

Resurrection Sunday

by Don Courville

The resurrection of Christ is the central theme of the gospel and brings life into a church and a being.

Duration: 32:19

Scripture: Acts 14:11

Topics: "Resurrection"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares his personal testimony of how God transformed his life from being a drug addict to becoming a preacher of Christ. He emphasizes the importance of having Jesus in our lives and how pastors and churches often struggle because they are seeking something other than Jesus. The speaker encourages believers to seek God wholeheartedly, even if it means facing rejection from others. He also mentions the impact of his testimony on others, including a pastor who was moved to tears and a man who was inspired to seek God's glory.

Transcript

...delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him, but we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel. And besides all this, today is the third day since these things were done. Yea, and certain women also of our company which made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre, and when they found not his body, they came, saying that they had also seen a vision of angels, which had said that he was alive.

And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it was even as the woman had said, but him they saw not. Then he said unto them, O fools and slow of heart to believe, all that the prophets have spoken, ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them all the scriptures, the things concerning himself. Heavenly Father, we pray that you would open up our eyes to see what this resurrection means to us.

Father, we pray that your spirit would work in our hearts in a powerful way today. We ask for your blessing. Father, I pray that you would anoint my tongue to speak your word, and to draw out and share truths that are from your word.

I pray that you would anoint our ears to hear that Jesus truly is alive, and as we are his children, as you indwell us that it is really Christ that lives his life through us, as we are yielded to you. Thank you, Father,

for this time. I pray for those that may not know Jesus as their Savior, that you would open up their hearts to see that Jesus Christ loved them, that he died for them, that he gave himself for them, and that they must repent of their sin and receive him as their Savior.

Your word says, Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. I pray, Father, that your word will not return into void, but it would accomplish that, would you please, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Well, this is our day. This is the day that makes every day real. I was just thinking as I was driving here this morning how ten years ago I had not yet entered into this resurrection life.

I've been pastoring many years and preaching many years, but yet I still had an up and down spiritual life. And it was just ten years ago that also right at this time that we had revival in our church where the Lord Jesus met me and showed me that I was a bitter pastor, that I was the Lord of my life, and that's the reason that we have struggles. That's the reason that we have inconsistencies.

It's because he's not the Lord. And he met me there, and he began a process of breaking, and he did a wonderful thing for those seven months and continued on. And it even has continued even ten years later to have effects around.

I was just thinking about my buddy John Musser, the revivalist who came in. God had had him sitting, excuse me, for five years, so to say, back in the woods as he was praying and believing God and getting meetings here and there, but there was not the breaking forth of the power of God. And when John showed up in April, April 8, 1985, God began to pour out his blessing, and he began to do an unusual thing.

And it went for weeks in that area and then began to spread around the state and has continued to have effects. Now John has gone into over 60 countries as a result of what God began back there. There's been a booklet written, and usually those of you that write in to us, I'll send you a booklet on what God did.

It's a little bit old news, but the fire of it, the zeal of it is still carrying on. But the main thing that I'm interested in is that God met me, and revival is Jesus again. That's what the word means.

The resurrection of Christ was a powerful thing. You know, I was just looking over some scriptures that I have here on the resurrection in the book of Acts. It was the central thing.

It was the main thing of the preaching of Christ. It was the resurrection of Christ that brought the scoffers out in Athens. It was the resurrection of Christ that the Pharisees and the Sadducees were so upset about.

Matter of fact, I was just thinking about turning back over here to Acts chapter 4 and verse 2. It says, being grieved that they taught the people and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead. The enemy, Satan, who is the one that God has allowed to roam to and fro, he is the one that will not care what you do. He will let you preach the gospel.

He will let you have Bible studies. He will let you do all kinds of stuff until you get plugged in to the resurrection power of Jesus Christ. And when you get plugged in to the resurrection power of Jesus Christ, then you become a threat to him.

And you will enter into a new level of life. It will be a level of surprise at first. It will be a level of great joy to you as you recognize the power of Christ living his life through you.

It will be a level of surprise in that you will begin to be surprised at why some people attack you. You'll be surprised at some of the strange things that will begin to happen to you. But you have moved out of this area where most Christians live.

You have moved out of the area of having a form of godliness and denying the power thereof. Where you will have the godliness and you will have the power of Christ actually in your life and working through your life. It will be Jesus living through your life.

And so now you will become a target of Satan. Paul, in Philippians chapter 3, he said that he might know him. He said that I might know him and the power of his resurrection.

It wasn't until Jesus broke me ten years ago that I began to understand the power of his resurrection. Paul said that I might 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.

Back in the book of Acts, we have the history. We see it, we can read it about those that when they found Christ, they understood the power of the resurrection life. They understood that they were dead, that their life was hid with Christ, that Christ was now their life.

And actually Jesus lived his life through them as they had died to self and now had risen to this new life. As last week we shared from Romans chapter 6, the heart of the doctrinal teaching on it and the resurrection of Christ. We have missed it today.

This is why Satan doesn't bother us. We are just burying ourselves in busyness. We are burying ourselves in programs.

We are burying ourselves in our self-gratification. And Christ is not free to live his life through us. And this is why many are praying and believing God to bring a revival in our land.

And we need two things. We need a revival which brings an immediate response to Christ and what he's doing. And we need a reformation which brings about the long-term process of restoring that which has been broken off in our churches and also in our land.

I have a report. I didn't bring it with me. Maybe I'll share it with you.

I'd heard about it for the last few months. I've been hearing about new areas of revival breaking out down in Texas and other parts of our country where God is moving in on the scene. And we have been believing God for years that he would break out one place and it would start a flame that would spread across our nation and bring about a great revival of turning us back to God.

But the resurrection of Christ is the heart of the gospel. You know, this morning in church, and by the way, let me invite you, before I forget, invite you to come and visit Maranatha Baptist Church. We're meeting temporarily at the Memorial Hall in Diamond, Missouri.

And Diamond is about six miles south of Interstate 44 coming down south of Carthage. When you get into town, you come to the caution light. You go east two blocks and back north one block.

We'd be glad to have you come and visit. And we just want to be an encouragement to you. We claim and pray and ask God for his blessing every Sunday.

Our desire is that we would receive his blessing. My prayer for the people is that they would be blessed by Jesus. And so we never know exactly how things are going to go from week to week.

But we do know that God loves us and that he wants to bless us as we seek his ways. We want to please him. But if you'd like to have a church to visit and possibly come attend, then you come visit us.

Services are at 10 o'clock. We start at 10, and today we'll have a carry-in dinner. So if you bring some vittles, you can just stay with us.

And even if you don't, you still say you're welcome. This resurrection life that was so powerful in the early church is the same life that we have today. One of my favorite missionaries, you know, I've talked about him so much, Hudson Taylor.

There he was, out in China, struggling. It was so hard. And this is one of the symptoms that you have not entered into the resurrection life of Christ, is it will be hard.

Life will be hard. Your work as a pastor will be hard. Your work as a Sunday school teacher, as a Christian, will be hard.

Going to work will be hard. And the world can tell that. They can tell that there's something wrong.

You will talk the talk, but you will not have the demonstration of the power of Christ in your life. And actually, your witness, your testimony, will be one thing that is different from your words. Your words will sound good, but your testimony of your life itself will not bring the drawing to Jesus.

In the early church, their words and their testimony had the power of God, and they were drawn to Jesus. They were drawn to attack, or they were drawn to receive. And the amazing thing is there was such power and purity in the early church that they would not dare join themselves to them.

But yet the people would magnify them. Do you see this in your church? Do you see this in your life? Hudson Taylor, there he was. This is the thing about the men and women of God that walk with God and that want to walk with God.

They will not play games. They will not be satisfied with less than all that God has for them. And as he prayed and sought God, he finally found what he termed as the exchanged life.

He exchanged his life for Christ's life. And this is what it meant when Christ died on the cross. Not only did he die for our sins, he died to save us from the power of sin, and he also died that he might live his life in us.

You know the amazing thing? In Luke, as I read this passage in Luke, Jesus talked about his glory in Luke 24, 26, and to enter into his glory. You know, we think about this being of him entering back into the presence of God and into the glory of the Father. But there is more there because Paul talked about this in a couple other places.

He talked about Christ being in his glory in Colossians 1, 27. He said, To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. He told the disciples to wait until they were endued with power from the Holy Spirit.

He would come back to them. He would not leave them comfortless. When he came back and indwelt them, that was his glory.

The indwelling Christ was the glory that he talked about. And so he said, To enter into his glory, the hope of glory, which is Christ in you. Hebrews 2, 10, he said, To bring many sons into glory.

And this is what it is when Christ, people look at your life, they look at your family. If your life is free and Christ is living through your life and your family is free and Christ is living through your life, they say there's something there. It is the glory of Christ himself.

It's not us. When Paul and Barnabas go preaching around through and Paul and Silas, they were preaching around through the book of Acts. At one point they wanted to worship them.

They said, Don't worship us. It's Christ. Go to Christ.

We should be always turning people to Christ. And when we're not, we're miserable. When we're trying to play the games, which most of our churches today are playing the games.

This is where Christ began to show me some things as he did a work in our area 10 years ago in revival. And then the testimony of that began to spread around to other pastors in the area and around other parts of the country. And I began to go and share my testimony, what Christ had done in my life and what Christ had done in the church.

They wanted this. They were hungry. You could see the hunger.

One man, I remember when I was out in, where was it, Pennsylvania and Harrisburg. We were there with a group of pastors in a restaurant. I'll never forget this man.

He had a church of a thousand people. And as I shared what Christ had done in our life, how his glory had come. I just looked over at him and I saw the tears coming down his face.

And I thought, Here's this man. He's just like me. He has missed it.

And he wants it. He wants the glory of God. You know what? Those that want the glory of God and they want it bad enough to fast and to pray and to seek God, you'll get it.

But we'll have to pay a price. You'll have to go through the rejection of your peers. Many will turn away from you.

As you get that which is real, your life will become a conviction to them. And as I went around these different areas sharing my testimony, some were so hungry for it, they wanted it. And many have seen God work since then and have received the glory of his presence also.

I think of one man right now. I just saw his itinerary as he is sharing around. It's in Canadian Revival Fellowship News how this man shares in his testimony.

And God just got a hold of him as he read the little booklet that I'd written. There he was drinking a case of beer a day and going through I don't know how many cigarettes or whatever. And God just got a hold of him and showed him his life was empty.

And now here he is 10 years later, taken from being a drug addict to these drugs, turned around to be a preacher of Christ, a pastor of a little church and going around sharing the glory of God. It's Christ living his life through your life and my life as he sees fit. It is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

What a wonderful thing. But as I went around, I saw pastors that were struggling like myself. I saw their churches playing the games, wanting to get something.

And what it is we need is we just need Jesus. That's all we need. We don't need more programs.

We go off to conventions to get ourselves pumped up on how to do this, to build your church. This is one of the problems we have too. After we get settled down after the holidays, I'm going to talk to you about the church.

We build our churches and the gates of hell prevail against our churches. Jesus said that when he builds his church, the gates of hell will not prevail against his church. And the early church, when they started off, the gates of hell did not prevail.

We have phonies today. If God showed up like Ananias and Sapphira in our church today and he worked in power like he did then, many would die. Matter of fact, Paul said in the book of 1 Corinthians in chapter 11, he said, Many are weak and sickly among you.

Many are asleep. You know today that if you have communion in your church, and we're going to have it next week in our church because of the size of our crowd, we know we have several visiting, some even coming from another state to visit. We know that you can get sick.

We know that you could possibly even die because you would be there partaking of the Lord's Supper. Your life would not be a testimony of that which you are doing. Paul said, Examine yourselves.

He even told them, Examine yourselves to see whether you're in the faith. And this is the shocking thing. When revival comes, as we see deacons get saved, we have even seen pastors and pastors' wives come to the reality that they were not born again.

And this is why there's so much death in our churches today, because we're content to play the games. You know, death means you stop being. Death in a church means that your church has stopped being a testimony of the resurrection life of Jesus.

Colossians 2.12 says that we are buried with him. Christ is our life. Christ is to be the life of the church.

Christ is to be the head of the church. And what we have today in a lot of our churches is not the resurrected life of Jesus, but we have the fleshly life of men who have set themselves up like kings in a little kingdom to run Christ's church. And they're running not Christ's church.

They're running their own church. And the fragrance of it is death, stench. People come.

They do not hear about the living Christ. They do not see it. They smell death.

And those that are searching, that want reality, they turn away from that. And, my friend, people are roaming all around this country. I get phone calls all week long.

I'm on the phone almost every evening with two or three phone calls. And many times people say, where can we find a church? I've heard this said so many times. We are looking for a church where Christ is real, where our innermost being can be fed and ministered to.

We're getting tired of the games of men. My friend, pray. God will guide you to that church wherever you're at.

God will guide you or God may use you to build a new fragrant church. But you seek him. You will find him.

It breaks my heart many times when I go into certain places. I got friends down in certain areas. They said there's no church.

I believe if that's the case, then you need to believe God to start a new church. We are going through the cycle now. I was thinking this morning how we're going through this cycle.

We're coming back to the cycle of going through an age. I was raised back in the 50s, born in the 40s and went into the 50s where the church seemed to go through a revival stage. But yet it went into, and God has blessed through those years and brought many churches into existence.

But now we're coming out of that cycle. We've moved into the cycle now of being a social function. When we cease to be the living church of Christ and move into a social function, then there is death.

I'm thinking of a big church I shared at just a few months ago where it is moving into the social function. When I shared there, those that want life that are hungry for it, I watched them. They leaned forward, and they drank from the words of life.

Those that are set and satisfied in the social function, this is just another meeting. We're doing our thing, and they are not fed, and they're not ministered to. Their countenance does not reflect the living Christ.

The resurrected life of Christ is to bring life into a church. It's to bring life into a being. When Christ died on the cross, those early believers, they understood that Christ was now their life.

They understood because of the types. You know, many times we don't understand. We don't understand the types of the ark.

There is the ark, the symbol of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Noah's ark really wasn't Noah's ark. He was just going along for the ride.

God had instructed him to build it. But it spoke of death and burial and resurrection. And when it landed on Mount Ararat, it's believed it landed on the resurrection day.

There was the Red Sea. Going through the Red Sea, the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Going through the Jordan, getting the old corn.

That was a type of the resurrection Christ. Christ's life, the sheaf of the first fruits, where they waited on the first day of the week after the Passover. The preparation of the Passover was before the Passover.

And they went through the Passover and the unleavened bread, and then they had their Sabbath. But then they waited on the first day of the week. The sheaf of the first fruits.

So many types spoke of Christ. They understood this. We don't understand it because our background.

We have not understood the Old Testament, how it fit together with the New Testament. We've been taught so many of the ways of man that we have not got the picture. But they understood it, that their life was finished.

They understood the goats, the scapegoat, that they had gone free. That their sin had been identified when they laid their hand on that sacrifice. They understood with the Passover that God had gave Moses.

That when the blood was shed, it was a symbol of their life. And the Passover, the death angel, passed over them because God would see the blood. And if Christ sees the blood of Christ over your life, and you're trusting the shed blood of Christ for your sins, and not your good works.

So many, I've talked to them, oh yes, I'm a Christian. I believe Christ died for me. But when I get to talking to them, they say, really, it's me I'm trusting for my salvation.

It's myself I'm trusting. This is not it. It's when you're trusting the blood of Christ, then that you're saved.

You know, there's some powerful stories. One of them I haven't shared for quite a time. It was a story about Edith Moses.

I was thinking about sharing it with a missionary down in Africa with C.T. Studd. There she was down there having a good time being a nurse and assisting and everything. C.T. Studd in the ministry.

Until one day, a leper showed up. And they went through all the people, and there was that leper at the end of the day. And she had to turn him away because she didn't know what to do with a leper.

And it brought a struggle into her life. And the next day, there he was again. And God began to work on her.

Why can't you minister to this leper? Why are you afraid to minister to a leper? And when God got done with her, he showed her that Edith Mole was still on the throne of her life. The resurrected life of Jesus was not there. And you see, when God got a hold of Edith Moles, when he transformed her and she went through this tremendous struggle for several days, because every day that leper would be there.

And all the people would be ministered to, but she couldn't minister to him. Afraid, fear. But God got a hold of her and freed her up.

And when he had Edith Moles, then he could reach the leper. And the reason Jesus maybe cannot reach your relatives, cannot reach those that are at your job, cannot reach your neighbors, those around, is because there's an area of life, your life, where you are still the Lord of. And the resurrected Christ of life will not work in your life in full power till he has all.

As you're all on the altar. You see, your altar isn't going to the front of the church. The altar is a cross where you are crucified.

And you are dead and Christ lives. You see, the resurrected Christ's life is Jesus living his life through you. One of my favorite poems is by Manon Gayou, who spent ten years of her life in the French prisons from 1695 to 1705.

And she wrote this little poem. Here she was, a great testimony for Jesus, a powerful influence. The enemy hated her so, but she wrote this little poem.

A little bird am I, shot from the fields of air. And in my cage I sit and sing to him who placed me there. Well pleased a prisoner to be, because my God, it pleased thee.

Nought else have I to do, I sing the whole day long. And he whom most I love to please, doth listen to my song. He caught and bound my wandering wing, but still he bends to hear me sing.

Thou hast an ear to hear, a heart to love and bless. And though my notes were ever so rude, thou wast not here, the less. Because thou knowest as they fall, that same sweet love inspires them all.

My cage confines me round, abroad I cannot fly. But though my wing is closely bound, my heart's at liberty. My prison walls cannot control the flight and the freedom of the soul.

Oh, it's good to soar these boats and bars above. To him whose purpose I adore, whose providence I love. And in thy mighty will to find the joy, the freedom of the mind.

My friend, that's the testimony of the resurrection life. Defeat and doubt and struggle. The other day I went into one of the lumber businesses here looking for something.

And I was running late, I'd been gone all day. And I was tired and wanting to go home. But for some reason God had prompted me to go there.

And I went in there and trying to get my business done. And this guy latched ahold of me and just sort of stuck on me like glue. And all he wanted to do was talk.

And so finally the Lord said, won't you just listen a little bit and see what he's saying. And so I started listening to him. And then the Lord began to show me, this man's hurting.

There's something wrong in his life. And so as I began to listen, I was also listening to him and listening to the Lord. And the Lord said, okay, now you take authority over this situation.

You bind Satan from working in his life. And so silently I prayed that. And I took authority over the situation and over him.

As I recognized that, I tried saying a few things to him. And I recognized he didn't have ears to hear. He wouldn't listen to me.

So after I took authority over him, then when I come back and I began to share with him basically what I said. And I said to him very up front. I said, you know what you need? You need Jesus in your life.

And he agreed. He said, yes, I need Jesus. He was raised in a church like most of us.

He said, yes, I need the Lord. He'd just gone through a divorce. He was really hurting because he couldn't see his kids.

And I said, not only do you need Jesus, but your wife needs Jesus. And he said, yes, she needs Jesus too. I said, there's keys to life.

And life doesn't work without these certain keys. And I said, the key to life is Jesus. He's the key to your situation.

He said, you won't have a life if you don't get your marriage back together. Your life's going to be miserable. And I took him through and I shared with him about Christ and how he needed Jesus.

And the amazing thing, he amazed me. He listened. But this is what happened.

God was living his life through me at that point. I was tired. I didn't want to.

I wanted to go home. I didn't want to talk to this guy. But I recognized that Christ had me there for a reason.

Even when I took a turn to go there, I said, why am I taking this turn? I wanted to go home. But it was the Holy Spirit leading me. And this is what the resurrection life is.

It's Christ leading you day by day, moment by moment. Paul said, I die daily. Do you know the day you fail to die will be the day Jesus will fail to live his life through you.

And for all eternity, that day will be missed. That day you will not give God glory. That moment that you will not give Christ the lordship in your life as he wants to go, you will not give him the glory.

And as I shared with him about Jesus, he received the resurrection life of Christ. He didn't need me. All he needed was Jesus.

But all Jesus needed was somebody being willing. Jesus needs a body. He needs your body.

And this is what it is, the glory of Christ in the church. It's him living his life through us. The glory of Christ in the church is him being the head over the body of Christ.

Him being the head over your life. Doing what he wants every day. And the reason you complain, and I might complain and murmur, is because we are not submitted to his lordship.

The resurrection life of Christ is the powerful life. Paul said that I might know him and the power of his resurrection. He said, I am crucified with Christ.

Nevertheless, I live, yet not I, but Christ lives his life through me. So who's living your life through you? Edith Moss then became a new creature. Hudson Taylor exchanged his life.

Have you done it yet? Have you done it yet? Unto him be glory in the church. You see, if you go to church today, you go into church and you are not living the life that you profess, you will go in as a hypocrite. But my friend, my prayer is that you won't come out the same way that you went in.

My prayer for those that come to church where we worship is that we will not go out the same way that we come in. That we will be encouraged, that we will be blessed. I pray that God will bring conviction by his spirit upon us.

That if an unsaved person comes in, he will get very uncomfortable. He will not be comfortable to stay there very long. And that if you have sin in your life, that you will not be comfortable.

We are so content to play games. I'm not content to play games. And God isn't content either.

We need this resurrection life of Christ. Let me invite you again. If you'd like to come visit Maranatha Baptist Church, just a little new church.

We're meeting in Diamond at the Memorial Hall, Diamond, Missouri. You come to the caution light and you go two blocks to the east and one block back to the north, 10 o'clock. Let me close up with this challenge to you.

You know, life is so sweet with Jesus, but life is so bitter and so hard if you don't have him. The testimony of the resurrection is the most powerful thing that the church has. And we must not be a false witness.

I've been meditating for weeks now in this area about the testimony. I don't know when I'll share this. But our testimony of the resurrection life, this is the thing that impacts the lives of people.

I came back the next day and I talked to this man again, this young man. The first thing he saw me, he stuck out his hand. He wanted to share with me how God had already worked and let him see his children.

I'm still praying for him that he will be set free. Be open with people. You know, one of the reasons we won't share with Jesus, with others, we won't be open with him and right up front.

I'm just, it's because we're not free and Christ isn't. He's, Jesus is a confronter. He just confronts you right where you're at.

And if we're not free, then he can't set others free through us. Father, bless the people. Encourage us.

Thank you for ministering to us. We thank you today for the resurrection life of Christ. Thank you for this wonderful time to remember you.

And actually every day is a resurrection day. I pray that you bless the folks. Bless them mightily in the name of Jesus.

And to him be glory in the church. Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/20/SID20201.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/don-courville/resurrection-sunday/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net