

Resurrected Christ

This is a message for those who believe in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord of your life. I know that there may be some who are not believers. I am glad you are listening. I have also chosen this message for you to hear. I want you to hear what the Bible has to say to those who put their faith in Jesus. My prayer is that in listening, God would grant you the ability to see the truth of Jesus and the infinite and eternal value of what you are missing. May you know the peace and joy of Christ by receiving Him as a gift by God's grace!

Resurrected Power

So my message for believers in Jesus is this, the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and what became of him after his resurrection, for this will show the greatness of God's power toward us now in this life. Perhaps you can remember these words to capture the essence of this message, "[immeasurable greatness of his power!](#)" These words come from verse 19. To help us remember and lock in, let me shorten it to *resurrection power now!*

I know many of you may not feel the power of Jesus' resurrection. It can sound somewhat idealistic or like religious hype or an appeal to people's emotions. I do not blame you for there are times when I do not feel the power of Jesus' resurrection. When I am not feeling His power it is the fault of my mind and heart. Through the grace of God's Word and prayer he brings back my mind and heart to him and his power. This sermon cannot bring you into unity with Christ, only by opening your heart and mind to God and meditating upon His Word and seeking Him in prayer will that happen.

There are reasons why we, my beloved brothers and sisters in Christ, do not feel the gracious, omnipotent power of God that is now at work within us as His children. The most common reason we do not feel *resurrection power now* is what Paul mentions or the opposite of what he mentions in verse 18 of our Ephesians chapter 1 passage. Reading verse 18, “[having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints.](#)” For some the “[eyes of your hearts](#)” are not enlightened but are dull to spiritual reality. This is the main reason for why we do not feel the magnitude of God’s power toward us and there are three secondary reasons this is true.

First, because the eyes of our spiritual heart is dull we are living unaware of the blinding and deadening power of sin and this lets us settle for a life that is far less spiritually than God desires for us. If you have been sick and are now feeling healthy, you are thrilled with the power of the medicine that has overcome the illness or disease that had a hold on your life. It is the same with Christ. If you recognize the power and hold that sin had in your life before your were saved then you see how Christ has healed you from many sinful desires and how you have changed and how Christ is continuing to change you. Through this realization then you know the depth and power of sin and the amazing power of God over sin.

Another reason we don’t feel the power of God toward us now is that we are not fully aware of the magnitude of demonic power that is coming against us at all times. In our modern age we are to busy and noisy to pay attention to the spiritual world all around us. If you feel safe and feel spiritually alive then you need to thank your protector; for God and His legends of angels is the power holding back the onslaught of Satan and his demons. As God’s children we live safely from most evil influences and this is by the power of God. The spiritual world is just as real as the physical world we live in. In the book of 2 Kings chapter six there is the story of the

Syrian king who was warring against Israel. He laid battle plans but at every turn the Israelis out maneuvered him. He suspected a traitor in his leadership, but his servant told him of the prophet Elisha (**el·ee·shaw**), whom God spoke through, warned the king of Israel of the Syrian army's every move. The Syrian king decides to capture the prophet and during the night surrounds the town of Dothan. Elisha's servant gets up in the morning goes outside and he sees an army and horses and chariots surrounding the town. He hurries to tell his master. Elisha said to his servant, " 'Do not be afraid, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.' ¹⁷ Then Elisha prayed and said, 'O LORD, please open his eyes that he may see.' So the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha." (2 Kings 6:16-17) You need to go to 2 Kings chapter 6 and read the rest of the story. If God would open your spiritual eyes you would see there are God's spiritual creatures and angels all around God's children and they protect you from evil and demons.

The third reason we don't feel God's power toward us is that we do not consider fully what has happened to Jesus and his present role in the universe. If you believe Jesus gave his life for you, then you belong to him completely - body, soul, and spirit. As you surrender to Christ, you will be amazed at God's power toward you now, at this present time. But you will only see His power if you see what has become of Him since the resurrection.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and what became of him after his resurrection shows the greatness of God's power toward us now in this life. Let me sum it up with three words ***resurrection power now*** empowers us to live and die for the glory of Christ. We need to believe and be able to say with firm belief, "**For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.**" (Philippians 1:21) Just as the Coptic saints in Cairo said last week. I will give you more about the Coptic Church in a few minutes.

Resurrected Knowledge

In our scripture passage of Ephesians 1:15-23 Paul is praying for believers. He is concerned with the very thing I have been talking about, that is, believers who do not feel the power of God in their lives now. Paul knows he cannot change this, only God can. That is why he is praying, but he writes the prayer for those who will need it both at the time he wrote it and in the future. Paul knows the things that matter when it comes to deep change in our hearts. God answers prayer through what He has given us to know in His Word.

What is Paul praying for? I will focus on the answer found in verse 19, but first let me set the stage by reading verses 17 and 18, “[that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him,](#) ¹⁸ [having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know ...](#)” Paul prayed, I am preaching and praying that God will enlighten the eyes of your hearts. That God will pull back the curtain for you to see that it is Satan working in the world to deceive and that Christ came to rescue people from Satan. When this happens then you will know. Not just know the scriptures as the devil does for he quoted scripture to Jesus after 40 days of fasting and he has quoted scripture, usually out of context, to people throughout the Old and New Testaments. We know scripture because of the spiritual wisdom God gives through the Holy Spirit and the devil has no spiritual wisdom. Spending time in the Word of God makes it easy to identify the false. Paul says the Father of glory will give us the Spirit of wisdom so that the eyes of our hearts will be enlightened and we will know. Know what?

The knowledge Paul is praying about here is not the kind of knowing the devil has. In one sense, the devil knows these three things that Paul is about to mention. That is not the kind of knowledge Paul is praying for. He means to “know” in the sense

of spiritual wisdom and experience. It is the difference between knowing the golden brown stuff in the jar is honey because of the label and knowing it is honey because of tasting it. The devil does not taste the wonder of this knowledge of God. Paul is praying we would know with the knowledge of God through tasting spiritual wisdom. We would grow in our knowledge of God by experiencing Jesus.

He wants us to know three things, and we are only concerned this morning with the third. These three are found in verses 18 and 19, Paul's desire is ". . . that you may know", first, "what is the hope to which he has called you." Second, "what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints?" Third and this is the one we are now concerned with, "what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe." Paul is not praying that we get the calling or become heirs or get the power. He is saying, you have the calling, you are heirs and you have the power of God. But the problem is you do not know them as you could and as you should. I want you to know them. I am praying that you will "know . . . the immeasurable greatness of his power toward you who believe" from verse 19. Paul is praying and this is why he wrote his prayer, so that he could help us be spiritually conscious of God's power toward us as believers and this power is now in our lives.

Resurrected Living

Then amazingly Paul spends all of verses 20 to 23 describing what became of Jesus after the resurrection and says that all of this shows the greatness of the power of God at work toward us now. So, Paul is praying and he is revealing, and this is why I am praying and preaching.

Reading the second half of verse 19 after which, I will point out five aspects of what became of Christ starting with his resurrection. Paul is praying that we would know "what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might." In other words, what he is about to show us is

what this immeasurably great power toward us harmonizes with the “according to the working of his great might.” That is, Paul is going to give us a way to measure this greatness. Paul says it is like these five things.

First in verse 20 the power of God toward us **now** is like the great might “that he God the Father worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead.”

Second, the power of God toward us **now** is like the great might that God worked because He “seated him Jesus at his right hand in the heavenly places.”

Third, continuing in verse 21, the power of God toward us **now** is like the great might that God worked when he exalted Christ “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.”

Fourth, the power of God toward us **now** is like the great might that God worked when He “put all things under his Christ’s feet and gave him as head over all things to the church” in verse 22.

Fifth, the power of God toward us **now** is like the great might that God worked when he made the church “his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.” (v. 23)

Now let me take these five facts of God’s power one at a time and more fully delve into what they mean for us.

1) God raised Jesus and broke the power of death. In verse 20 we read, the power of God toward us **now** is like the great might “that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead.” God raised Jesus from the dead and Jesus would never die again. The point here is that the power of death is broken for all who are in Christ Jesus. The enemy, death, is defeated. For Paul, the death of Christ was the death of death. Yes, it is true as believers we will physically die but the sting is

removed. The poisonous event of our mortal death has become a pathway to heaven.

As Paul wrote because he understood what God had done when raised Christ, “Death is swallowed up in victory. ⁵⁵ O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” (1 Corinthians 15:54-55) By the power of God through Christ we have victory, praise God! Praise God for his power and through the resurrection of Christ, as believers we have power over death.

The power of God toward us **now** is this power, God’s power raised us spiritually from the dead as we read in Ephesians 2:4 and 5, “...God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved.” God opened the eyes of our heart and conquered our rebellious spirit. As Ezekiel wrote, God “will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.” (Ezekiel 36:26) This is *resurrection power now* - to live and die for the glory of Christ.

2) God seated Jesus at his right hand and us with him. The last part of verse 20 reads God “seated ~~him~~ Christ at his right hand in the heavenly places.” God’s power installed Jesus at His right hand and he has put us there also. Reading from Ephesians 2:6, God “raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” This is Jesus’ *resurrection power now!* We are to live and die for the glory of Christ!

3) God gave Jesus authority over all demonic powers. Reading verse 21, God set Jesus “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.” We know from Ephesians chapter 6 that these rulers and authorities include Satan, devils and

demons of the universe. The power God gives toward you through Christ is a devil defeating power for our lives **now**.

Paul said in Colossians 2:14-15, “**This he God set aside, nailing it to the cross.** ¹⁵ **He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him Christ.**” So when Jesus rose from the dead, he was exalted over all the hosts of hell. They are a defeated foe. They are not yet out of the world and battles are yet to be fought. But the power from God for us **now** in these battles is a **resurrection power now**. My beloved, live and die for the glory of Christ!

4) God gave Jesus as head over all things to the church. Verse 22, God “**put all things under his Jesus’ feet and gave him as head over all things to the church.**”

There are two things we want to take notice of. First the risen Jesus Christ is “**head over all things.**” The word “**head**” implies authority, active rule and that Jesus is ruling as King over all! All human beings, all demonic powers, disease, disability, all nature; including hurricanes, lightning bolts, tornadoes, volcanoes, earthquakes, floods, global cycles are under Jesus’ authority. Jesus is head over all businesses, industry, healthcare, sports, inventions, media, Internet, military might, governments, presidents, kings, chiefs, religions, universities, solar systems, stars, galaxies, molecules, atoms, subatomic particles, and ten thousand things no man has ever yet discovered. Jesus is **now** head over them all. Jesus is conscious, active and authoritative Ruler of all.

The second great thing in verse 22 is that Jesus is given as head over all to the church. Let me say that again, God “**gave him Jesus as head over all things to the church.**” Which means, with all that power and all that authority and all that wisdom, Jesus serves us as our Head and our Leader and Savior and our King and our Friend. In other words, this power is, as verse 19 says, “**toward us.**” It is **resurrection power now** so that we are able to live and die for the glory of Christ.

5) Where God rules, Jesus rules and we will rule. Verse 23, tells us as believers, we know joy and peace in this tumultuous world. “[The church - which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.](#)” I am not sure I can express this well, but I will try. God’s power toward us fills the universe with the authority of His crucified and risen Son and though I can barely speak these words, God intends to make us, the church, those who believe, the means of that fullness and the embodiment of that fullness. That is to say, where God rules, Jesus rules and we will rule. God created humans in the beginning to inhabit a beautiful creation and to subdue it, enjoy it, having dominion over the earth and reflect His glory in it all.

That is what God intends to do through the new humanity called the church. God will fill creation with all his fullness of his glory and you, my beloved, will be that fullness – listen closely, “[The church - which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.](#)” This is the power of God at work toward you right **now**. May we know the power of God toward us who believe His *resurrection power now* enabling us to live and die for the glory of Christ.

Closing

I close by reading highlights of the respond given this week by Father George to the attackers on the Coptic Church in Egypt. It embodies what I have I have been teaching this morning. This should be our approach to *resurrection power now* – living boldly and dying boldly for Christ. I printed his response in full for you to take home and read and discuss and see the implications for us as believers. Draven would you please these out.

A MESSAGE TO THOSE WHO KILL US

Fr. Boules George, St. Mark, Cleopatra (Cairo, Egypt)

When asked what he would say to ISIS that claimed responsibility for bombing the Coptic Churches in Egypt on Palm Sunday.

Father George replied, The first thing we will say is “Thank you very, very much,” and you won’t believe us when we say it.

You know why we thank you? I’ll tell you. You won’t get it, but please believe us.

You gave us to die the same death as Christ and this is the biggest honor we could have. Christ was crucified and this is our faith. He died and was slaughtered and this is our faith. You gave us, and you gave them to die.

We thank you because you shortened for us the journey. When someone is headed home to a particular city, he keeps looking at the time. “When will I get home? Are we there yet?” Can you imagine if in an instant he finds himself on a rocket ship straight to his destination? You shortened the journey! Thank you for shortening the journey.

We thank you because you gave to us to fulfill what Christ said to us: “*Behold, I send you out as lambs among wolves*” (Luke 10:3). We were lambs; our only weapons are our faith and the church we pray in. I carry no weapon in my hand. We are so grateful that you helped us fulfill this saying of Christ.

Thank you for helping us achieve our goal. You’re helping us and you don’t even know it. I know you don’t understand, but I’m trying to explain it to you. There are people we visited at home to encourage them to come to church – three, four, five times. Still they won’t come. What you’re doing here – you’re bringing to

church the people who never come. Believe me – it's bringing to church the people who never come!

People who were living in sin and away from God, after the bombing of St. Peter's Chapel in the Cathedral, they were saying, "You never know when your number's up. Better take more care [in our spiritual lives]." All these visitations we do – you're so much more effective. You're filling up our churches! You're filling our churches!

Let's speak plainly here... Usually attendance at the Eve of Monday Pascha is very little. People are usually so tired after a long Palm Sunday Liturgy and the General Funeral and they don't come to the Eve of Monday services. When I came in tonight, there were people on chairs outside the sanctuary, there were people in the balcony seating. The church is completely full. There isn't even one empty nook. Thank you. We are so grateful that you're helping fill up our churches.

When you do this, you irritate the soul of the person who was lazy before. You wake his conscience and the love of God within him prods him to come to church.

Can you see why we thank you? We're not being deceptive. A priest holding a microphone can't lie to you! I say to you: **THANK YOU**. Thank you for all you have done for us without even noticing.

The second part of the message we want to send to you is that we love you. And this, unfortunately, you won't understand at all. Maybe you won't believe us when we say we're grateful. But this – you won't even understand. Why won't you understand it? Because, this too, is a teaching of our Christ. I want to explain to you about our Christ. I want to tell you about how wonderful He is.

See what Christ said, If you love those who love you, you have no profit or reward with me. Even thugs and thieves love those who love them. Any gang loves its

members. Even the drug dealers all like each other and take care of each other.

Right? But I want to tell you that *“if you love those who love you, what reward have you... But I say to you, love your enemies”* (Matthew 5:46, 44).

We Christians don't have enemies. We don't have enemies; others make enmity with us. The Christian doesn't make enemies because we are commanded to love everyone. And so, we love you because this is the teaching of our God – that I'm to love you – no matter what you do to me.

I love you very much. And I want to say one last thing to you: we're praying for you. Because the One who told us to love you told us to *“bless those who curse you... and PRAY for those who spitefully use you.”* (Matthew 5:44) So my instructions from my loving God make it my duty to pray for you.

In one of the dioceses, there is a bishop. In that diocese, there is a man who gets on the microphone every week to say terrible things about Christians—unheard of things. So the servants [of the diocese] are hearing this man and are **so upset**. We didn't do anything to this man. He's just taken a vow to curse us. **Every Friday he comes out and curses the Christians.**

So the bishop is sitting with his servants, and he asks them, “Are you upset by what this man says?” And they say, “Of course! We are so upset! What's he doing to us!” The bishop gets quiet and his face darkens with sorrow. The servants say to him, “You have a right to be upset from what he says, Your Grace. You have a right.”

“I'm not upset with him,” the bishop says, “I'm upset with you! You are servants—you? **How many of you pray for him every day?** Because if he tasted of the love of God, if he knew who our Lord is, he could never hate again because God is love.

“How many of you are praying for him? Aren’t you servants! Aren’t you Christians! So you are a servant teaching in the Sunday School here, and you’ve broken the commandment of Christ to **pray for this person?!**”

So what do you think? **How about we make a **commitment** to pray for them? **Pray that they know the God of love?** Pray that they experience the love of God? Because if they knew that God is love and experienced His love, they could not do these things—**never, never, never.****

They are a wretched lot. And because they are wretched, we must pray for them. But when someone loves God, he won’t know except love.

We need to pray for them **so they can sleep at night**. A person who has all this inside them, how can he sleep comfortably?

Can you imagine? We are being slaughtered and the King of Peace gives us peace to sleep. And the one who slaughters, all night he can’t sleep.

You know where this happens in the Bible? With Daniel and the king. Daniel is put in the lion’s den and he stays up all night praising God and praying for the king. And the king is up all night, tossing and turning, unable to sleep.

Pray for them. Take it as a command. Take it as a duty. Take it as the application of Christ’s instructions.

We must ALL pray for them today that God opens their eyes and open their hearts to His love.

Because if they knew Him, they could NEVER do this.

I don't want to take too long. God comfort us. God give us understanding. God give us **JOY** because Christ's promise is truth. He said, "I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy **NO ONE** will take from you" (John 16:22).

I'm embarrassed to say at the beginning of Holy Week that the Church, though she is in pain, **rejoices** because today—I don't know what the final count is. They said 40-something, and, of course, many people in the hospitals will catch up to them. **All of these are crowns.** They are rejoicing with God. And they will attend the Resurrection up there. And they are praying for us. The rest is on us.

O, you lucky, lucky, lucky ones! And until it is our turn.

To our God be the glory now and forever. Amen.