

Participants of Christ's Resurrection

by F.J. Huegel

The sermon emphasizes the transformative power of participating in Christ's resurrection, leading to a new life free from the bondage of self.

Scripture: Ephesians 2:4

Topics: "New Life in Christ", "Resurrection"

Description

F.J. Huegel emphasizes the transformative power of participating in Christ's resurrection, illustrating how this participation leads to a radical change in our lives, attitudes, and relationships. He describes the shift from a life of struggle and self to a new existence filled with divine life and abundance, highlighting that true life comes from being united with Christ in His death and resurrection. Huegel asserts that only through this divine connection can believers overcome the flesh and live out the teachings of Christ, experiencing the fullness of joy and power that comes from the Holy Spirit. He encourages believers to embrace their identity as new creations in Christ, empowered to live a life that reflects His love and grace. Ultimately, the sermon calls for a deep reliance on Christ to experience the abundant life He offers.

Transcript

AS we go forward step by step in the consideration of that which our participation in Christ implies, we will find that it is the key to unfathomable riches, the Aladdin's Lamp of unspeakable power, the gateway to such happiness as we had never dreamed could be possible this side the gates of Heaven.

We cannot take these steps without experiencing such a radical revolution in our attitudes, our relationships, and our thinking, that all things indeed become new. We look back down upon the old way of Imitation, struggle, failure, confusion-the old way of "self," the way of the "flesh" --with unutterable relief, unspeakable gratitude that a new day has dawned. No disinherited prince who, after years of strife has at last come to his own-name, wealth, power in his father's palace-could look back upon years of loss and shame with feelings any more profound.

We find that after yielding all to the Master, He comes so to possess us by His Spirit that our very frames-of-mind are governed by Him. Are we moved to pray? He gives that spirit of prayer, access into the presence of the living God. And our prayers have a force and a vitality that leads us to laugh at the impossible. Are we tried? He holds us in Iris boson and the hisses of His mouth make: our hearts to sing. Are we tempted? He girds us with night---we are more than conquerors in Him.

The next: step which we would consider is our participation in Christ's resurrection. Not only did we (lie in Christ - in Him we arose. Our death to self is but the gate-way to a larger, fuller life-the more abundant life. As we sign our death-warrant and consign to the grave (we are sharers of Christ's tomb-Weymouth's translation of Rom. vi. 4) the "old life," it is only to find that we are the recipients of a life infinitely more wonderful-the life of the Ages. We become once more temples of the living God. That element of discord-self, the "flesh-life" which, however religious, is still at enmity with God, 'for "they that are in the flesh cannot please God," "the carnal mind is enmity with God"---that element of discord once removed, God comes again into His own in us and we truly live.

"God who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us . . . hath quickened us together with Christ . . . and hath raised us up together" (Eph. ii. G).

Marvellous Truth! Glorious Fact! How it enriches! What treasures of grace, what power, what glory-what a wealth of meaning. Christ's resurrection my resurrection. God raised me up together with Him. He is something adapted to my deepest need. I want life, life abundant, life eternal. My spirit pants for life. "As the hart panteth for the waterbrooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God."

Jesus had said that such a life was to be at the disposal of the believer. "He that drinketh of this water shall thirst again, but he that drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." "He that believeth on Me, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water." "I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly." "I am the Bread of life, he that cometh to Me shall never hunger and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst."

Were it not for this Divine life which in a measure all believers, even those who are still dominated by the "flesh-life," enjoy (for some it is a tiny rivulet almost imperceptible, for others it is as a mighty stream, "Rivers of living water," the degree being determined by one's union with Christ and dependence upon Him-see Ezek. xlvi, the vision of the rising waters), were it not, I repeat, for this Divine life which in a measure all believers receive, they could not participate in Christ's Cross. Only a living creature can die. Only souls that have in a pleasure received the Christ-life can die to "self." "Self" cannot overcome "self." We must be Christ-possessed to die to the "flesh-life." And to the degree in which we receive Christ, we die to "self." Or, to state the matter conversely, to come more fully into Christ we must more fully die to "self."

In the first chapter of the Ephesian letter, Paul utters a marvellous prayer. He says to the Ephesians: "I cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory may give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened that ye may know . . . what is the exceeding greatness of His Power to us-ward who believe." And this power which is to us, for us, in us, who believe; whence does it emanate-what is it? It is the "power which He

brought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead."

That is the matchless power which works in the believer -the power of Christ's resurrection. Paul longed to have the Ephesians realize that fact.

When we come to consider the requirements of the New Testament as they bear upon the Christian- life, we realize that they all presuppose this very oneness of the believer with Christ in the power of His resurrection. No one but a Christ-centered soul, one with Him in death and resurrection, could possibly

measure up to the ideal of Christ in Christian life and service. To love one's enemies without a deep participation in the power of Christ's endless life, with that Divine love (Greek agape, Divine love) which the Word enjoins, would no more be possible for the purely natural man, nay, for even the Christian in whom the "flesh-life" is still in the descendancy, than for a worm to play the role of a bird. There is not a New Testament requirement that does not immediately bring the believer face to face with an overwhelming dilemma. Either he must cease to move in the realm of the purely natural die to the "flesh-life" and find in the resurrected Christ a new life-or, he must fail as a Christian. To the New Life, the life that flows from Christ, the Sermon on the Mount presents no problems. It is all natural, easy, a spontaneous expression of principles already inherent. To the "old life," which animates man naturally, which by virtue of his oneness with a fallen race surges within him, the Sermon on the Mount can never be anything but an amazing contradiction. The ways, customs, language, of a Hottentot would be no more unintelligible or impracticable to the average European, or American, or Latin, than the Sermon on the Mount to one who has not been born again (i.e. died to the "self-life" to rise up with Christ, in the power of a "new life").

We deceive ourselves with the cant of the hour. We talk glibly of the social gospel, and Heaven knows we need a social application of the teachings of Jesus, an injection in all the ramifications of life of the love of Christ. We talk no less glibly of following in the footsteps of the Master. But we forget that a mere mechanical doing as Jesus did in that which has to do with our social relation, would never bring us to the Christ-life. A dead frog can be made to kick as if it were alive by the touch of an electric current.

An imitation of a Frenchman would not have me a Frenchman. I am a German and I would have to be "reborn" to be anything but what I am.

And so in the Christian life. I must be born anew. That is why Christ took me with Himself down into the grave: and brought me forth a "new creation." He terminates my old life when there upon the Cross as Representative He died; and He imparted to me a new-life when He arose from the grave.

Christ expects nothing of the "flesh." However religious its garments, however holy its mien, however sanctified its undertakings, it still "profiteth nothing." It is still only "flesh." It is still only the realm of the natural. It is still "self."

The Christian faith is not simply supernatural in its God-ward aspects. It is not simply the Incarnation of Christ which comes under the category of the miraculous. The believer, too, becomes Godpossessed. He, too, as a partaker of Christ's resurrection comes under the sway of the supernatural. It is not simply Christ dying for the sinner. It is the sinner dying in Christ. It is not simply Christ being raised from the dead. It is the believer being raised with the Divine Head. It is not simply man reaching out after God-it is God taking the form of man and then, as the "Son of Man," changing life's entire process, subjecting it to the Cross for the extinction of that great monster which has been the source of all corruption, the root of man's misery, namely: the principle of self; and bringing him out from the tomb charged with the Life of the ages-Resurrection life. This is the Christian faith the faith of the Apostles, the "faith of the Son of God." "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me" (Gal. ii. 20).

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