



Easter Sunday

Acts 10:34-43 1 Corinthians 15:12-26

Matt 28:1-10

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In the first century AD, Greek writers made a list of the “**7 Wonders of the Ancient World**”. These were impressive sights and landmarks that caused awe and wonder in people¹. Of those “7 Wonders”, only the Great Pyramid of Giza remains today, though greatly damaged over the centuries. Of the other six, one was plundered and burned to the ground, and the remaining 5 were all **destroyed** -- by earthquakes.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seven_Wonders_of_the_Ancient_World

Ironically, it was an **earthquake** that **announced** the **GREATEST “wonder of the world”**: the *Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead!*

After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. Matthew 28:1-2

The earth announced THE RESURRECTION through the earthquake;
the heavens announced THE RESURRECTION through the angel’s words:
“He is not here; He has risen!”

On Easter Sunday, **ALL CREATION** proclaimed that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has risen from the dead! The **GREATEST “wonder of the world”** of **ALL CREATION** is the *Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead!*

¹ These ancient wonders are Colossus of Rhodes, Great Pyramid of Giza, Hanging Gardens of Babylon, Statue of Zeus at Olympia, Temple of Artemis at Ephesus, Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, and Lighthouse of Alexandria. https://www.albany.edu/~mwolfe/ist538/unit4/Chapter_07_examples/07-07.html#:~:text=These%20ancient%20wonders%20are%20Colossus,and%201%20is%20still%20standing.

The miracle of Easter is that Jesus, who was crucified, died, and was buried, rose from the dead on the Third Day!

This is exactly what Jesus said would happen. Three times in the Gospels, He predicted His death and resurrection. Here is an example:

Jesus took the Twelve aside and told them, "We are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled. He will be handed over to the Gentiles. They will mock Him, insult Him, spit on Him, flog Him and kill Him. On the third day He will rise again." Luke 18:31-33

His death and resurrection is the reason why God sent His Son into the world in the first place: to rescue you from sin and death. *Jesus' work on the cross "set you free" from sin and its effects and its punishment.*

Sin tangles you up, and turns your life upside down. It fills you with guilt and regret. Sin alienates you from God the Father and it closes Heaven to you. It's so easy for us to get tangled up in serious sins like envy and pride, lust and anger, greed and worldliness. Sin wreaks havoc in your life, it hurts your relationships with other people, and it destroys your soul. *We all know that these things are true.* The Bible even goes so far as to say that you are "**DEAD IN SIN**". You have no way out; there is **not one thing** that you can do to help yourself. You are dead in sin! **You need help.** We all need someone to save us.

That is exactly why God the Father sent Jesus into the world. Jesus is the One who saves you. He is the Son of God, born of Mary, Who **sets you free** from sin, guilt and its punishment.

- † **God's Powerful Absolution** sets you free from fear and guilt;
- † **Christ's Death on the cross** sets you free from sin and its punishment;
- † **His Resurrection from the Dead** sets you free from death itself.

Jesus is the Savior that God sent for you -- and His Resurrection from the Dead is God the Father's "stamp of approval". God the Father has accepted Jesus' suffering and death on a cross for you!

In the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, God the Father declares you "**not guilty!**" of your sins; and you are **set free** from sin, guilt and death so that you can live a new life in Christ! **The work is done**; the gift of salvation is freely given to every single person in the world and you are included!

*Today believe the promise that God makes you: that Jesus was crucified and on the Third Day rose from the dead **for you** and your salvation!*

Now – BE CAREFUL! There is a danger today.

The danger is that you hear this promise but **fail to believe** it. The danger is **unbelief**. Unbelief is **pushing God's gift of eternal life away** from yourself. It is **refusing** it; **denying** it, **rejecting** it – even **sneering** at it.

There is an equal danger on the other side as well: you have faith but you have taken the Resurrection for granted and you don't understand its significance. You lose interest in it and you neglect the **GREATEST "wonder of the world!"**

DON'T LET THAT HAPPEN TO YOU!

*Because of God's grace and kindness at work in your life, **you are here today!***

- † You have **heard the Easter Gospel**;
- † you have **heard the Easter Scriptures**,
- † you have **heard the Easter songs**;
- † you have **heard God's Promise of salvation** in His Son Jesus

Don't let it go in one ear and out the other.

Easter is the Good news of eternal life in Jesus Christ – **for you**. This is a **personal gift** that God gives to you! God works through these Words that you hear to create faith and give you the gift of salvation. Your sins are forgiven. They have been paid for when Jesus died on the cross. God gives you the gift of eternal life. You are reconciled to God the Father in heaven. *The work of salvation is done, salvation is now a gift that God freely gives to you!* Don't push it away in unbelief – but rather believe it and apply it to yourself!

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ changes everything! The Resurrection defines your life as a Christian; as one who trusts in Jesus.

- † The Resurrection is the **cornerstone of the Christian faith**.
- † The Resurrection is the **source of your new life in Christ** that you live each day
- † The Resurrection makes **Holy Baptism 'Living Water'** where God washes away sins and gives eternal life!
- † The Resurrection is the **assurance that your sins have been paid for** and removed from you
- † The Resurrection means that you have **peace with God** and peace in your heart, mind and soul
- † The Resurrection means that you have been **set free from the power of sin, temptation, and the devil**
- † The Resurrection puts **Christ in your life and makes your body a temple of the Holy Spirit**
- † The Resurrection gives you **hope, encouragement and strength** in difficult times
- † The Resurrection guarantees that your **very own body will rise from the dead** on the Last Day, your body will be glorified, and you will live forever in the Kingdom of Heaven.
- † The Resurrection of Jesus Christ is the **rock solid basis** of all the promises God makes to you --- Jesus is God and His words are trustworthy and true!

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead changes everything! *Today, believe in the Risen Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved!*

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ is the greatest “wonder” of the world – **of all creation!** Amen!

Almighty God and Father,
through Your only begotten Son Jesus Christ
You have overcome death and opened the gate of
everlasting life to us.
Grant that we, who celebrate with joy the day of our
Lord's resurrection,
may be raised from the death of sin by Your life -giving
Spirit;
through Jesus Christ, our Lord,
who lives and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen

Acts 10:34-43

34 Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism **35** but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right. **36** You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, telling the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. **37** You know what has happened throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached-- **38** how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him. **39** "We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a tree, **40** but God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen. **41** He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen--by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. **42** He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead. **43** All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

1 Corinthians 15:12-26

12 But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? **13** If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. **14** And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. **15** More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. **16** For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. **17** And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. **18** Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. **19** If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men. **20** But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. **21** For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. **22** For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. **23** But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. **24** Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. **25** For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. **26** The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

Matthew 28:1-10

Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. **2** And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. **3** His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. **4** And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. **5** But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. **6** He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he[a] lay. **7** Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you.” **8** So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. **9** And behold, Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. **10** Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me.”