

# Clergy & Elders Weekend Opening

## The Resurrection

God bless you in the name of Jesus Christ. It is wonderful to be with you at our annual gathering of the clergy and elders. It is a great time for us to fellowship together in the full sense of the word fellowship. There is such a depth of knowledge and experience and commitment to God and His Word in this group. It really is an honor to be with you and a tremendous privilege to share something from God's Word with you. I'd like you to go to II Timothy to start this evening.

When we consider what we call the first century church, it is obvious that there were problems and issues that arose early on. This is not to say that the Church didn't accomplish great things – it surely did. We can read in the Book of Acts of the tremendous outreach and growth. We can read of the power of God that was in evidence in so many ways. But the Church then, like the Church today, was comprised of people. And people don't always conduct themselves and live perfectly in the will of God. By the time Paul wrote II Timothy, we can read that "all they which are in Asia are turned away" from Paul and from his teaching. There were those who, "concerning the truth have erred" and overthrew the faith of some. There were those who "resist the truth, men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith". Some had turned from the truth unto fables. So by the time that II Timothy was written, things were not all "peaches and cream" for the Church. And frankly, almost 2,000 years after this epistle was written, things have continued to go downhill. Yet despite all that, there are some remarkable exhortations in II Timothy that we can hold on to. I would like to look at one of those tonight.

Before we do that, let me first mention (and I realize that I am preaching to the choir here) that God wants us to help people with their lives. In Ephesians 4, the first reason listed for the giving of the ministries to the Church is “for the perfecting of the saints”. Our service for God is to His people. And in that light, I want to look at one of the exhortations that Paul gave to Timothy.

## **II Timothy 2:8**

Remember that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead. Like Timothy would forget that! But the resurrection of Jesus Christ is arguably the most pivotal point in all human history. With all that was going on in the Church, Paul exhorted Timothy to remember that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead.

## **Romans 1:1 – 5**

Being raised from the dead was what marked Jesus Christ out as the son of God with power. Of all the people who have ever lived, only Jesus Christ has been raised from the dead to die no more. We will marvel at the power manifested in the Church in the Book of Acts – it was the resurrection of Christ that the early Church gave witness to.

## **Acts 2:22 – 24**

## **Acts 2:32, 33, 36**

## **Acts 3:13 – 15**

## **Acts 4:2, 10**

## **Acts 5:29 – 32**

## **Acts 10:38 – 43**

## **Acts 13:23, 27 – 31**

## **Acts 17:2, 3**

**Acts 17:30, 31**

**Acts 26:22, 23**

In I Corinthians, Paul explains further about the crucial point of the resurrection of Christ.

**I Corinthians 15:3 – 8**

**I Corinthians 15:12 – 21**

It is our identification with Christ in his resurrection that gives us the basis for a completely new life. It gives us the liberty to not be governed or ruled by our old man nature. Our identification with Christ in his resurrection gives us the liberty to be the people that God would have us to be. Our identification with Christ in his resurrection makes it available for us to live with and for God.

**Romans 6:1 – 14**

No wonder, with all that was going on, Paul wrote to Timothy to remember that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead. Remember not just the fact, but what it means to individuals. That is helping them with their lives.