

The Resurrection Proved

by H.J. Vine

Christ's resurrection is the justification of His claims and the pledge of our own resurrection, securing our salvation and future glory.

Scripture: Isaiah 50:8, Romans 8:34, Romans 10:9, 1 Corinthians 15:5, Philippians 3:21

Topics: "Christ's Resurrection", "Justification"

Description

H.J. Vine preaches on the undeniable resurrection of Christ, emphasizing the multitude of witnesses who saw Him after His resurrection, including Cephas, the twelve apostles, over 500 brethren, James, and all the apostles, leaving no room for doubt. The resurrection of Christ serves as His justification, overturning the wrongful judgment and treatment He received from men, as God raised Him to declare Him the Just One and the Son of God. This resurrection also secures the believers' justification, ensuring no condemnation for those who are in Christ.

Transcript

Evidently the apostle had been very diligent in his enquiries as to the resurrection of Christ as a Man from among the dead. It was a serious matter; and he writes to the Corinthians, "If Christ be not raised your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins"; but he marshals his witnesses to show that without a shadow of doubt He was raised. Any solicitor would be glad to have a case with such abundant witness. Here are the witnesses who saw Christ as a Man in resurrection given in 1 Corinthians 15:

1. "He was seen of Cephas."
2. "Then of the twelve."
3. "After that, of above 500 brethren."
4. "After that, He was seen of James."
5. "Then of all the apostles."

Moreover Paul adds, "He was seen of me also." This would be at his conversion, when he was persecuting the assembly of God. Examine those witnesses and give up all questioning! Others could have been called, but all these have some exceptional and distinctive features. Just think of 500 witnesses, "at one time" too--and most of them living when the apostle wrote his document! Think of

James, born of the same mother, who questioned his wonderful claims when on earth (John 7:2-5)! There was no question left after Christ's resurrection! How earnestly he served the Lord after that we see in Acts and elsewhere. How reverently He owned His Lordship we find in his epistle (James 1:1), where he speaks of himself as "a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ." There is no room for questioning the resurrection! Nothing but wilful perversity or the seductions of fallen spirits would lead any intelligent person to do so. We may well take up the exultant language of the apostle after he had brought forward his irrefutable witnesses, "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the Firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by MAN came also the resurrection of the dead" (1 Cor. 15:20-21).

Moreover, if Christ be not raised, where is His justification? Men treated Him as one unfit for decent society, unfit even to live in this world. They treated Him with every indignity. Is He left without any justification whatever? No; certainly not! Man crucified Him, but God raised Him. His resurrection is His justification, for by it God has declared that man's treatment and judgment of Him was wrong. In Isaiah 50 the Spirit of Christ speaks in the prophet. He is smitten; the hair is plucked from His cheeks; shame is heaped upon Him; they spit in His face. Then He says, "He is near that justifieth Me" (v. 8)! So He was, and God raised Him from among the dead. He is declared to be the Just One, the Holy One, yea, the Son of God by resurrection. Men treated Him as a malefactor, but He was raised "by the glory of the Father."

If His resurrection be the pledge of ours, as we have seen so His justification has secured ours also. Indeed the words of Isaiah 50 are used in Romans 8:34 to show there is no condemnation for true believers. Christ was the elect One of God, and those who are His are elect also; and, it is asked, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God." Yes, He is in the seat of power and glory, and a day of great rejoicing is coming for all who believe; a day of honour for the One who was so dishonoured--a day of great gladness to the heart of God--the whole universe shall be changed in perfect order in relation to the One whom God has highly exalted; every family of the blessed in the heavens shall be placed in relation to Him as Head and Centre of all; every family upon the earth also; and all those also who inhabit the infernal regions "prepared," not for men, but for the devil and his angels (though the unsaved go there), must own Him too; for God has decreed, "that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of heavenly, earthly and infernal beings, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." That will be a great day. It is a great day, too, when a soul confesses Him as Lord now; for it is written, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God has raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. 10:9).

The "saved" are those who will leave earth for heaven when He comes again, like Israel marching out of Egypt, only more swiftly--"in the twinkling of an eye." The world will be left behind. "The shout" of the Lord--as that of a commander (for the terms used are military)--will call us away. "The archangel's voice" will be uttered, "the trump of God" will be sounded, and "the redeemed" will be gone. The dead in Christ raised first, and the living changed, with triumph we shall rise to realms above! We are told that the power, by which the Saviour will transform our bodies like to His own body of glory is the power which He has to subdue all things in the universe to Himself (Phil. 3:21). Our hearts are longing for that time. We look forward to that supreme moment when we shall "see His face"! Oh, glorious day! Ah! but He shall see the result of His soul's travail and suffering on Calvary's cross, and He shall be satisfied. Notwithstanding all that He has gone through, and all the attacks made upon Himself and His finished work, He will never have a regret. He shall be satisfied. We shall be satisfied, too, and praise and worship Him for ever. Meanwhile may we be waiting, watching, and working for Him, serving the Lord with gladness.

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