

THE SUPERNATURAL POWER OF THE RESURRECTION

READING: Philippians 3:7-10

THESIS: To illustrate the initial and extended power of Christ's resurrection.

INTRO: The pyramids of Egypt are famous because they contained the mummified bodies of ancient Egyptian rulers. Westminster Abbey in London is renowned because in it rests the bodies of many English notables. Arlington Cemetery in Washington is revered because it is the final resting place of many American heroes. But the tomb of Jesus is empty! There is no epitaph on Jesus' tomb that begins with the words "*Here lies ...*" There are no memorials inscribed in gold or etched in stone. Rather, Jesus' epitaph is spoken from the mouths of angels: "*He is not here! He has Risen!*" (Lk. 24:4).

I. THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS IS A POWERFUL FORCE

- a. One day the great composer, Johann Sebastian Bach visited his favorite tavern and heard a secular drinking song with a title that translates into English as, "*One Foot In The Grave.*" After hearing the song, Bach went home, had his dinner, and helped Mrs. Bach put their eighteen children to bed. Then he left and went over to his Church. By himself, in the dark, with the organ, he worked for hours. And during that working session, he transformed the secular drinking song, "*One Foot In The Grave,*" into a "*Cantata in Praise of the Risen Lord*" -- a cantata so beautiful and so full of power and life that it has been sung for centuries. And it continues to be sung in Churches all over the world
- b. The resurrection of Jesus is like that, enabling us to have lives so changed we could call it "Awesome Power!"
- c. A truly dead man came from a grave truly alive.
 - i. Truly dead= no breath, no heartbeat. Behind a stone set in place, secured by the Emperor's seal. Up to 16 armed guards on site.
 - ii. He appeared to so many people in his new alive state- I Corinthians 15
- d. Therefore God says, "*[Jesus] was declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead.*" Rom. 1:4
- e. And can you picture the onlookers who were there earlier when Jesus himself raised people from the dead? Like:
 - i. The Widow of Nain's son- Lk 7:11-17
 - ii. Jairus' daughter Matt. 9:18-26
 - iii. His friend Lazarus John 11:1-44

II. THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS PREFIGURES OUR PRESENT LIFE

- a. Hear the Bible on this: And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.
- b. Even if you just read the underlined part, which I have done for emphasis, you will see that a resurrection has already taken place. A spiritual act of God. Christians are living a resurrected life.
- c. Therefore, we should act like we love it right here is the "*high places with Jesus.*" Let me illustrate this: The Mohawk Indians are native to New York State. They built most

of the skyscrapers in NYC They are famed for their catlike ability to scamper across girders. They are totally indifferent to heights. It seems to be a genetic trait. A writer spoke of it back in 1714. In 1886 they built a bridge that spans the Saint Lawrence River. They were the riveters on the Empire State Building and Rockefeller Center. Some people are uncomfortable in high places, but the Mohawk Indians seem right at home. Spiritual heights are uncomfortable for some. They want to live in the lowlands of life, but Christ keeps calling us to higher ground.

III. **BUT WE STILL WAIT FOR OUR FINAL BODILY RESURRECTION**

- a. That's right, there is more good stuff to come. We find the words of Jesus in John 5:28,29 saying, *"Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, ²⁹ and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment."*
- b. Therefore, we wait in hope. Titus 2:11-14 depicts Christians living between two comings, the first and second at which time Jesus will appear and the dead will be raised. So, we live in hope of the blessed resurrection of our bodies.

CONCLUSION:

In 1992, a Los Angeles County parking control officer came upon a brown Cadillac El Dorado illegally parked next to the curb on street-sweeping day. The officer dutifully wrote out a ticket. Ignoring the man seated at the driver's wheel, the officer reached inside the open car window and placed the \$30 citation on the dashboard. The driver of the car made no excuses. No argument ensued--and with good reason. The driver of the car had been shot in the head ten to twelve hours before but was sitting up, stiff as a board, slumped slightly forward, with blood on his face. He was dead. The officer, preoccupied with ticket writing, was unaware of anything out of the ordinary. He got back in his car and drove away. Many people around us are *"dead in transgressions and sins."* What should catch our attention most is their need, not their offenses. They don't need a citation; they need a Savior.

Is this you? Does it describe someone you might be able to turn to reading God's Word?