

No resurrection without first a death

The inspiration for this title comes from John 12:23

"Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

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Jesus applied this first to His own death and resurrection. But then He applied it to His disciples, in the sense of laying down one's life in service to the Lord.

This morning's message is based on another passage , in the book of Philippians:

Phil 3:10-11

that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; 11 in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

It's always bothered me that this passage appears to put the resurrection of Christ before His death. But appearances can be deceiving.

/We need to pay close attention to the verbs. The action words.\

With that in mind, let's do a second read of our passage in Philippians 3:10-11.

Phil 3:10-11

*that I **may know** Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, **being conformed** to His death; 11 in order that I **may attain** to the resurrection from the dead.*

/It turns out that there are three verbs here:

1. Know
2. Being conformed
3. Attain\

So we can organize our passage according to these verbs.

/First, That I may come to know -three things:

- Him
- The power of His resurrection
- The fellowship of His sufferings\

This is not simply an intellectual thing, like knowing your times tables.

It's more like that tune in the musical The King and I. "Getting to know you"

Getting to know you, getting to know all about you.

Suddenly I'm bright and breezy
Because of all the beautiful and new
Things I'm learning about you
Day by day.

That I many come to know Him. There are so many things about Jesus that we need to come to know. All we have to do is go to our Bibles and believe what is written.

Things like

/His deity:\

Col 1:15-17

15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. 16 For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities — all things have been created through Him and for Him. 17 He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

Things like

/the hope of His calling, and the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints\

Eph 1:17-18

17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. 18 I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

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/That I may come to know:

- Him
- The power of His resurrection
- The fellowship of His sufferings\

/That I may come to know the power of His resurrection. God demonstrated unimaginable power when He resurrected Jesus from death.\

So there is first of all the power of the event itself.

But then there is the power that His resurrection unleashed.

/The Resurrection declares that Jesus Christ is God.\

Rom 1:4

4 who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord,

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/Believers are born again to a living hope by the Resurrection of Christ.\

1 Peter 1:3

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

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/The Resurrection enables all believers to one day share in Christ's physical resurrection.\

1 Cor 15:20-22

20 But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. 21 For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.

/His resurrection power is at work now in the lives of believers here on earth.\

Ephesians 1:19-20

and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might 20 which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,

/That I may come to know:

- Him
- The power of His resurrection
- The fellowship of His sufferings\

That I may come to know the fellowship of His sufferings.

/When we suffer in a way that shares in His sufferings, we get closer to Him, because that's when we really need Him the most.\

Paul experienced this many times.

2 Cor 1:5-10

5 For just as the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ. 6 But if we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; or if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which is effective in the patient enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer; 7 and our hope for you is firmly grounded, knowing that as you are sharers of our sufferings, so also you are sharers of our comfort.

8 For we do not want you to be unaware, brethren, of our affliction which came to us in Asia, that we were burdened excessively, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life; 9 indeed, we had the sentence of death within ourselves so that we would not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead; 10 who delivered us from so great a peril of death, and will deliver us,

These are the things we can come to know.

Phil 3:10-11

that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; 11 in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

Then we come to the other two verbs, and these statements are in the expected order. /being conformed to His death\ then /Attain to the resurrection\

Here, the death comes first, as a necessary prelude to the resurrection.

/But this is not physical death, nor is it physical resurrection.\

You see, this is something that Paul wanted to attain (come into) while he still lived on earth, in his mortal body.

Being conformed to His death is passive on our part. It is something that is done to us by God. /And here's the exciting part: if you are a believer in Christ, you have already been conformed to His death!\

Gal 2:20

"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me. "

/And there is a practical, experiential side also to being conformed to His death. \

2 Cor 4:10-12

10 always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. 11 For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. 12 So death works in us, but life in you.

/Being sharers of His death, we can come into His resurrection. In this life.\ Just as the death we share with Him is not physical, I daresay neither is this resurrection.

Rom 6:3-4

3 Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

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There is no resurrection without a death, but our death has already happened, and now we can walk in this new life. /We can walk away from the dead things (like the flesh and the world) and come into the life of the resurrection. \ We can do this now, in time.

For while the mind of the flesh is death, the mind of the Spirit is life and peace.

Rom 8:5-6

5 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

6 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.
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Rom 8:11

But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

/We can reap eternal life while we are still here on earth.\

And this life is not ethereal or holier than thou. It's practical. We can walk in it here in time.

Gal 6:8-10

8 For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. 9 Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. 10 So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

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Simply put away the old. That's passing away. Then put on the new. You are a new creation. The new man was created in righteousness. And now, day by day, the new man is being renewed in knowledge after the One who created him.