

EASTER SUNDAY 2022

“The Christ, the Cross and the Crown”

(John 12:31-32; I John 3:8; Hebrews 2:14-15; Colossians 2:15; Acts 2:32-36)

Easter is about ...

- The Resurrection as the Evidence that Christ is Lord and that Death has been Defeated Along with Sin and the Enemy. And ...
- The Resurrection is the Inauguration of the New Creation and the Empowerment of Those in Christ to Serve the Earth and Rescue All Creation.

Our belief system about the crucifixion and the resurrection has to be enlarged. So, let's begin by looking at:

❖ **The Christ: His Victory as Our Savior**

According to the New Testament, the central things that Jesus did was to ...

- Drive Out the god of this World (John 12:31-32)

“Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out. ³² And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” (John 12:31-32)

- Destroy the Works of the devil (I John 3:8)

"Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil." (1 John 3:8)

▸ What are the "works" of the devil?

- *Morally*, he entices us to sin.
- *Physically*, he inflicts disease and seeks to destroy those who bear the image of God.
- *Intellectually*, he seduces us into error and aims to rob us of hope. And ...
- *Spiritually*, he blinds the minds of unbelievers from the gospel. So,

▸ How did Jesus "destroy" the works of the devil?

- First, A Virtuous Life and Ministry
- Second, A Vicarious Death

"Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery" (Hebrews 2:14-15)

- Third, A Victorious Resurrection

- Disarmed the Rulers and Authorities through the Crucifixion and Resurrection

Jesus came and ...

"He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame by triumphing over them in Him." (Colossians 2:15)

After the Holy Spirit was poured out on the day of Pentecost, Peter stood up and preached:

"This Jesus God raises up, and of that we all are witnesses. ³³ Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing. ³⁴ For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, "The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at my right hand, ³⁵ until I make your enemies your footstool." ³⁶ Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified." (Acts 2:32-36)

❖ **The Cross: The Value of Our Salvation**

The message Paul received when he first encountered Christ was that he was being sent to the Gentiles, to do what?

"... to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me" (Acts 26:17-18)

- Freedom from the Grip of the Enemy

Salvation is most fundamentally about ...

- ▶ Escaping the Snare of the Enemy

"Escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do His will." (II Timothy 2:26)

"Who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father." (Galatians 1:4)

- ▶ Enabled to Share in the Inheritance of the Saints

"Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. ¹³ He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son." (Colossians 1:12-13)

- Freedom in the Glory of the Eternal Kingdom

The New Testament concept of salvation is a holistic concept that addresses Christ's cosmic victory and our participation in it. As James Kallas says,

".... Since the cosmos itself is in bondage, depressed under evil forces, the essential content of the word "salvation" is that the world itself will be rescued, or renewed, or set free. Salvation is a cosmic event affecting the whole of creation. Salvation is not simply the overcoming of my rebellion and the forgiveness of my guilt, but salvation is the liberation of the whole world process of which I am only a small part. Christ has in principle freed the cosmos from its demonic oppression and thus freed all inhabitants of the cosmos who will simply submit to His new loving reign. The cosmos that had been "groaning in labor pains" because it was subjected to "the bondage of decay"

has now been, and is yet being, set free (Rom. 8:19-22). And we who were the originally intended viceroys of the earth (Gen 1:26-28) have also been, and are yet being, released from bondage and reestablished to our rightful position as co-rulers of the earth with Christ (2 Tim 2:12; Rev. 5:10)."

❖ **The Crown: A Vision of the Sovereign and His Kingdom**

The tomb became the womb through which the new creation was born into this world on the third day in the Person of Jesus Christ – the glorified and resurrected Lord.

- Two Modern World Views
 - Modernity
 - Religiosity
- The Biblical Worldview

'The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom, and rejoice with joy and singing; the desert shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water.'

- Reality of the Kingdom

The book of Revelation concludes with heaven coming to earth, not those on earth going to heaven! N.T. Wright is quoted as saying,

“One of the great difficulties in preaching the gospel in our days is that everyone assumes that the name of the game is, ultimately, to ‘go to heaven when you die’, as though that were the last act in the drama. But that’s wrong! Heaven is important, but it’s not the end of the world.”

- ▶ Resurrection of the King – New Beginnings

New Creation began when Jesus of Nazareth rose from the dead on Easter morning.