

Foundation of Our Faith - Christ's Resurrection

by Erlo Stegen

The resurrection of Jesus is the foundation of our faith and proves that He is alive and our Savior, and we must experience this resurrection in our lives to live a new life in Him.

Duration: 31:55

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, John 11:25, Romans 6:23, 1 Corinthians 15:3-14

Topics: "Resurrection"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares a powerful story about a man named Sampangi who faced persecution for his faith in Jesus. Despite being threatened with death by five secret police officers, Sampangi boldly proclaimed his belief in the risen Lord. He explained to them that his life was hidden in Christ and that their lives were in danger without accepting Jesus. Moved by his words, the captain of the police asked Sampangi to pray for them, leading to a transformation in their hearts. The sermon emphasizes the importance of Jesus' resurrection as the foundation of the Christian faith and encourages believers to let the life of Christ be evident in their lives.

Transcript

We find our text in 1 Corinthians, chapter 15, verse 3. For I delivered to you, first of all, that which I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures. And that He was seen by Cephas, and then by the twelve. After that He was seen by over 500 brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep.

After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles, then, last of all, He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time. We'll read thus far. If you take the religion of Confucius, and you go to his grave, you'll find that he is still inside, his bones are still there.

Go to the grave of Buddha, you'll find that he is still there, in the grave. Go to the grave of Mohammed, you'll find that he is still inside. But if you go to the grave of Jesus, you'll find it open, for He is not there, He is risen.

One Muslim man said, you Christians are troubled because you don't have at least a person in the grave like we have to go to the grave, but when you go, there's nothing inside. Well shame, shame. He was born without brains, only pumpkin pips for brains.

That itself is the proof, for we do not worship the dead, we worship the one who is alive. If you go to the grave of Confucius, you'll find that he is still there, his bones are still there, his bones are still there. Some accuse Christians of having abandoned their ancestral spirits and adopted a new ancestral spirit, this Jesus.

But no, this Jesus isn't one who goes into the bodies of animals, no, He is the risen one. The women went to the grave to embalm the dead. They found the body of Jesus, and when they came there they found the stone rolled away, an angel sitting there saying, what are you doing looking at the place of the dead for the living, He is risen.

And then they went and told Peter and them. Some people are confused by the idea of a grave and they say, what do you mean an open grave, what do you mean, is it a hole? No, they didn't do it as we do it today, unless they were very poor. For Jesus was buried in the grave, in the sepulcher of a rich man.

Jesus wasn't like communists, and I'm not anti-rich people like you find communists are, they speak against capitalism but oh how they love capital. Abraham was a rich man, well he worked for it, he was industrious and diligent, that you are in your state of poverty, maybe you are just lazy, you are not diligent. I want something that is clear and straight.

Now let's imagine it, it's like this stool, it was a flat surface vertically, they would use a chisel and a hammer and they would dig out a wall, a door And they would dig out a room inside the wall. Dig it out of the side of the hill, if you go to Jerusalem today you'll see that it's a big hill out of which that sepulcher had been dug. And then at the door, they didn't just nail it up with wood, but they took a stone.

And they would take a boulder bigger than the door, and really thick like this. It would be also very heavy, they estimate that the rock that had closed Jesus' grave was probably between three and five tons. And so they would be able to roll a stone, it was made roundish like a millstone.

And then they would roll the stone to completely close the door of the sepulcher. And so it was also sealed, in Jesus' case it was sealed that nobody could open it, but when the women came who had been saying to one another, who will roll away the stone for us, they found it already rolled away. Ask the questions about the choir who sang for you earlier on, we went with them into that grave of Jesus.

And when he arose there was an earthquake, and still till today there's a crevice visible, a crack that is above it that is very long, and that is what they say, when that happened, the earthquake, it caused that crack. He is our champion. But not that he needed the stone to be rolled away in order to rise again, he is able to come in and out with the stone being closed.

Now some people, though they deny Jesus' coming and his existence, they nevertheless when they write a date every time they say like now 2003. That is the date when the Lord Jesus came into this world. Some deny his death, that he never died.

Some deny that he actually got to the point of death, and they have the swoon theory, they say no he only really fainted. Well even if he had been in that swoon, but when that soldier pierced him with the sword, water and blood came out, that was enough to kill him. Some say he never died, but there were so many witnesses, and here it's mentioned the various men, not even mentioning the women, for instance Kephias, that is Peter, the disciples.

And on one occasion to over 500 people simultaneously, and he goes through the list and says finally he was revealed to me too, Paul. This is an undeniable truth, should you reject this truth, well you are simply insane. In the same chapter in verse 14 it says, and if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is in vain, and your faith also is in vain.

Our religion would be just the same as the Hindu religion, or the Buddhist religion or whatever, but our saviour is alive. That is the very foundation of our faith, his resurrection. There is a certain Frenchman, Jean-Paul Sacre, who was a very famous atheist.

The whole world was full of his atheistic writings. In his dying days he was full of utter despair. You just watch a person as they die and you will see the truth about them.

He had said arrogantly, I will die being full of confidence. He had tried to make himself bold. But after a few days he said, however, hope needs a foundation.

He had tried to cling to hope itself, but hope is hopeless without the foundation thereof. He has risen, that is our foundation. Like my wife, as she was dying, the Lord was coming to meet her.

She said, here the King is coming, then he is come. We don't die just as animals, just as soulless creatures, but we die having the foundation, the trust, the true hope, with a reason. Easter 1973, on Easter Day, on Resurrection Day.

It was during the regime of the dictator Idi Amin. If you have seen photographs of him, you will remember that he would appear in uniform. He had huge amounts of medals that he used to hang.

One of them actually was sent to him by two naughty German students who, wanting to play a trick on him, just thought up some false award and went and picked up a trinket in the marketplace and sent it to him as a medal, and he wore that badge proudly. In the same category as Saddam Hussein, a second Idi Amin. Saddam Hussein used to boast that his two heroes were Hitler and Stalin.

The whole world, standing on its head in support of Saddam Hussein. Don't they realize, don't they have the understanding to see who his heroes were, Hitler and Stalin? Well, no wonder that they should think in such a skewed way, because they don't know the one who is arisen. There had been a revival in Uganda for 40 years.

Idi Amin had sent out his soldiers to destroy the Christians, to kill those of that revival, and he had said, you trample them with your boots, you break their bones. With the heel of your boots. There was a certain young preacher with the name of Kifa Sempango.

He witnessed how some soldiers burnt another Christian and how his ribs broke as they were incinerating him. Why? Because he declared, Jesus is arisen. And that preacher just couldn't get rid of that picture of this image of this man being tortured.

But Kifa said, let's go and worship and adore our arisen Lord in the stadium, and 7,000 of them met together. Of that service, 5 of the secret police came to him. They followed him to his little chapel.

Two of them took out their guns, aiming at him, and said, we are going to kill you. How dare you resist what he has said and commanded, Idi Amin, and you should have denied the faith he wanted to get rid of it. There were five guns aimed at his face.

I said, we are going to kill you now for you refused to obey Amin. The captain of those five said that. He said, have you got any last words before we shoot you? Speak now before you die.

And then Sempangi thought of his wife. He had married a wonderful young lady. He had just one child, a little daughter, she was like a doll.

He began to tremble. But then he prayed in his heart and said, O risen Lord, give me the boldness now to speak. He said, men, the Bible says that I who have believed in Christ have died already.

And that the life I now live is hidden in Christ with God. I no longer live my own life. My life is no longer in danger.

But he said, men, your lives are in great danger. He said, I have risen from the dead together with my Lord. But you have not yet risen.

You are still dead in your sins. He said, may God be merciful to you before you enter into eternal destruction. The captain stayed at Sempangi for a long time.

He took his gun and he put it down. And he said, can you please pray for us? Sempangi prayed. And from that day, on that very day, 1973, of this day of Easter, those five men got converted and lived for the Lord.

Jesus has risen. Do you see? He is indeed alive. I wonder whether you have risen.

Or is your Jesus still dead? Are you still living in your sins of anger, bad thoughts, all those wicked things still lying in your death? Or have you risen with him where you've been made clean, pure and holy? Even the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the lust of the world, you've died towards that. And now you live for the Lord. Jesus has risen.

He is alive. Is he alive in you? The German language puts it so nicely. He is alive.

Have you experienced that? The disciples of Jesus experienced that he was alive. Have you experienced that? Or are you still just a dead fish which goes down with the stream? If he is alive in you, it will be evident. Your wife, your husband, your children, they will see it.

If they cannot, then you are in as dead a state as those five soldiers. You need to ask and say, Sempangi, pray for me. They dropped their guns, parted from them, stopped killing the Christians and propagated the gospel.

Let's stand to our feet. Thank you, Lord Jesus, that you are indeed our champion. You are our David who has slayed the giant Goliath and decapitated him.

You have conquered death, the grave, and sin. The lion that bear in our lives, that Goliath, Lord, you have conquered for us. We thank you, Lord Jesus.

Amen.

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