

"Lower Thirds" Material

Easter 2021

Pastor Ben Cross

Dealing with Uncertainty during the Coronavirus Pandemic:

"Uncertainty is all around us, never more so than today. The current COVID-19 pandemic has heightened uncertainty over the economy, employment, finances, relationships, and of course, physical and mental health. Yet as human beings, we crave security. We want to feel safe and have a sense of control over our lives and well-being. Fear and uncertainty can leave you feeling stressed, anxious, and powerless over the direction of your life. It can drain you emotionally and trap you in a downward spiral of endless "what-ifs" and worst-case scenarios about what tomorrow may bring."

God has set eternity in our hearts (**Ecclesiastes 3:11**) and implanted his divine image in us (**Genesis 1:26-28**).

Because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, every Christian can live with absolute certainty in times of great uncertainty.

- 1. Because Jesus is raised from the dead, we can be certain that he reigns over all creation. This gives us peace.**

Revelation 1:4-5 *Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come...from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth.*

Ephesians 1:20-21 *Christ was raised from the dead and seated at the Father's right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.*

This gives us peace, because we can be absolutely certain that evil is not running around on earth outside Christ's control.

The Lord Jesus is absolutely sovereign over every authority in the universe.

The Lord Jesus is using the evil works of evil men and spirits to bring about ultimate good. The Cross of Christ is the greatest example.

- 2. Because Jesus is raised from the dead, we can be certain our acceptance before God as believers is secure. This gives us rest.**

Romans 4:25 – *Jesus was delivered up (crucified) for sins and raised for our justification.*

How can we be sure Jesus' life and death are sufficient to save us? The Resurrection!

- 3. Because Jesus is raised from the dead, we can be certain that we will be raised from the dead with bodies like his. This gives us hope.**

Philippians 3:20-21 *We eagerly await a Savior from heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.*

Jesus was raised permanently from the dead, never to die physically again, and he entered an entirely new order of physical existence.

Jesus is the first of a new kind of human being God is creating for a new heavens and earth.

- 4. Because Jesus is raised from the dead, we can be certain that the new creation has broken in on us, right now. This gives us power.**

2 Corinthians 5:17 *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ s/he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold the new has come.*

The fullness of who we are as God's children is not yet fully realized on earth.

The fullness of our heavenly standing is not fully applied to our earthly state.

We have within us, as followers of Christ, the capacity to become more personally righteous, to actually become more and more like Jesus.

We are called, by faith, to put off our old self and put on the new self that God created in us (**Ephesians 4:22-23**).

By the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit, we can be transformed from glory to glory into the image of Christ (**2 Corinthians 3:18**).

The glory of who we are as the children of God will be finally and fully revealed when Jesus returns (**Romans 8:17-25**).

When Jesus returns we will be perfected in his likeness (**1 John 3:2**).

God will complete the work he has begun in us (**Philippians 1:6**).

5. Because Jesus is raised from the dead, we can be certain the fulness of God's kingdom is near. This gives us enthusiasm.

Luke 12 – Jesus urges us to “*watch*” and “*be ready*” for his return.

Philippians 3:20 - We eagerly anticipate Jesus' return.

Matthew 6 - Jesus calls us to lay up treasures for ourselves in heaven by serving God's kingdom as our first priority on earth.

Our resurrection is the inevitable outcome of Christ's resurrection. (**John 5:29**).

The resurrection of Jesus secures us with a living hope that will never fade away (**1 Peter 1:3-4**) and an unfailing love that can never be taken away (**Romans 8:38**).

Luis Palau

Christ's story is the defining truth of our own story and all that is real and that ultimately matters in life.