

K-497 Resurrection Life (1 of 2)

by Art Katz

Art Katz's sermon explores the profound implications of the resurrection of Jesus Christ as a divine verdict and its significance for the church and Israel's restoration.

Duration: 1:14:11

Scripture: Philippians 2:10

Topics: "Resurrection Life"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker highlights the superficial and casual nature of our society, where we breeze through everything without truly understanding or appreciating its significance. He emphasizes the importance of understanding the death, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus Christ as the epic event of God in the earth. The resurrection of Jesus is described as the great verdict of God, confirming and proclaiming His decision regarding the cross. Without the resurrection, there would be ambiguity and uncertainty surrounding the sacrifice of Jesus. The speaker urges the church to embrace and proclaim its heritage, as failing to do so allows the world to shape the narrative.

Transcript

So, in his biography, you just read about the man who was born the son of a professor of theology, and who goes through the normative training that such men would be exposed in his generation, and then he becomes a pastor, but it's in becoming a pastor in a village church in Switzerland that he began to recognize the enormous problem of communicating the truths of God in the Word, to preach, is another kind of phenomenon, and how to break into the consciousness of bourgeois Swiss people. If you have not encountered the Swiss mentality, you ain't lived yet. Really a remarkable little nation, but such a powerful civilization, and of course probably the highest standard of living in the world, and the kind of hubris, H-U-B-R-I-S, pride that comes from people who have an exalted economy, way of life, culture, civilization, who have avoided the consequences of two world wars.

They have never experienced a bombing, but what they are experiencing now is drug plague in the city of Zurich, and even giving out free needles, and AIDS tests, and their whole generation in their jackets, their leather jackets, and their high standards are just going berserk. But this is a man of an earlier time, and the turning point for him was the necessity to preach, and to find a compelling way to bring to a hearing people of that kind the truths of God. He wrestled with this agonizing thing of the strange phenomenon of preaching.

And the greater turning point was World War I. And if you ever go back to that period of time, August 1914, and see how serene Europe was, how the age began in the early 20th century, with expectancy, hope, confidence, the age of progress, the end of disease, reconciliation, human brotherhood, science, technology, the industrial age, commerce. It was such a euphoria of optimism, and then like men playing with their tin soldiers, the Kaiser, Wilhelm, and the British war office, and their fleet, and their navy, and imperialisms, and the Balkan thing, which is today again erupting, and boom, an event broke out. I think men wanted opportunity to go from their playing with tin soldiers on their drawing boards, out into the field of action.

They had romantic and idealistic notions. It was an unreality that finally took its toll, and we're still paying for it. World War II is nothing more than the continuation of the unresolved issues of World War I. And the Holocaust has come out of that, and out of genocide, mass murder, mayhem and destruction, and we're still reaping that.

So, when some of his former professors and men of repute in theology began to endorse Kaiser Wilhelm, and the national aspirations of imperial Germany, he began to have second thoughts, like how could they be giants of the faith, and at the same time dupes and supporters of nationalist rivalries and national ambitions, something is wrong here, and the consequences were death on a massive scale. And so it required him to go back to the drawing board, and to go through the faith again, and to search it out, and wrestle his way through. And so we are the beneficiaries of a man who was led by God in that way.

Also a remarkable personality, and a lover of Mozart, and a man who smoked a pipe. And they say quite a personality, always joyous, and so I just commend him to you. To sum up, the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the great verdict of God.

The fulfillment and proclamation of God's decision concerning the event of the cross. If you can write one statement like that, you can hang up your hat and retire for the rest of your life, and retire with a good conscience. Someone asked the man who gave a public address, how long did it take you to write that? And he said, a lifetime.

You cannot read Karl Barth, except in this way, and we're spoiled by cheaper reading. This is not gone with the wind. You don't just move a little bit.

Word for word for word. If any of you have heard me say this before, it's worth repeating. In Germany I have contact with just a precious little band of souls.

Not the Gobson, they are precious, but in Frankfurt, the Baumann family. The woman is an outstanding saint. They have a little circle of friends who share the same quality of faith.

When I was with them the last time, I was so impressed. Just an overnight stay. To have fellowship with saints like that for an evening is golden.

The memory of it lingers. Something has come as a deposit that remains. At one point I was just so impressed with them, and they were not trying to be impressive.

They were just themselves. I said, there's something about you guys. You have something in common.

There's a quality of spirituality in your life that I find enormously impressive. Can you explain it? Oh, Art, we were all inducted into the faith and brought up in the faith by the same teacher. I said, who is that? I

was thinking some grand master of the faith, some great heavy theologian.

A simple woman. I think she came out of some kind of village background in Germany, who plowed in and wrestled with the faith herself, like Bart and anyone else who has ever come to a real apprehension. She had one basic principle, and it transformed our lives.

I said, what was that? She said when she taught us the word, she taught us to ponder every single word, word for word, word for word. And I so appreciate that. I wouldn't even go so far.

Syllable for syllable. Especially the word of God. Just to weigh it, ponder it, hold it, reflect it.

Like a cow, bring it up in your cud and chew on it. We are the victims of such a casual and cheap superficial civilization that breezes through everything. That's why we can put on and take off wives like nobody's business.

Divorce, the name of the game. Friendships, fellowships, we breeze through everything at the level of surface. A lot of what we were talking last night is the very consequence.

So, listen to a man who has given his life to wrestling through, to an understanding of the great epical event of God in the earth. The death, the crucifixion, and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. God as man, suffering a necessary death and being raised up out of it to ascend on high to the right hand of God and of power.

There's no way that you can ever exhaust the meaning of that one epical event. It's in two parts, death and resurrection. And the fact that the world has dismissed it, even the church, by glibly passing over it, has brought a judgment upon us that is called Easter.

So that every year we should grovel in our humiliation to see people with their chocolate bunnies and Easter eggs and their Easter outfits. And that the great song of Easter is written by a Jew, Irving Berlin. How does that go? So it celebrates clothing, parades, an event, you wear your best clothing.

It's remarkable. There's an innate talent in the world so calculated against God that it takes the holiest and most awesome, epical events given to transform and to transfigure humanity and save it out of its death and domesticate it and make of it a culture and a plaything. That is a condemnation and a judgment against a church that has not understood its own heritage nor proclaimed it and stood for it and made it known, not only in its speech, but in its very being.

And in that vacuum you can expect that the world is going to make music. So listen to what this man says. To sum up, this is a concluding statement.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the great verdict of God. You know what a verdict is? It's what we're waiting for in the O.J. Simpson case. This is God's verdict, a final statement, his own appraisal, approval, and an evaluation of what? What is the resurrection the verdict of? This is God's verdict on Jesus' death.

And if it had not come, think of the ambivalence, the ambiguity, the question mark that would have hovered 2,000 years later over that sacrifice. Was it really valid? Did it need to be made? Was Jesus a misguided martyr who brought himself to a place of needless suffering and death that could rightly have been avoided and served no real significant purpose? And it's maudlin and sentimental to celebrate that death because it served no real purpose. He would have been better off alive where we would have had

more years of his teachings and of his parables and of his example than he should have been cut off in the prime of his life.

For what? There's nothing more foolish. You guys don't understand the scandal of the gospel that this man who hung on the cross naked before the eyes of his kinsmen, is an Orthodox where to hang on a tree is the ultimate statement of shame and to be executed by the goyim for a Gentile to touch a Jew. Remember how Peter could not even come into the house of the Gentiles or eat with them.

To be murdered by Gentiles is utter disgrace, let alone to suffer the death of a criminal and between criminals. And you're going to tell me that that's God? And that's the God of Israel? That that's the God of the burning bush? Because Jesus said to him when he's dead, Who do you think yourself to be? Are you greater than our father Abraham? He said, I tell you verily, verily, I say unto you, that before he was, I am. He saw my day and was glad.

Oh, now we know you have a demon. You're not even, you're 50 years old and you say that he saw your day? Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am. And the next verse says, And they took up stones to kill him.

Who would dare take the holy name of God on his mouth who is just an itinerant preaching bum who had not a place to lay his head and say that I am the same one as spoke to Moses out of the burning bush when Moses said, And who shall I tell the people ascending me? After all, I've been in exile for 40 years. I'm not number one in popularity. Tell them that the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and Jacob is sending them, the God of Israel, and moreover, this shall be my name throughout all your generations as a memorial unto you.

I am that I am. And here's this preaching nothing. This drifter had no real place saying before Abraham was, I am.

And the same one now hanging on a cross in the most despicable form of death where you have to avert your eyes to look upon that terrible cadaver. There was not just an execution but the most malevolent, vicious expression of the hatred of the powers of darkness against the Son of God. When it says that he was marred more than any man and that he has no beauty that we should desire him, it was not speaking of what he was before his crucifixion but in his crucifixion.

He was a battered lump. He was a gangrenous cadaver. He was contorted.

His bones were virtually pulled out of joint. His jaw was agape. You ever see someone asleep and a little saliva falls out of their mouth and their mouth is open? It's so unbecoming to that person's dignity.

How did you like to be found like that in your death? That's how they saw him. And that's why the disciples on the road to Emmaus were so disconsolate and crestfallen. Why are you looking this way? Jesus said to these two men.

Oh, don't you know? Are you estranged in response? He, a prophet great in word and deed whom we thought to be the Redeemer of Israel has just been cruelly murdered. So we just need to let that scandal seep in. It's the most calculated offense to human sensibility and especially to religious sensibility.

That's what you need to understand. God was making a statement once and for all it's not again to be repeated in which he is confounding, confusing and contradicting all that men have and would celebrate

as truth, righteousness order, religion, morality, ethics the good life, good sense, rationality in which they could show themselves superior. Jesus Christ on the cross is God's statement of condemnation of all that phony baloney which if it had not come men would have had no alternative to this day but to live in deception and think it to be truth.

The crucifixion of Jesus is God's repudiation of man in all of his forms and in his best forms Jewish religion and Roman law the two greatest expressions of its generation and whatever would be its corollary today were judged at the cross because the best of what they were crucified Christ. Not the worst, the best. The high priest said it's necessary for the nation that one man die and the powers that be resented the threat that Jesus was thought to be for their own status quo and their political security that he would be recognized as some other king and the mocking thing over the cross in three languages Oh, you think I'm doing this justice?

We're just feeling this we're at the faintest intimation of the enormity of this event in three languages Jesus Christ, King of the Jews what a mock to the man who came and will again come as King of the Jews and if he doesn't come King of the Jews he doesn't come King of anything and he's going to come and be that king in the very place where he was executed jeered and mocked that's going to be his citadel his sanctuary and the place of his rule out of that Zion I mean, can you catch something of the dimensions of this drama that only God could have conceived and willing to wait 2,000 years for his comeuppance for his, what's the word, satisfaction suffering 2,000 years of having his son blasphemed, not only in the world but by the church and made into religious forms and suffer that for

2,000 years until the day will come when every knee shall bend and every tongue shall confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father and that the law of the Lord shall go forth out of Zion and the word of God out of Jerusalem and he shall make Jerusalem his sanctuary and his dwelling what a consummation for God's long patience now here's the catch saints it'll never happen you ready for this? got your seatbelt on? except for us this is not automatic it's not in the bag it requires a church a church was born out of Jesus' rent side and this enablement came when he brought his own blood before the throne of God in heaven and sprinkled it on that mercy seat of which the one on the earth was only a physical corollary the great one and the important one was the one in heaven and

Jesus brought his own blood into that place once and for all and because of that something was sent down the spirit of the Lord upon the church waiting in obedience to the Lord to whom all authority had been given in his exaltation from death and were filled with that spirit and on the basis of that enablement set in motion the phenomenon called the church whose greatest glory yet waits to be seen now if you understand that you'll understand why we can't so glibly, quickly and easily say yay and amen and hallelujah to anything that comes down the pike in fact from my perspective 31 years in the faith all that has come down the pike does not seem consonant with the call and the glory that God intends for the church but something less and other than that a cheap alternative and a playing

with the holy things that God intends for the phenomenon of the church birthed out of the death and the resurrection of Jesus holy, holy, holy you shall be separate sayeth the Lord touch not the unclean thing and I will be a father unto you the principle purpose of the church in the last days is Israel's restoration from death that the phenomenon of death and resurrection by which the age began will it conclude it that Israel right now while we're sitting here is in process of death politically, socially, culturally militarily and we're going to see it in a shocking way and when we see it it will come suddenly and it will unnerve and disorient if not destroy the shallow faith of many who have no anticipation of Israel's necessary future

death Israel cannot serve the purposes of God as

being the wellspring and the locus of his theocratic rule except in the state of resurrection that means according to what we understand by the paradigm of Jesus death and resurrection there's got to be a death not a progressive amelioration or improvement of their condition so you already have two different wisdoms at play numbers of them who will be strewn into the world as captives and as the victims of the last days affliction that will come to Israel will be brought back in the millennium in the millennium by kings and by rulers and by those who formerly abused and victimized the helpless Israelis who were devastated by these armies and nations who bring them back on mules and litters and on their shoulders because they will have been converted by the enormous demonstration of God's

mercy to that people and will honor the God who not only judged them but restored them we're going to see a reenactment of the whole drama of the death of the Son of God and his resurrection in that people who from the first in Exodus 4 are called the Son of God there's an enormous parallel and it needs to be done but Israel will not be raised from the dead except through the church who can bring to Israel the testimony and the witness and the power of resurrection itself to raise it from the dead in the same way that Jesus did at the tomb of Lazarus if Jesus was anything other than a Son of God if he were only a religious practitioner or a revivalist I'm asking you a gracious condescension Bill as I'm taking these little jibes Lazarus would have remained in his grave well meaning intentions

would not have been enough only a Son of God in the authority of the Father that's what makes a Son a Son because the Father can give to a Son his authority without fear of misappropriation of his glory think of what that means how many of us could handle it that's why we have such shallow teaching and shallow preaching because God is not giving his authority and depth to men who would use it and usurp it for their own ends and for their own names their own movements and religious successes that's why they're condemned to the shallowness that pervades them because they're not sons they may employ the language of sonship but it does not constitute its reality because what is missing is death well there have been deaths but not the ultimate and final national death that is yet future and

the evidence of it, the truth of it is that we don't see the resurrected nation in the character of God that comes with resurrection which is to say newness of life it's a good question to put to us what are we exhibiting of the resurrection unless we are exhibiting the newness of life we have only subscribed to a correct principle we have not entered into the awesome reality you know why? because there's an instinctive aversion to death we don't want to taste it we don't want to suffer it and therefore we're content merely at the doctrinal and creedal level to subscribe to the truth of something but are not able to demonstrate that truth and my point is this unless there's a church of the last days that are the sons of God that are moving in the awesome reality power and authority of

resurrection Israel remains in her grave if the previous deaths of Israel had accomplished this, there would be no need for a future death, a time of Jacob's trouble, another dispersal into the nations another massive affliction, another humiliation but I believe that the scriptures show that it's yet future because one of the principle things accomplished by it is this, then you will know that I am the Lord who had both spoken and performed this, if Israel had come to that knowledge it would not be in its present condition virtually all the prophets show a last day's devastation and a last day's return and that the last thing on the return were the hills drip with new wine and that the flowers are already on the heels of those who are reaping there's such a millennial blessedness that

before they can take in the crop already they're plowing they're just overflowing with honey that falls upon them and new wine is that they will no longer again be discomfited or fear or be driven from their boundaries and they will be able now to rest in peace and you'll plant your vineyards and you will drink from it and not others who will have stripped with you indicates right up to the time of the millennial blessedness the last historic experience of Israel is suffering and death and humiliation which is exactly what Jesus suffered and it may well be that we Jews who failed that's how our whole discussion began to recognize the significance of the advent of Jesus and his death and suffering will when we go through it ourselves all of a sudden say hey this is what he suffered and see

in our suffering the truth and the significance of his and that may well be part of the wisdom of God and the necessary wisdom the best way to view that in terms of the end is now not the Roman centurion standing at the foot of the cross and watching this agonized victim suffer a death in a unique way but Israel itself world Jewry standing at the foot of the cross of the church and watching the church suffering in an extraordinary way for its own sake and saying this thing that we have ridiculed and blasphemed that we flipped the TV switch and we've seen the televangelists and all of their scandals and understood the corruption of these guys long before the church itself recognized it who were still paying the bill gladly we now see in this the son of God now we to see the son of God is

to see God because what is a son of God but the exemplary demonstration that in his face we beheld the glory of the father the son shows the father that's why Jesus said if you see me you see the father and when the son of God which is the church of the last days the remnant people of God who do not have an exclusivistic pride we are it because it's incompatible with being the son to show the image of God as a son is to show the humility of God when that will be exhibited as dumb as Jews are comparable to the dumb dumb that the Roman centurion was see that's the beauty of it however perverse in their minds however obdurate unseeing however every other witness has failed to communicate the truth of the gospel this demonstration in suffering and death is ultimate and it may well be that

that is our destiny we're on a collision course ourselves the crucifixion the suffering and death of the church of the last days and there are many references I won't say many several significant ones that should not be overlooked Revelation 13 and Daniel 7 and 11 I think speak of the affliction that must come when God gives to the beast the power to overcome the saints it's totally inexplicable and totally contrary to the theme promulgated by the revivalist movements that the defeat of the powers comes now through our worship so let's rev it up and turn up the amplifiers and use our worship militantly to overcome the powers you know what the powers are saying what else is new they're not impressed by decibels of sound and shouts that come from vacuous and carnal Christians who are not

reconciled to the cross in their own lives their own marriages and their own fellowships it's a vain carnal demonstration of mere noise that is sound and furious signifying nothing the final defeat of the powers comes in the same way as the initial defeat came when Jesus made of them an open spoil at the cross and that's why it says in first Corinthians that if the rulers of this world knew they would never have crucified the son of glory and those dum-dums still have not learned their lesson because they're going to crucify us and in the crucifixion of us comes their final defeat if we bear our suffering and our death with the same magnanimity and graciousness and lack of complaint and ability to forgive that was exhibited by Jesus which is to say exhibiting God as God if we so much as

whimper, if we so much as lose it, if we so much as get hit by the blind side and something rises up in that involuntary way of getting angry and retaliating or railing against those who are drubbing us we have failed

can you see why what the church is and why God is dealing with us as he is dealing with us and why we're going through all of these agonies now? it's to bear then what we must and bear it as one corporate life together as the body of Christ and to bear it with equanimity, magnanimity grace humility, patient suffering, forbearance uncomplainedness and forgiveness who right now would have a tough time even approaching that with other Christians let alone against the hostile world and what if the ones who are persecuting us are Jews themselves for whom we are suffering these

things which is exactly how Jesus died and jeering us at the same time with what grace will we bear that you know that you can hear something from a stranger who can call you names but when you hear it from your own wife it's devastating you understand what I'm saying when someone who is close to you says something that would leave you unaffected if it was said by a stranger you come apart at the seams because of the the proximity the depth of that the intimacy of that relationship so when those charges will come to us from Jews themselves, they'll call us every name in the book, we're traitors, we're this we're that, we're trying to rob them of their Judaism we're worse than Hitler, Hitler only sought to destroy their bodies, we're out to destroy their souls and we'll answer them not a

word no self-defense no self-justification willing to suffer being misunderstood reviled against but we don't answer back and when they see that which they saw in Stephen you know the way Stephen died the archetypal martyr the magnanimity while the stones are crashing into his skull breaking his nose bone and into the sockets of his eyes and his own blood is running into his mouth he's completely impervious to his own suffering and saying Lord lay not this into their charge having said that, he fell asleep but his statement was not a retaliation to being provoked his statement was an obedience to the father which provoked his death if he had played his cards right if he had been diplomatic if he had said unaccustomed as I am to public speaking please you guys have it all wrong I'm not in

any way talking against the temple I want you to understand that it's just that in a symbolic way he didn't say anything like that he opened his mouth like Jesus on the mount of Beatitudes and he taught them in other words he was already exemplifying the resurrection life in the form that the Lord of life was pleased to express through his mouth that means that we have to be available to speak sermonic things like Beatitudes that will bless or harsh judgmental and confrontational things that might provoke our very death and we'll speak to one or the other with the same equanimity for it doesn't matter whether we receive the applause of men or their stonings can you get that? this Stephen was a son of God and a son of the resurrection, his words were not calculated by him he had no thought

of what the consequence would be for himself just the life of God surged through him and when he came to that final gush as your fathers did so do you also you do always grieve the Holy Spirit of God, was not very diplomatic no more than Paul at Athens saying I perceive that in all things you're too superstitious you, what are you haven't you ever been to a school of discipleship and evangelism, you don't insult your hearers, especially if they're intellectuals and philosophers the last thing they think themselves to be is superstitious you don't begin by telling them that you'll lose your hearers see every principle of reason and of man and of religion is almost always contradicted by God when he will have the total possession of vessels through whom they can be contradicted who have no

regard for themselves when Paul spoke that he didn't have any assurance that he would be able to come down from that mount that he had ascended and in my article on revival I said something like this first adumbration of reaction against those who don't go along as being resistant to God and opposing the revival and having a religious spirit and even more hostile recriminations may be the first adumbration, the

first resonance of what will finally be perfected when they will kill us and claim they're doing God a service in their synagogues, in their religious institutions in their perfect confidence that they're doing God's service and that we somehow are the ungainly ones who are impeding the ecumenical progress of mankind where they're finally coming to a place now of agreement as in

fact many of the same key revival figures are involved in the ecumenical and catholic thing that is moving toward the one world church and economic system that the scriptures tell us to expect so we're not playing games here guys well you went to here abandon hope or gird your loins at least you're being fitted for last day's confrontation we will be brought into their synagogues but I doubt very much it will have a star of David on it, more likely it will have the cross as a piece of architectural decoration with men perfectly confident that they are really where the action is and you ungainly characters with your religious spirits and pharisaical pride don't see and are in the way of the obstruction when we're at the very threshold not just of a breakthrough of revival but an ecumenical

world order that will guarantee peace and at last even the Jews are willing to come see this and be part you just hold that and see to what degree what I'm intimating will become increasingly clear as we go on keep your finger on the pulse what's happening already ecumenically by men like Bill Bright of Campus Crusade Charles Colson Jay Packer the head of Fuller Theological Seminary some of the most estimable names in evangelical Christianity have already signed the pact with their Catholic equivalents by which they agree not to proselytize from each other and to recognize the validity of each other's faith confession and that to agree together in the things that we have in common addressing the moral concerns of our generation about abortion and the cultural decline I'll tell you that

the same heart that cannot say yay and amen to the revival thing is beating like a trip hammer with alarm and resonating every kind of concern over these first steps toward ecumenical world order isn't that strange that I should be so impervious and dead to the one thing and so keenly alive to the other and I'll say that that's not an accident that is a very statement of somehow how the reality and the truth of God in us in how we respond to modern phenomena of the one kind or the other that is almost ironic our inability to respond to the one so celebrated as revival makes us equally by the same condition so alive to sense the devious subterranean deceptive things already at work bringing us to a last days configuration of the kind that the scriptures have told us to expect I just

listened to the debate between Michael Brown and Rabbi Schockett and Michael Brown raises the question in the debate listen, how can you commend Christianity to Gentiles if you tell us as Jews that Jesus is not the Messiah of Israel and that we're making a grievous error to celebrate him as that how can you then commend the same misbegotten presumer to Gentiles and his answer was, it's okay for them that's what you like and you can believe it and it makes you a better people, fine but for Jews, it's foreboding I mean this I had to say to my mother once on the phone when she said, it's okay for the goyim Jesus is okay for the goyim the Gentiles, I said, listen mom he's either the Messiah of all mankind or he's the Messiah of none listen guys, we're coming full circle, and the same

vehement, bitter opposition to the truth of God and the faith and the gospel of Jesus Christ by which the generation began, is going to conclude it and that's why God is not babying you you would have liked to have been babied and made nice but he entered you into a much more severe I won't say ruthless if I had been in charge, it would have been I even prayed this morning, Lord only you know the end from the beginning only you know the things that are future for us, that we only faintly anticipate and what kind of preparation we need to have now, and I'm asking you to employ this last session to put something in us

and these young people who are leaving that will serve them in good stead until that day, and through that day and here I am, on one line of Carl Barton, we haven't even begun

to examine it yet but I think all of this is very good, very rich very necessary, and noticing by the way, how much it relates to last night as if God himself had set the agenda brought Bill brought his theme brought the examination and now we find ourselves almost involuntarily having to make reference to it in order to speak about end time realities and the remarkable differences that will exist and the oppositions and tensions between remnant people and those who will think that they're doing God's service what is the factor that distinguishes the one from the other?

All are sincere what saves us from subscribing to error that seems to be conferring so much good and blessing what will keep a remnant people in the narrow path and make them candidates for suffering and death what is the one factor that is crucial in such an age of confusion and all kinds of things that are overwhelming in their character and seem full of blessedness and people giving testimonies of what they receive and how do you weigh through that and stay in the right place in God the issue of the cross itself if that cross is not daily operative if we're not willing to suffer its deaths as something of our flesh rises up if we find a way to skirt around it we make ourselves to that degree candidate for deception.

The issue of being saved from deception is the issue of the cross and our willingness to be ruthless with regard to ourselves to bear the suffering of it when God makes the issue clear if we run from something, if we're escapist if we rationalize and justify our conduct and find a way to explain it that gratifies us and saves us from the awareness of sin as sin then we are to that degree candidates for deception the love of the truth is the only thing that saves us from deception and truth is everything as God sees it and the most sterling, acute expression of that truth is Christ and Him crucified and so as the church has moved away from the cross and has allowed the cross only to be a ceremonial and architectural decoration but it is not living a cruciform life is not willing for the

suffering of the cross but wants the blessing, which I would say is a definition of the charismatic movement then you become candidate for deception, and deception will come and likely come from very God Himself, who will give lying delusions to those who have rejected the love of the truth why does it take a love? mere tolerance for the truth or even respect for the truth is not enough, only a love for the truth keeps from deception because truth is painful especially the truth about ourselves I couldn't help it the devil made me it's my upbringing I had suffered this, that, like that we have all kinds of ways to rationalize this, we don't want to see the truth about ourselves and we've got to be ruthless in this regard and apply the cross and bring to the death that thing that God

brings to the surface and allows us to see how do you maintain how do you obtain and maintain a condition of humility which is the sine qua non I hope I'm pronouncing this right the Latin formula of what is absolutely and essentially necessary for the overcoming an authentic spiritual life is a humility the remnant people of God particularly if you have that consciousness about yourself yes, I'm in that remnant, I want to be but the very awareness that you are a remnant is the same very thing that can cultivate a place of pride and exclusivity, it's a contradiction it's like Jesus knowing that he was the son of God and that he was sent of the Father and yet he walked through his life in such a selflessness almost a mindlessness about his own calling, Paul was like that who could say

imitate me as I imitate Christ, you know follow me in all my ways and if you don't you're likely out of the faith and yet there's no arrogance it's a remarkable thing, it's an ultimate thing and it's something that we

need to be jealous for or we'll find ourselves entrapped and snared not by our defects but by our virtues your virtues can more do you in than your defects do you know what I mean? remember in John, I forgot if it's chapter 1 or chapter 2 it says that the many who believed on Jesus but he would not trust himself to them for he knew what was in man and there came to him a man at night Nicodemus, ruler of the Jews there's such a profound distrust of man in God because he knows what is in man, the question is do we know, do we know what is in man do we know how essentially

depraved we are in our humanity if we knew it we would not seek to cultivate it, polish it, promote it or live in it, we would despise it, it would be our filthy rags, let alone that we would think to serve God on the basis of it and why should we detest it and how should we know that it is so utterly depraved that no good thing can come from it it is Adamically ruined corrupt through and through, self-seeking and however effete and well mannered and polite and cultured it could be under certain circumstances the very same people can be brought right from that to putting Jews into ovens and without batting an eyelash and going to their Lutheran service right after and singing its hymns that's how depraved we are why and what saves us and gives us a basic distrust not to trust man or our

own humanity and compels us to be totally the people of the resurrection, we have no confidence in anything we are the circumcision, Paul says who have no Philippians 3.3, somebody read that, we are the circumcision the cut off ones why callest thou me good, Jesus said to a man who sought to compliment him, there is no man good but God if Jesus didn't believe that he wouldn't have been baptized because John the Baptist protested I have need to be baptized of you you do it because it fulfills all righteousness you don't understand you're impressed with me but you don't understand that even though as the son of man, I'm still man and there's something rotten, innately corrupt in man and I'm identifying with man in my humanity as a second Adam and that's why I in my humanity need to be

crucified I'm fulfilling for that Adam what is his penalty and unless we understand the Adamic sin which Jewry has not understood that's why we're humanists, that's why we celebrate man and especially Jewish man, that's why we have to end if you guys will only allow me to get there on the resurrection side or else we're left with a morbid emphasis on death and crucifixion and God doesn't intend that's not the end it's a total thing it has this inception but it has this end in resurrection remember I showed you the book of the portrait of Jesus crucified, a horror to contemplate you almost have to, it's painful to look at but you walk around to the back side there's the resurrection and it shows Jesus coming up out of the grave and the Roman centurions lurching forward from the power of

that being raised from dead their helmets, how the artists caught this their helmets are toppling off, their spears are coming out of their hands, they're just, the power and there's this glorious figure rising with his arms outstretched beams of light and glory everywhere but the beams of light and glory came through every perforation and wound in his body, so I'm saying that to say this, and also answer your question, the resurrection is the other side, but it's always the resurrection of the crucified one, and his scars are always there to remind us we don't want to lose touch with either side of this reality or we will either become morbid or we'll become superficially celebrative of the resurrection and forgot what it required to obtain, and that the same process of death and

resurrection is a continual modus vivendi, it's a continuous mode of living and the one is not automatic the one is always related to the other when Paul says I'm determined not to know anything but Christ and the crucified is that to say that he's determined to forget the resurrection?

No, resurrection is implicit in Christ crucified, but he doesn't say I'm determined not to know anything but Christ resurrected he'd rather find his safety in the foundational event without which there would have been no resurrection, but we need to be reminded, resurrection follows that's why we rejoice because the final upshot of it all is the last resurrection of being raised from the dead with the righteous and those that are asleep in Christ are raised first, but those who are barely alive and being knocked from pillar to post in last day's persecution then ascend with them that is our resurrection in glorified bodies what was begun culminates in a final resurrection the resurrection is an eschatological event, Jesus' resurrection is promised that's the promise, the Holy Spirit that came down to us at Pentecost and in our baptism in the Spirit is a first fruit, it's a foretaste, it's a down payment of what?

It's a tasting of the age to come when the full payment will be the final resurrection to be with him forever in glorified bodies and to ascend and descend upon the Son of Man in a whole new dimension of being and power and glory in being raised up out of the death of those who are in Christ that's our anticipation, because we have had the down payment, see what I mean Paul who was so concerned about the Judaizing work of shallow Jewish believers trying to get the Gentile Christians to be circumcised in their flesh, he called them mutilators he said they are the workers of concision, of mere cutting but we are the circumcision by our union with Christ who was cut off and out of the land of the living not with hands but by the cross, we have entered into that cutting, that circumcision and

we have no confidence in the flesh, we've been cut off and out from the flesh, well it's the obedience that flows out of the life not according to the flesh but by the spirit and lived by the law of life in Christ Jesus this is not legalism, this is liberty this is freedom in Christ, to be free in Christ is free indeed, but not in some reckless way it's an obedience, yes, but out of the life of the law of liberty in Christ Jesus his life, not some should I do this, should I do that what if, how am, you know like this morning, should I do this or should I do that, I'm still on line one and I've not done it yet, how come because I'm ruled by the law of life and not by some mechanical strictures you see what I mean and that's the life to which we're called and the only life that will

celebrate and honor him and fulfill his will ok, the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the great verdict of God the fulfillment and proclamation of God's decision concerning the event of the cross, it is the acceptance of the act of his son appointed as our representative an act which fulfilled the divine wrath that did so in the service of the divine grace this is so beautiful but I know that to hear it read does not register so you see what I do, I mock up I underline, I put it in boxes I mark it with a yellow marker and I'll just look and ponder that the resurrection of Jesus is God's own statement of the truth of the cross it's his acceptance of his son's act which is really his act because Jesus didn't make it up Jesus only fulfilled it out of his own obedience it was the father's act

so it's like God validating himself showing his own approval of what he himself established out of his own wisdom because he knows what was needed for the condition of mankind that's why the resurrection is more opposed than the crucifixion of Jesus because there's a way in which even crucifixion can be sublimated to the purposes of men sentimentalized, appealing for sympathy one of the outworkings of it as I mentioned is that those who subscribe to that also subscribe to Jews as Christ killers isn't it interesting the true believer who has come into the resurrection side never once ever holds such a view of Jews would never ever call Jews Christ killers not to say that they're absolved of their culpability in the death of Jesus but that bitterness and vehemence that has persecuted Jews

throughout the ages could never come from a true believer who is in the resurrection side, only from those who are on the other side so resurrection is enormously contended against and I would say that the principle this is just a minor point opposition to myself as a minister of the word is on this basis that those who are taking issue with me especially now currently and at this time strangely is over the issue of resurrection nothing offends them more than I should make any illusion that what I'm speaking and saying is not me but the expression of the resurrection life through me sounds to them like a terrible presumption and arrogance yet I want to say if that's not true I want never to leave home and to be out speaking for Christ's sake if my speaking is not a resurrection phenomenon

it ought not to be spoken the world doesn't need human opinion it needs the expression of the life of God and the wisdom and the content and the authority that he gives the remarkable thing is that when he gives it men are so often offended by it so that's why resurrection is so critical we're not going to fulfill our mandate as the church to Israel or to a dying world except on the basis of resurrection well meaning religious intention will not do it we'll end up a bunch of frustrated and defeated religious practitioners we must eminently be the people of the resurrection, sons and daughters of the resurrection and you know how Jesus describes such they're like angels he said they neither marry nor are given in marriage they're in another realm what is it to say that if you're the son

and daughter of the resurrection you don't marry? you do but you don't do so on any human basis because he's cute or you like him or you think you'd make wonderful music together because the lord of glory has joined you that's the only reason and even in that joining your marriage is not like other marriages your marriage is like those who are married as though they were not see what I mean it's not that you ignore your partner but you don't look upon him with a slavish fascination or dependency or singular attention as if there were no lord and no god and no higher purpose for your being and for your life it's another kind of marriage so they neither marry nor are given in marriage as the world knows it they are like angels that's in Luke chapter 20 I think around verse 14 that if you

want to be a son and daughter of the resurrection you have to have a totally different attitude about marriage and marriage is only symbolic of everything of the world, of life of gratification, of career of success, you're in another realm and you see things from that realm differently or you're not a son and daughter of the resurrection ok so it is its acceptance as the act of the son of god appointed as our representative an act which fulfilled the divine wrath Jesus suffered the judgment of god the crucifixion of Jesus was as much the judgment of god on sin as the holocaust of the Jews under the Nazis was the judgment of god upon Israel both devastations are judgments and are equally deserved because god's judgments and god's wrath is not arbitrary he doesn't lay it on either Jesus or

the Jews or the world because he's a cruel god who takes malicious delight in pulling the wings off of flies his judgments are proportionate to our sins and those of you who remain and will ever get back again to my paper on the holocaust we're going to talk about that in much greater detail we need to know this god's judgments are not arbitrary but are exactly proportionate to our sins so if Jesus was demolished by his crucifixion if he was a piece of human wreckage if that was the statement of god's wrath what was the magnitude of the sin for which he birthed you want to know what sin is? you want to know the exceeding sinfulness of sin? look at what it cost him not just his physical devastation but his moral, psychological emotional and spiritual the forsakenness of the father which

for Jesus who lived in the intimacy of the father was more excruciatingly painful than what was visited upon his body he had to bear that because he became sin he who knew no sin became sin that we who

are sinful would know the righteousness of god he became it so what is god saying by the resurrecting of him I'm satisfied what you bore as the sinless son of god who became sin and allowed the consequence and judgment to fall upon you I have received as appropriate and satisfying my righteous requirement has been fulfilled in your death and therefore you're raised you're being raised out of the death is the statement of my approval of the death that you suffered and the purposes for which you suffered it you've got to understand the resurrection as the vindication the justification we're

justified by the resurrection of god's approval on the act of the death of Jesus which is god's own design it's god approving himself it's god validating his own wisdom it is its acceptance as the act of his obedience which judges the world but judges it with the aim of saving it you want to know what theological reflection is, it's that making a statement like that thinking your way through that there's no more profound and sublime object for study than the scriptures and all a theologian is is a man who compares scripture with scripture, who wrestles through who wants to understand the meaning of the events of god in the word of god so in this the resurrection is the justification of god himself which god? god the father, the creator of heaven and earth who has willed and planned and

ordered this event this is not some momentary historical aberration, this is not Jesus not playing his cards right this is not roman authorities being threatened by people celebrating Jesus as king this is the careful planned, predetermined act of god the father himself can anyone quote me a text from the new testament that makes that very point it's found in the first address of Peter on the day of Pentecost the point that this is the predetermined carefully planned willed act of god it's the very beginning of Peter's speech, 22 says men of Israel, hear these words Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested by god to you by miracles, wonders and signs which god did to him in your midst as you yourselves also know him being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of god this is a

profound statement and I quote this verse in the first holocaust message of 1977 because it shows two profound things it shows the unspeakable sovereignty of god, who by his predetermined counsel made a determination of the crucifixion of the lamb of god before the foundations of the earth were laid but does not because of that absolve men of their culpability and responsibility as participants in his death have you ever struggled about free will and the sovereignty of god you know if god is sovereign then is man responsible I mean because they had to do it his will had to be fulfilled this verse answers that here's the sovereign will of god predetermined, calculated before the foundations of the world and yet holding men liable culpable as participants in that death him being delivered

by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of god you have taken by lawless hands and have crucified and put to death whom god hath raised up that's the basis for which he calls them to repentance, if they were not responsible, there's no basis for appealing to them to repent and believe and be baptized every one of you, see what I mean so here you have both things god as sovereign predetermining something that must be fulfilled and yet men acting out of their own volition and human freedom being free and willing participants in his death they are not absolved so can you see that in the cross and in the word of god about the cross men are robbed of their excuse and therefore we can confront every man as a sinner as being culpable not only in his own sin, but in this sin even though two

thousand years later, you are involved in that death you are responsible, you are sinned and you've not seen that and acknowledged that and yet you know what the remarkable thing is? the event of the crucifixion of Jesus will not ever once come up in the entire O.J.

Simpson case as if men can determine the issues of righteousness of guilt, of culpability, of judgment and of death or release without once taking into consideration this epical event and that's why the world is what it is it has refused to consider the god of whom Barth speaks, who made these determinations, so the resurrection is the justification of god himself who has willed and planned and ordered this event it's the justification of Jesus Christ his son, who willed to suffer this event and suffered it to the very last and in this person is the justification of all sinful men, whose death was decided in this event, for whose life there is therefore no more place in the resurrection of Jesus Christ his life and with it their life has in fact become an event beyond death you can see

the way he has thought through the entire thing what the resurrection means in vindicating god but the men who were caught up with Jesus in his death who were Adamic and are in union with him in that death have also been released from death and have been brought into the newness of life and the Jesus that was raised from it so that his death and resurrection has in fact become for them an event beyond death and that's why Jesus could say because I live you shall live also that's why Paul could say for me to live is Christ he was a man of the resurrection he was beyond death and that's why he was fearless and the issue of death is finished, it's in the past I'm in the life see what I mean oh death where is thy sting and grave where is thy terror and the thing that has terrified mankind

since time immemorial the fear of death is broken and the fear of death is the base of all fear once you come out of the fear of death what fear shall touch you what shall you be afraid what men are going to rail on you and gnash on you with their teeth and call you names it's like water up the duck's back it means nothing you're in another realm you're in the resurrection you're not in the earth, you're not some squealing thing wanting to be vindicated you have been vindicated you're in the life it's enormous expansive freedom if you have been joined with him in the death as a sinner deserving the judgment and the wrath that was risen upon Jesus you will also therefore equally be raised with him unto newness of life the issue of resurrection is your issue not just the doctrine and it's a

basis for your living thereafter no longer to live unto yourself nor for yourself but unto God and for God and the basis of the new power of the life that raised him from the dead and raised you also death where is thy sting and grave where is thy terror of what shall we be afraid our days are not to be ended by men one moment short of the fulfillment of the thing for which God has called us you can do nothing against me, Jesus said to Pilate except to be given you from above and when Stephen said lay not this into the charge he fell asleep because that was the last statement God created him to make and when it was made his purpose was fulfilled then he was taken we ought to be walking through this life like such emancipated beings and you know when we know that we can not only be free

from fear but there's a expansiveness, a largesse that comes into our life where we can be sports, where we can we're free with each other we don't have to be critical, suspicious we can bear so much it's another mode of being and I'm saying that the issue of resurrection has not been pressed on the consciousness of unbelieving mankind because they have not seen the reality in the people of God

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