

DEVOTIONAL AID FOR 24 AUGUST 2020 – 30 AUGUST 2020



**UPPER
HUNTER**
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Dear church family,

The resurrection of Jesus is the single greatest event in history. Without it, Christianity is nothing but a lie, and none of us should be Christians. The Apostle Paul writes in 1 Cor 15:14-15:

“And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. **We are even found to be misrepresenting God**, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised.”

But Christ has been raised back to life! But many Christians are mystified by the significance of Jesus's resurrection. Some might think of how Christianity is noteworthy since the resurrection of Jesus a unique event in history. Some might think of how people should pay attention to Jesus since He came back from the dead as He predicted. Others might think of the resurrection of Jesus as the proof that God can be trusted, as God has done what He promised in the Old Testament. All these are true and good things to remember. But there are many other points of significance that we ought to know. Here, let me quote Kevin DeYoung again here for just one of those great blessings we can be confident of because of Jesus's resurrection.

Why is the resurrection, and not simply the cross alone, necessary for the forgiveness of sin? Because without the resurrection nothing has been conquered—not sin, not death, not the Devil. Jesus' resurrection from the dead testifies not only that Jesus is the Son of God (Rom 1:4) but that the offering of life was an acceptable sacrifice to God. If Jesus had not been raised, it would be an indication to us that the work of salvation had not yet been accomplished.¹

There are other benefits too, as the Heidelberg Q45 show to us. I hope this week's devotional aid helps you to grow in your faith as you meditate on the significance of Jesus's resurrection for us.

Yours in Christ,

Timothy Lee

<https://www.upperhunterpc.com>

¹ Kevin DeYoung, *The Good News We Almost Forgot*, p92.

THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM²

Lord's Day 17

Q45) How does Christ's resurrection benefit us?

- A) First, by His resurrection He has overcome death, so that He might make us share in the righteousness He won for us by His death.
Second, by His power we too are already now resurrected to a new life.
Third, Christ's resurrection is a guarantee of our glorious resurrection.

ROMANS 4:25

[Jesus our Lord] was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

Christians rightly believe that Jesus died for our sins, and therefore, we who believe in Jesus are free from the judgment of God. However, we can sometimes forget or minimise the significance of Jesus's resurrection. While the bible clearly teaches us that Jesus's death paid for our sins, it is also true that without His resurrection, we would not be saved. In fact, Romans 4:25 says that Jesus was raised (resurrected) for our justification. Justification is God's declaration that we are righteous. And this verse is telling us that God would not have declared us righteous unless Jesus was raised to life (after His substitutionary death for us, sinners). This often neglected truth is critical, because without being declared righteous by God, we cannot finally have peace with God or eternal life. It is Jesus's resurrection that secured our right standing before God, being declared righteous by God. Praise God for His power to raise Jesus to life and His grace to grant us this wonderful blessing of being declared righteous!

ROMANS 8:11

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.

Despite knowing God and trusting Jesus for our salvation, life in this age is challenging and can be discouraging time to time. Sometimes, it's our very selves that disappoint us the most. We continuously falter and struggle with the same sins. Sometimes it doesn't have to be our moral failures, but just our physical bodies that don't seem to function well, and that can be hard too. But the glorious promise God has given us in the bible is that this will not be the case forever. The Holy Spirit raised Jesus from the dead. And that same Spirit dwells in us who believe in Christ, and will give us the perfect resurrection body one day. This truth should give us confidence as we wait for that day, even as we fumble along the way. We will be perfect one day, as Jesus is today.

² The text of the Catechism is usually from <https://threeforms.org/heidelberg-catechism/>, but time to time, for the sake of clarity, I have also adopted the translation used in *The Good News We Almost Forgot* by Kevin DeYoung.