



GOOD NEWS

for the unsaved WORLD!

(#180)

Responding to the FACTS related to the resurrection concept.

Well, we've learned about JESUS' RESURRECTION and the RESURRECTION OF PEOPLE.

SO WHAT?

IS THIS JUST SO WE CAN WIN IN A "BIBLE TRIVIA" GAME?

NO WAY!

SCRIPTURE TELLS US THESE FACTS SO THAT WE CAN RESPOND TO THEM.

AND IT TELLS US HOW TO RESPOND TO THEM.

The RESURRECTION demands a RESPONSE!

>> This is true of all aspects of the resurrection concept. <<

When Scripture tells us something, it demands:

our **ACCEPTANCE**, and (when applicable) our **OBEDIENCE**.

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The one is to influence our **THINKING**... the other is to influence our **CONDUCT**.

⇒ **SPIRITUAL RESURRECTION:** Some passages focus on our coming to spiritual life – being raised from *spiritual* death. (There may also be a reference to *Jesus'* death and resurrection.)

⇒ **PHYSICAL RESURRECTION:** Some passages focus on our future resurrection – being raised from *physical* death. (There may also be a reference to *Jesus'* death and resurrection.)

Facts about the resurrection to **SPIRITUAL** life:

⇒ **THE "SALVATION CALL."**

"Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."
Ephesians 5:14 (NIV)

- This symbolic description of salvation, shows the interaction of sovereignty and responsibility. We choose to "wake up." After we are awake, we look back and realize that God was involved in our waking.

FACT When people "wake up" to the call of salvation ... the "light" of Christ "shines" on them. [Ephesians 5:14]
There is hope for the unsaved, because when God calls, he also empowers. It's a "waking up" from death to life!

⇒ **BELIEVING AND CONFESSING (openly declaring)** who Jesus is.

If you **openly declare** that Jesus is Lord and **believe in your heart** that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by **believing in your heart** that you are made right with God, and it is by **openly declaring** your faith that you are saved.
Romans 10:9-10 (NLT)

[The term "openly declare" can also be translated as "confess" (a concept we looked at in the past). But today, some groups use the concept of "confession" in reference to something else; and "openly declare" more accurately conveys the New Testament concept.]

FACT People who openly declare who Jesus is AND believe the facts about the resurrection ... **will be saved.** [Romans 10:9-10]
This is verified even in Old Testament prophecy. See vs. 11-13, which quote Isaiah 28:16 and Joel 2:32.

⇒ **THE "MEANS" OF SALVATION** – what causes it.

- The specific ritual mentioned in the following passage is circumcision – a *physical* act that was intended to symbolize a needed *spiritual* reality.
- Christ accomplished the reality that the physical act could only symbolize. And what he did applies to us only if we are united *with* Christ.

When you came to Christ, you were "circumcised," but not by a physical procedure. Christ performed a **spiritual circumcision**—the cutting away of your sinful nature. For you were buried with Christ when you were baptized. And with him you were **raised to new life** because you trusted the mighty power of God, who raised Christ from the dead. You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then God made you **alive with Christ** ...
Colossians 2:11–13a (NLT)

FACT

When people are saved, Christ "cuts away" their sinful nature ("flesh"). [Colossians 2:11-13a]

Such people have been buried with Christ, and raised to new life, because they trusted God's power. They were spiritually *dead*, but are now spiritually *alive* with Christ.

More from the context: We are not to pursue religious activities, rules, and "knowledge" (so-called), in an attempt to do what Christ has already done! (ALSO: Religious activities can only illustrate or symbolize what Christ did.)

When we ignore:	This happens:
The nature of salvation.	We may forget that God's sovereignty and human responsibility are <i>both</i> involved. We start thinking that people can be saved <i>without</i> meeting the described conditions. We tend to rely on something other than Christ. We forget how spiritually <i>dead</i> we really were.

7

The LIFE-CHANGING impact of Christ's resurrection on those who are saved:

⇒ **[NOW] A FRUITFUL LIFE:** We were saved for a purpose – to bear "fruit" for God.

So, my brothers and sisters, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you could be joined to another, to the one who was raised from the dead, **to bear fruit** to God.
Romans 7:4 (NET)

- This specifically refers to living in the new way of the Spirit (v. 6). Any other way results in the fruit of death (v. 5).

FACT

God saves people so that they will bear fruit to God (instead of fruit for death). [Romans 7:4-5]

This happens because we died to the law (as a method of trying to become saved) and have been joined to Christ.

8

⇒ **[FUTURE] A LIVING HOPE:** Jesus' resurrection enables us to have a *living hope* for the future.

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into **a living hope** through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ...
1 Peter 1:3 (NIV)

- Verse 4 tells us that we also have an inheritance to look forward to.

FACT

Saved people have a living hope. [1 Peter 1:3]

This hope is not a "feeling" but a fact. It is an expression of God's mercy; made possible through Jesus Christ's resurrection from the dead.

[The world has no hope – nothing good to look forward to. Any "hope" they may *claim* to have is a delusion and a pretension. It is no better than clinging to a spider's web – Job 8:14-15.]

9

⇒ **[NOW AND IN THE FUTURE] A CHRIST-CENTERED LIFE:** "Those who live" will live for *Christ* (not for themselves). If we have shared in Christ's death, his love *compels* us to live for him.

For the love of Christ **compels us**, since we have reached this conclusion, that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all so that **those who live** should **no longer live for themselves**, but for the one who died for them and was raised.
2 Corinthians 5:14-15 (CSB)

- In this context**, the "all" statements probably refer to "all who are following Jesus." But there are some who interpret it as referring to "all people in the human race."
- Either way, the **end result** doesn't change – because the **change** mentioned here takes effect *only* in "those who *live*" – i.e., the people who are no longer **dead** in their sins, and have responded to his "compelling love."

10

FACT

Saved people live for Christ (and not for self). [2 Corinthians 5:14-15]

This is because they are now alive; and Christ's love *compels* them to do what spiritually alive people do.

[Being under the New Covenant (Hebrews 10:16), this "compulsion" is *internal* to us: It's not an external force trying to pressure us into compliance. *We want to do it.*]

When we ignore:	This happens:
The changes that occur when salvation is present.	We may claim the <i>future</i> effects of salvation, but downplay or ignore the <i>present</i> effects of salvation: that God <i>changes</i> people <i>now</i> , and that these changes accomplish something! We may talk about Christ's love, but forget that it is a <i>heart-changing</i> love that gives us a new set of values.

11

LIVING as a spiritually *resurrected* person:

⇒ **BEING AWAKE/ALERT/WATCHFUL.**

- We do not know when Jesus will return. This is why we are to be ready *continually*.

"Look, I come like a thief! **Blessed** is the one who **stays awake and remains clothed**, so as not to go naked and be shamefully exposed."
Revelation 16:15 (NIV)

FACT

People who remain awake (also translated as *alert* or *watching*) ... are blessed by God. [Revelation 16:15]

Most verses related to this concept are in **COMMAND** form, and will be examined at another time.

(Some people have views about prophecy that seem to diminish their sense of urgency. Yet this "being awake" concept is found in *many* contexts – 1 Peter 5:8 is an example – and is not to be restricted by a person's views about the "end times.")

12

⇒ **THE PURSUIT OF A RIGHTEOUS AND PURE LIFE.**

- There are *commands* in Scripture, that tell us to do these things. But here they are given as *statements of fact*.

If you **know** that he is righteous, you **know** that **everyone who does what is right** has been born of him.

See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does **not know** us is that it did **not know** him.

Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has **not yet been made known**. But we **know** that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

All who have this hope in him **purify themselves**, just as he is pure.

1 John 2:29-3:3 (NIV)

- We do these things because of what we *know* about them. Such knowledge has an effect on our conduct.
- The world lacks this knowledge.

13

FACT Saved people **pursue righteousness and moral purity**. [1 John 2:29-3:3]

This is because they know *he* is righteous, and that it's *righteous* people who are "born of God." Also, since God's children are going to be like Christ in the *future*, they want to start being like him *now*.

When we ignore:	This happens:
The fact that saved people live for Christ and pursue moral purity.	We live powerless lives, perhaps believing these verses to be "ideal," but not "real." We ignore them, because they don't describe us, and we <i>don't like that!</i>

When we ignore:	This happens:
The necessary prerequisites for receiving the blessings.	We begin to think that we are <i>entitled</i> to blessings, even if we <i>don't do those things</i> .

14

OPPOSITION by the spiritually *dead* world:

⇒ **POTENTIAL PERSECUTION.**

- This can occur when we proclaim truth that people don't want to hear. In these two verses, it involves the physical resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the resulting consequences (such as the future judgment of the world).

"Brothers, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee. It is because of my hope in the resurrection of the dead that I am **on trial**."

Acts 23:6b (BSB)

"It is concerning the resurrection of the dead that I am **on trial** before you today."

Acts 24:21b (BSB)

- Scripture mentions the persecution issue quite often.

15

⇒ **TRIALS ACCOMPLISHING GOOD.**

- It's not just the "presence" of persecution that Scripture mentions... but also the "response" to persecution. Here is one example of responding to it.

PAUL, DESCRIBING HIS RESPONSE TO PERSECUTION AND TRIALS:

We think you ought to know, dear brothers and sisters, about the **trouble** we went through in the province of Asia. We were **crushed and overwhelmed** beyond our ability to endure, and we thought we would never live through it. In fact, we **expected to die**.

But as a result, we stopped relying on ourselves and **learned to rely only on God**, who raises the dead. And he did rescue us from mortal danger, and he will rescue us again.

2 Corinthians 1:8-10a (NLT)

- Verse 11 points to the role of others, who prayed for their deliverance.

16

FACT **The devil may persecute us.** [Acts 23:6b; 24:21b]

This is because we have a hope based on the resurrection. (He uses his followers to accomplish this.)

But God may use persecution to accomplish good in us. [2 Corinthians 1:8-10b, connected to Romans 8:28]

God may use our *inability* to endure it to teach us to rely on *him* instead of on ourselves.

(The *fact* found in Romans 8:28 is illustrated here. God uses *all* things to accomplish good in the lives of those who love him.)

And we know that God works all things together for the good of those who love Him, who are called according to His purpose.

Romans 8:28 (BSB)

When we ignore:	This happens:
The fact about potential persecution.	We act surprised (and perhaps indignant) if persecution occurs. We fail to see how God can use it to accomplish good, etc.

17

PAUL'S GOAL – The EXAMPLE for us to follow.

★ Paul helps us to understand the connection between *perfection and imperfection*. ★

⇒ **NO CONFIDENCE IN HUMAN ACHIEVEMENT ... BUT ONLY IN THE RESURRECTED CHRIST** (in our pursuit of righteousness).

I once thought these things were valuable, but now I consider them worthless because of what Christ has done. Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with **the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord**.

For his sake I have **discarded everything else**, counting it all as garbage, so that I could **gain Christ** and become one with him. I no longer count on my own righteousness through obeying the law; rather, I become righteous through faith in Christ. For God's way of making us right with himself depends on faith.

Philippians 3:7-9 (NLT)

18

⇒ **THE GOAL: OUR RESURRECTION ... BY THE SAME POWER THAT CAUSED CHRIST'S RESURRECTION!**

I want to **know Christ** and experience the mighty power that raised him from the dead. I want to **suffer with him**, sharing in his death, so that one way or another I will **experience the resurrection** from the dead!
 Philippians 3:10-11 (NLT)

⇒ **NOT THERE YET... BUT IN PURSUIT OF THE GOAL!** Here is how we do it:

I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection. But I **press on** to possess that perfection for which Christ Jesus first possessed me.

No, dear brothers and sisters, I **have not achieved it**, but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I **press on** to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.
 Philippians 3:12-14 (NLT)

19

The FACTS of Paul's life, in Philippians 3, leave us with an example to follow. (This involves values, priorities and conduct.)

What he relies on for righteousness: only the resurrected Christ.
 [Philippians 3:7-9]
 In the pursuit of righteousness, he places no confidence in human achievement (not even the *best* of human achievement – see vs. 3-6).

His lifelong goal/desire: to attain the resurrection. [Philippians 3:10-11]
 This would be accomplished by the *same* power that caused Christ's resurrection! Salvation, sanctification and glorification are all expressed in this passage.

His daily practice: to pursue the goal! [Philippians 3:12-14]
 Just like us, he had not reached perfection. *But he pursued it*, forgetting past failures and simply pressing on toward the final goal – the goal that God has called us to!

20

★ Based on what Paul later says, in chapter 4, these **FACTS** in Philippians 3 also imply **COMMANDS!** ★

PAUL – OUR GOD-GIVEN ROLE MODEL!

PAY ATTENTION TO THE FACTS! Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—**think about such things.**

AND FOLLOW MY EXAMPLE! Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—**put it into practice.**

(IF THIS IS WHAT YOU WANT!) And the God of peace will be with you.
 Philippians 4:8-9 (NIV)

21

When we ignore:	This happens:
The connection between Paul's description of his values and choices... and how we are to live.	⇒ We may praise Paul as a "good example"... yet not believe that it really applies to us.

HERE IS AN EVEN BETTER EXAMPLE TO FOLLOW!

- If we look at the *previous* chapter in Philippians, we learn about the example that PAUL followed. Jesus Christ is the role model for *all of us!* [Philippians 2:5-11]

You should have the same attitude toward one another that Christ Jesus had, ...
 Philippians 2:5 (NET)

22

So what do these FACTS tell us?

FACTS IN SCRIPTURE:
 They are to be **ACCEPTED**, and are to influence our **THINKING**.
 (What we think will influence what we do.)

COMMANDS IN SCRIPTURE:
 They are to be **OBEYED**, and are to influence our **CONDUCT**.

The CONTEXT is to influence our understanding of these things.

- Some **FACTS** don't have *direct* application to us, but form the overall context that influences how we think. Some facts may *imply* commands.
- Some **COMMANDS** do not apply to us, and they become part of the "FACT database" that influences how we think.

23

What if we don't let these FACTS influence our thinking?

★ It's easy to "cancel" a passage we don't like... but it's not wise. ★

The best option is to carefully think about these verses, and then to look for similar concepts found elsewhere in Scripture.

We should also look for "complementary opposites" that express the "other half" of the truth.

There are many other passages that have an emphasis that is similar to what we see in these verses. They can be easily found by anyone who wants to look for them. We have included only those that *also* have a resurrection focus.

24

Our Mission:

We have to decide how we are going to react to the **FACTS** of Scripture!

> Especially if we don't like some of those facts. <

✓ The issue isn't "Do we like them," but "Are they truthful."

If we are uncertain about what they say, we can look for other passages that have a similar focus.

⇨ IF WE **IGNORE THE FACTS**, we will never change, and our "saved" lives will be a lie.

⇨ IF WE **ACCEPT AND PAY ATTENTION TO THE FACTS**, we can admit that they often don't describe us... and "becoming like Jesus" will become a lifelong pursuit.

25

Credits

SCRIPTURE

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26