

WHAT the RESURRECTION of CHRIST MEANS to US

By Richard Jordan

"Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel" (II Timothy 2:8).

When the Apostle of the Gentiles declared that Jesus Christ was "raised from the dead according to *my gospel*," he made it imperative that we understand just what this tremendous event means to us.

Because of limited space, we offer the following brief (and admittedly incomplete) outline, and we trust our readers will use it as a springboard to look further into this important truth. The resurrection of Jesus Christ

REPRESENTS A FACT TO BE BELIEVED

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;

"And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (I Corinthians 15:3, 4).

The resurrection of Christ is not fiction; his body was not stolen by His followers, nor did He somehow revive from a death-like coma and walk away by Himself. Further, the resurrection of Christ is not a fable. The modernist claim that He "lives on" in the "continuation of the spiritual principles He taught" is the *real* "religion myth!"

No, the resurrection of Christ is a fact of history to be accepted and believed. The "many infallible proofs" (Acts 1:3) of His resurrection make it an event as thoroughly and historically validated as any in past history.

Our faith does not rest on a coffin lid! The resurrection of Jesus Christ is a *fact* to be believed. It also

PRESENTS A FAITH TO BE EMBRACED

"...if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Romans 10:9).

Our *faith* is to rest in the *fact* of the resurrection of Christ--not simply in the historic reality, but also in the divinely revealed *meaning* of this event:

"[Christ] was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Romans 4:24).

The reality of Christ's resurrection declares the *finality* of the work of Calvary. When "Christ died for our sins," He thoroughly put away sin, paying its penalty in full. Thus, the debt of sin having been paid, death could not hold Him. His resurrection is, as it were, the receipt that declares: "Pail in full!"

It is because the shed blood of Christ fully and completely paid for sin that Jesus Christ could be raised from the dead, and thus, with a perfect redemption accomplished and attested to, we can be declared righteous in Him.

The import of the resurrection does not end with our justification, however, for it also

OFFERS A FORCE TO BE EXPERIENCED

"...like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4).

This is the practical impact in the believer's life of the reality of Christ's resurrection. Romans 8:10, 11 declare:

"And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."

The resurrection life of Christ is a power, a force, to be experienced by every believer. The "newness of life" received from Christ means that He lives His life in us.

Christianity is not a religion--it is a *life*. It is Christ *in* us living His life *through* us. This is the essence of Christianity.

Have you ever found the Christian life difficult to live? If not, you will! In fact, it is not only difficult, it is *impossible*. Only Jesus Christ can live His life, and He does just that as we simply walk by faith in His marvelous grace to us.

Experiencing this glorious freedom and power is the goal Paul set before himself and us:

"That I may know Him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death:

"If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead" (Philippians 3:10, 11).

There is something else, too, which Christ's resurrection does for us. It

ASSURES A FUTURE THAT IS GLORIOUS

"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him" (I Thessalonians 4:14).

The future of many things may be very uncertain, but for the believer it is only glorious. No matter how difficult things may be for us now, one day it will be only *glory for me!*"

One day soon our ever-living Savior will return for us, and in that day He "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Philippians 3:21).

May God help us to rejoice in the reality of the resurrection of Christ and all God has made it mean to us.