

“There shall be no more death.”

Good morning! Happy Resurrection Sunday. And indeed it is a happy day we celebrate today. /On this day over 2,000 years ago, Christ burst forth from the grave triumphant, victorious over sin, death, and satan.\ This capped off the greatest three days in history.

/On the first day, Jesus had died on the cross.\ At nightfall, He was buried.  
/During the second day, His lifeless body lay in that virgin tomb. \

/But then, early the next day, the third day, He was raised from the dead.\

He died first of all to vindicate His Father’s holy character.

/He died because we all sinned. He was raised because believers are justified.\

/We Christians believe that the most momentous things happened at the cross.\ I mean, here we have the Son of God dying. He had become human, being born of a virgin. And when He died, He died the most cruel and painful death possible.

He suffered excruciating pain in His body. But that was not the worst of it.

During the last three hours of His life, /He bore the sin of the world – including our sins, all of them – in His body on the cross.\ He who knew no sin was made sin for our benefit. He suffered all the horrors that should have been ours.

/We were under the wrath of God. But He took our punishment for us. \

Isa 53:5-6

5 But He was pierced through for our transgressions,  
He was crushed for our iniquities;  
The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him,  
And by His scourging we are healed.

6 All of us like sheep have gone astray,  
Each of us has turned to his own way;  
But the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all  
To fall on Him.

He loved me, and gave Himself up for me.

/And He loved you – no matter who you are – and gave Himself up for you also.\

Make no mistake: this is personal. I am a sinner. Christ died for sinners. Christ died for me.

We faced a certain judgment under the wrath of God.

/If you are not a believer in Christ, you still face that judgment.\

It gets nearer every day.

*Heb 9:27-28*

*27 And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, 28 so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.*

In our day, people are conditioned to think that the law is an insubstantial thing. It's something to be sidestepped. Lawbreakers are routinely released without even being charged.

/Most people think that right and wrong are relative things, easily bent to suit the circumstances.\ If they think sin exists, they think it is in the eye of the beholder.

But none of these matters to God. His court puts no stock in the opinions of man.

His Law was given to Moses. Right and wrong are written on every heart. And all of us have broken that law. /All have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God.\

No attorney on earth, no technicality, no excuse, can exonerate you of that charge.

/The penalty for sin is death.\ That's a permanent death. It's described in the book of Revelation as the Lake of Fire, and that's an awful, frightful thing.

And people use this to say that God is unfair.

News flash: that argument, that plea, will not help you on the day of judgment.

Whether you choose to accept it or not, /God is perfectly fair, perfectly just, perfectly holy. His Law is perfect. \

/Who can argue that murder should go unpunished? \

Who can argue that the God who delivered Israel out of slavery in Egypt should be dishonored and disobeyed by that same people without consequences?

Who can argue that the God who created the human race in His image and provided for his every need, only to see that very first man rebel against His creator,

Who can argue that this was not heinous? God was fully within His rights to do whatever He wanted with that race. And yet here we are, proof that He didn't wipe out that race, as He could have, and arguably should have.

But you see there is something else about this holy and just God.

/God is love. And He is sovereign. He can be merciful to whomever He chooses.\

Throughout history, He has provided a way of deliverance. A way back to Him.

/He postponed executing that ultimate death sentence -temporarily.\ And His enemies scoffed at this leniency. They thought God didn't mean it after all.

But He DID mean it. Just because God is not willing that any should perish, just because the sentence is not yet executed, just because He has not yet counted our sins against us, does not mean that His justice can be evaded indefinitely.

/There will be a day of judgment, a day of wrath, for all who remain in unbelief.\

There is none righteous, not even one. We are all sinners by nature.

/But God has provided a way to rescue each and every person from this ultimate death sentence.\ A marvelous and unexpected and undeserved way out.

Many of you know who Charles Dickens was. He was a famous English author who wrote many books. /One of those books was called "A Tale of Two Cities".\

It was set in France and England before and during the French Revolution.

/The plot revolves around a man by the name of Sidney Carton.\ [pic]

Carton first appears as a cynical drunkard who serves as a legal aide to a London barrister. He is secretly in love with Lucie Manette, whose French émigré husband, Charles Darnay, physically resembles Carton. This coincidence enables Carton to stand in for Darnay, who has been sentenced to die on the guillotine. By this act Carton gives meaning to his misspent life.

His thoughts as he approached the guillotine are memorable:

“I see the lives for which I lay down my life, peaceful, useful, prosperous and happy. I see that I hold a sanctuary in their hearts, and in the hearts of their descendants, generations hence. It is a far, far better thing that I do, than I have ever done; it is a far, far better rest that I go to than I have ever known.”

/That was a fictional account. Now it's time for the real thing.\

*John 19:28-30*

*28 After this, Jesus, knowing that all things had already been accomplished, to fulfill the Scripture, said, "I am thirsty."*

*29 A jar full of sour wine was standing there; so they put a sponge full of the sour wine upon a branch of hyssop and brought it up to His mouth. 30 Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.*

God traded the innocent One for the guilty. /He ordained that His perfect Son would die in place of guilty ,wretched humanity\, guilty in any very possible way.

He died so that we may live. And the terms God set for us were incredible. /To any person who listened to the truth about what Jesus did for them and believed - simply took God at His word that this was true in their case-\

/God would credit the full merits of the sacrifice of His Son Jesus Christ to them.\

God remains just when He justifies the ungodly one who believes in Christ!

/God made the sinless one sin itself so that whosoever believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life\, and/ beyond that, actually be declared righteous, perfectly acceptable, in God's eyes forever.\

Now doesn't that take your breath away?

/So Jesus said, "It is finished".\

All had been accomplished. He had fulfilled all of the Scriptures.  
He was now finished bearing the sin of the world in His body on the tree.  
All His suffering was over. His obedience to His Father was complete.  
He had glorified the Father to the max.

And that brings us to the main event of today – the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

*Matt 28:1-10*

*1 Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to look at the grave. 2 And behold, a severe earthquake had occurred, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it. 3 And his appearance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. 4 The guards shook for fear of him and became like dead men.*

*5 The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; for I know that you are looking for Jesus who has been crucified. 6 "He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said. Come, see the place where He was lying. 7 "Go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead; and behold, He is going ahead of you into Galilee, there you will see Him; behold, I have told you."*

*8 And they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy and ran to report it to His disciples. 9 And behold, Jesus met them and greeted them. And they came up and took hold of His feet and worshiped Him.*

/Thirty years later, the apostle Paul identified many eyewitnesses to the resurrected Christ – including himself. It's strong proof that Jesus came out of that tomb. \

*1 Cor 15:3-9*

*3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, 5 and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.*

*6 After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep; 7 then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles; 8 and last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also. 9 For I am the least of the apostles, and not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.*

/If you are not a believer, do not persist in your unbelief. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved! \

God did raise Jesus from the dead. Then He took His Son back to heaven, where, even today, Jesus is seated at His Father's Right Hand.

/There is no more death, no more pain, no more sorrow, no more tears, for Him.\

Every person who believes in Christ has a great destiny of his or her own also.

/The Scriptures say that we receive eternal life when we believe in Christ.\

In God's eyes, we died with Christ. We were buried with Him. And we have been raised with Him (Rom 6). God has seated us with Himself in Christ in the heavenlies.

And in the ages to come, He will show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. (Eph 2:4-7)

/One day soon, Jesus will come to bring us home to His Father's house.\ We will see Jesus as He is. And we will be like Him. /We will have a glorified body just like His.\

*Phil 3:20-21 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; 21 who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.*

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/And then there will be no more death, or sorrow, or pain, or tears for us either.\

*Rev 21:4*

*4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.KJV*

/Christ our Lord **is** risen today – and we believers are raised with Him! Alleluia! \