuiticus 23 describes this feast of first fruits and the feast of first fruits gives us one of the things or actually more than one of the things but it gives us a it gives us a principle to follow which is this so what they did at the feast of first fruits was this they it was it was when they brought in the first of the harvest and so the first sheaves were brought in and they would take a sheaf from the harvest so all the half all the harvest is in all the sheaves are sheaved and it's all sitting there waiting to be put into barns so that they could eat for the rest of the year and they take the first sheaf of the harvest the first sheaf and they hold this sheaf up and they wave it before the lord and i learned from linda last week linda's so useful for this that when they wave it i always used to do this but she said no they don't they go up and down and left and right they actually make a cross with their waving now i didn't know that but if you want to know more ask linda so they wave the sheaf before the lord and the lord accepts the harvest by accepting the first sheaf now this is such an important piece of typology for us because the harvest of souls is the same when god accepts and in fact joe prayed it and spoke about it this morning when he said

thank you lord that you accepted jesus because jesus was our first fruits and he's described as first fruits um in 1 corinthians 15 still hopefully verses 20 to 23 paul is going on to say but now christ has been raised from the dead the first fruits of those who are asleep so who is the first fruits christ he's the first fruits of those who are asleep so the feast of first fruits spoke of christ who is the first fruits and it goes on to say for since by man came death by a man also came the resurrection of the dead for as in adam all die so also in christ all will be made alive that's verses 20 to 22 of 1 corinthians 15 i'm getting carried away so this brings us a point here that the first fruit jesus was raised from the dead what is true of that first sheaf is true of the whole harvest the whole harvest will be raised from the dead so one of the things we get from the resurrection is our own resurrection to come we can have confidence that he will raise us up in uh daniel chapter 12 verse 2 we learn that everyone is to be raised up whether good or bad whether believers or unbelievers every soul will be resurrected and a resurrection isn't just and you get you hear teaching on this uh various places there are those who teach that resurrection doesn't have to be bodily resurrection can just be a spiritual equivalent where some spiritual ray is raised to heaven and i don't need the body but that's not a resurrection a resurrection means my body wherever it finishes up in a grave or in a crematorium garden or whatever my body is raised resurrection has to be bodily and in daniel 12 verse 2 we read that some are raised to eternal contempt and some are raised to life so resurrection is something that's going to happen to everyone jesus resurrection made absolutely certain that we can be raised to life without his resurrection as my first fruits i have no i still have a bodily resurrection but it's only going one way it's going to condemnation it's going to eternal contempt so my resurrection requires me to recognize the record the resurrection of jesus christ the only condition for salvation is that you believe on the name of the lord jesus christ you don't have to be a good boy or do anything else you have to put your trust in this resurrection in order to get your resurrection i think that's a brilliant deal so this first sheaf is acceptable to god and therefore all subsequent sheaves that's you and me are also acceptable to god and jesus then goes to heaven and is presented before the lord and he's accepted the whole harvest and he's also accepted his son into heaven and jesus is our first fruit so our acceptance into heaven has become guaranteed because it was guaranteed for the first fruits

[22:11] does my heart good the other thing that happened and let's just think about this for a moment jesus was raised from the dead and now these these are genuine questions that i have to which i do not know the answer but i suspect i know what the answer is so what i'm about to say you have to do your own research and see what you think there are quite a few people now who teach that when jesus was raised you know they went into the tomb and they found these grave cloths just laying there but they found the head covering put to one side and folded but there are many that teach that jesus didn't get up and throw off these grave cloths that when he raised he raised through the grave cloths now we don't know whether that's true so i'm not saying it's true what i am saying is it where it very well could be because the resurrected jesus was able to appear in rooms without opening the door he was able to go through walls or whatever so getting through the grave cloths wouldn't have been difficult for him which leads me to another question was the stone rolled away so that jesus could get out or was the stone rolled away so that we could get in and have a look and see those grave cloths because the stone wouldn't have presented a barrier to him which tells us something about the body that he now has the body that he now has is different from the body that was buried this is not just any old body this was a body that could walk through walls and appear in rooms when it wanted to and yet you could touch it and it could eat bread and fish and thomas could stick his hand in the wounds in jesus side so it's a recognizable body that's like this body but in very many essential ways totally different from this body we call that a resurrection body and the fact that the first fruit got one of those means that we will also get one of those and we can have confidence in the fact that our resurrection body is waiting for us and that when we get it it will be able to do things that this body can't do and believe me this body is able to do less and less as i get older but the resurrection body will have fewer limitations so this is another thing that we can depend upon is that our bodies will be changed and most of us would welcome that but look let's read on a bit if we go verse 15 and then verse 52 so 1 corinthians 15 verse 15 talks about the fact that jesus was raised verse 52 says in a moment well let's start with verse 51 behold i tell you a mystery we will not all sleep but we will all be changed 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 will all be changed for this perishable must put on the imperishable and this mortal must put on immortality but when this perishable will have put on the imperishable and this mortal will have put on immortality then will come about the saying that is written death is swallowed up in victory so this resurrection body takes victory over death right when jesus gets his resurrection body and he is raised death is defeated and to all that put their trust in jesus death is defeated

it was defeated for our first fruits it's defeated for us verse 55 oh death where is your victory oh death where is your sting it's a saying that's kind of like show me where is it it's not there is it you can't show me can you a bit like they were over his corpse 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 brethren be steadfast immovable always abounding in the work of the lord knowing that your toil is not in vain um i want to look at verses 39 to 49 as well verse 39 now it's talking about flesh and blood here and what we know in scripture is that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of god so verse 39 start with verse 38 but god gives it a body just as he wished and to each of us seeds a body of its own all flesh is not the same flesh but there is one flesh of men and another flesh of beasts and another flesh of birds and another of fish there are also heavenly bodies and earthly bodies but the glory of the heavenly is one and the glory of the earthly is another so let's just unpack this a little bit so we've got two types of two types of human body we've got this one the earthly one and there's another one a heavenly one so there is this distinction you can have one or the other my guess is you can't have both at the same time there is one glory of the sun and another glory of the moon and another glory of the stars for different for stars differ in their glory so also is the resurrection of the dead it is sown a perishable body it is raised an imperishable body so when this body is sown in the earth the body that is raised will be imperishable different body it is sown in dishonor

I can tell you this body has a lot of dishonor in its life sown in dishonor but it's raised in glory I can't even imagine what that means but I want it it's sown in weakness and raised in power it's sown a natural body and raised a spiritual body if there is a natural body there is also a spiritual body so also it is written the first man Adam became a living soul the last Adam became a life-giving spirit however the spiritual is not first but the natural then the spiritual this is why it is so vital for people who are walking this earth to get saved before they finish walking this earth when you finish walking this earth it's then too late to change your mind because your earthly body is sown in whatever it is in whatever state you're in at the point where you are sown verse 45 so also it is written the first man Adam became a living soul the last Adam became a life-giving spirit however the spiritual is not first but the natural the first man is from the earth earthly the second man is from heaven as is the earthly so are those who are earthly as is the heavenly so are those who are heavenly just as we have borne the image of the earthly we will also bear the image of the heavenly all that means

I hope I get this right it's a bit of a job trying to be more succinct than the apostle Paul but this is earthly and it's going to go that is heavenly and it's going to be a lot better than this and his resurrection guarantees my resurrection unless I reject him and in verse verse 50 now I say then brethren that this flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable so if there's no resurrection I cannot inherit the kingdom of God it's a very straightforward equation all right if there's no resurrection we're all stuffed if there is a resurrection it means I can it doesn't necessarily mean that I will but I can enter the kingdom of God and as I said before the only condition for entry into the kingdom of God is that you put your trust in the Lord Jesus Christ that is the only condition so this resurrection body then of Jesus mustn't be flesh and blood because flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God so my resurrection body when I get there is also not going to be flesh and blood now what that means

I have no idea anatomically and physiologically I have no idea except that when Jesus was raised when he described himself to the disciples and to Thomas he said I'm not I'm not a ghost I'm not a spirit because you know touch me put your hand there Thomas put your hand in the wound have you got any bread fish I'm a body I'm a normal body that has flesh and bone but he doesn't mention blood now in this life the life is in the blood this is a bit of guesswork on my part but when he came back that was not on blood drive that was on Holy Spirit drive that's my guess please don't hold me to that as a dogmatic statement but it's not flesh and blood as we know it and your resurrection bodies will not be flesh and blood as you know it so this is part of bringing about all justice so justice was satisfied by the sacrifice of Christ on the cross and you may say to yourself how is that just after all I've done someone else pays the price for my sin how is that just well it's just only in that the price for what I did wrong was paid and it wasn't paid by me it was paid by him and that was a level of justice that satisfied

[33 : 20] God and I'm so grateful for his mercy because if I had to pay the price for my own sins I wouldn't have enough in the bank to pay for it so on the one hand we see an innocent man being put to death for the sins of the unrighteous and how can that be justice but if that righteous judge paid the penalty for the sins and rose from the dead to confirm that all accounts have been settled then what's been created for us is a new starting point in heaven we're starting fresh in heaven so only because of the resurrection are we guaranteed righteous justice in eternity which of course we don't deserve 1 John 2 verses 1 and 2 says it says we have an advocate with the father Jesus Christ the righteous who is the propitiation for our sins put your hand up if you can give a fully confident definition of the word propitiation

I thought not propitiation we know it best from pagan worship pagans used to worship like they would worship the god of the sea and they would make offerings to the god of the sea in order that the god of the sea would let them make a good catch or that would preserve them from storms or something like that and so what they hoped was that the offering that they made to that pagan deity would cause that god to be propitious towards them so would cause the god to look upon them favourably so a propitiation is something that either gains you or regains you favour with god and christ was the propitiation for our sin christ was the one who made god propitious towards us because he put our sins out of the way we've read recently haven't we that he took the handwriting off the decree which was against us i won't go off on a colossians study but he wiped out the effects of sin so propitiation is a noun that describes gaining or regaining the favour of a deity so the resurrection this is my i think my last point for this morning it's the resurrection of jesus that guarantees us the presence of and the indwelling of the holy spirit because if you remember if you turn to john 16 and this could well be the last scripture reference this morning john chapter 16 and verse 7 jesus is talking to his disciples at this point and in verse 5 he is already talking about his death and he's about to leave them he's about to go away so i'll start with verse 5 but now i am going to him who sent me so jesus is now i'm going to the father which means his death is right in the immediate near future!

none! of! you asked me where are you going but because i've said these things to you sorrow has filled your heart and if you imagine the disciples on good friday all hope seems to have gone there is nothing they haven't really heard him about his own resurrection so he's gone what are we going to do they'd be reffed verse 7 but i tell you the truth it is to your advantage that i go away for if i do not go away the helper will not come to you but if i go i will send him to you so jesus had to be resurrected and go to the father in order for the father to send the holy spirit to us so if the holy!

spirit if he had not been resurrected the holy spirit would not have come so that outpouring of the holy spirit that we read about in acts chapter 2 the feast of pentecost would not have happened and we would be still trying to live in our own strength and overcome our sins in our own strength but he says i will send him to you and when he comes he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment and i could go on but it gets complicated if i go on so i'm going to hold fire and we'll do that when we do the gospel of john the point is the only reason we have the holy spirit is because he was resurrected and the apostle Paul teaches this and i lied about it being the last scripture verse in 2 Corinthians 1 just to show you that 2

Corinthians chapter 1 verse 21 says the one who has he who he who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God so it's God's plan that comes to pass here that establishes all of us in Christ and then go to chapter 5 verse 5 now he who prepared us for this very purpose is God who gave us the spirit as a pledge the word pledge means a promise or a guarantee so because of the resurrection we have the Holy Spirit not just in passing not just out there somewhere but in here as a pledge as a promise so no resurrection no Holy Spirit no down payment or promise or pledge no helper and no one to lead us into all truth with the resurrection you have all those things guaranteed let's just pray father thank you that there was a resurrection that your resurrection filled so many ancient prophecies was witnessed by so many confirmed by Jesus his enemies produced a world changing church from frightened men who became exemplars of courage changed the worship practices of believing

[40 : 21] Jews overnight Lord thank you that because of your resurrection we can have confidence in the day of judgment and we can have confidence to enter the throne room of God we can have confidence that whatever is true of Jesus will be true of us in eternity confidence that the resurrection body that you had we will also have father I do pray that anyone who entertains doubts about your resurrection and anyone who has doubts about you if they hear this talk they will have their lives changed because they will trust in your resurrection which gives us so much and so much speaks of your love for us that you want not only to save us it would be merciful to save us but so much wants to bless us with all the riches of heaven for which we will need the benefits of your resurrection thank you father in Jesus name for all that you've done amen