

RESURRECTION—THE TRIUMPH OF
THE INCARNATION

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"Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them. They found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre, and they entered in and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments. And as they were afraid, and bowed their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead. He is not here, but is risen; remember how he spake to you when he was yet in Galilee, Saying, The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. And they remembered his words." (Luke 24:1-8).

We now come to the super climax of the Incarnation: When Christ bowed His head and His disciples saw Him die, their houses of cards tumbled. They had invested their all in the new organization. While Jesus lived and they witnessed His miracles, they trusted fully in all His claims; there were no doubts in their minds as to His identity; even the money loving Judas knew Him as the Lord and Master. Then when the collapse came, they saw the ignominy of the whole inhuman drama—nothing else mattered now. They were discouraged, disillusioned, humiliated, and ashamed to be seen. The force of the situation was evidenced in the conduct of Peter at the mock trial. Disillusionment began to operate on the crowd, as well as the humble group who were His followers.

Peter, always the spokesman for the rest, crushed and bruised beyond expression, exclaimed: "I go fishing." In those words resounded the undertone of despair. It meant back to his old weather-cracked boats, rotten fishing tackle, and nets to be mended. It was a vision of all night toiling, wet and hungry, and hopeless. They all chimed in with him: "We go with you." In the language of a modern situation, it would be: "Boys, it's off; we are washed up and done for." In so short a time, their spirits which had been soaring now dropped to the lowest key in the gamut of life.

No doubt in those three days, eventful heart-breaking days, much thought was given trying to gather up courage to make an adjustment with their dragging spirits. Gloom of the darkest settled over their horizon.

It was now Monday morning. A group of loyal, devoted women had prepared spices to anoint the body of their Master. They came early to the sepulchre.

They looked into an open tomb; one that had been sealed by law. They did not think of the stone and the Roman seal when they were preparing to anoint His body, but they followed their hearts and not their reason. The stone was removed and they beheld emptiness and the linens neatly folded. In their confusion two men in shining garments, informed them that they were seeking the living among the dead. "He is not here but is risen." All aflutter, they knew not what happened, but they were told to go and tell the disciples. This they did, but the story did not click; it was too wonderful. They obeyed, but doubtless they told the story in a stammering unintelligible language.

Yes, something had happened. An angel had descended upon the scene and put the sixty Roman soldiers out of commission; they were as dead men. This angel rolled back the stone, and our glorious living Lord came out from three days of grave imprisonment. It was the Triumph of the Incarnation: our living Lord was dead, but "Behold he is alive forevermore." He "was in the beginning with God, and was God." Herein is the greatest of all miracles. All the mysteries that the intelligentsia pronounce as a "biological impossibility," now come out into the light in living reality. The modernistic Unitarian leadership has crept into the Church of God like Bubonis rats gnawing into the vitals of the "Body of Christ" may alibi and explain the rationale of it all, but the story of the resurrection faces us and will not down. Blackstone, the greatest legal mind of the last century, says that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the best established fact in human history.

This much we know, there was a reformation, a transformation of that small defeated, scared group of cowardly followers of Christ, who became brave heroes and martyrs which has to be explained in order to make some sense. There is no human explanation aside from that given us in the Word of God. The thing that happened turned all the currents of history into the channels. New hope was born, new outlook on life, new perspective, a new horizon, a New Soul.

The risen Christ revealed to John the Revelator, said: "I am he that was dead, and behold I am alive forever more." "He lives, he lives who once was dead; he lives my everlasting Head." When this marvelous truth burst full-orbed on the little group of unsophisticated disciples—the whole scheme of the Eternal Godhead came into a glorious reality. The statement made by Christ to Peter, which he did not understand, was that salvation by faith in His atoning blood was the foundation upon which His church would be built—a foundation which the gates of hell could not prevail against. Fixed and eternal realities follow the resurrection. They then had a Gospel, and they could and did reach it with a new note and a new emphasis, "They went everywhere preaching the resurrection."

Seven by-products obtained are: 1. His resurrection resurrected in His followers life, joy, hope, courage, and heroism into the nucleus of what was to become a world-wide commission with a definite program and objective. 2. This new commission was accepted and given: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." 3. It gave the infant Church a full understanding of all the events of four thousand years: the theme of the Old Testament, in prophet and historian, was all brought into clear perspective. 4. The meaning of the Mosaic ritual of blood sacrifice took on the real meaning. 5. All the intricate construction and significance of the tabernacle and the temple were truly exemplified from this corner stone truth. 6. When He arose, there appeared from time to time to this humble group the divine realities concerning Himself. 7. Then we find lastly that the coming of the Holy Ghost was predicated of this event—resurrection and the ascension to the Father. This Third Person of the Godhead was necessary to illuminate all the truths necessary to the world-wide evangelism. The Holy Ghost would take the things of Christ and reveal them unto His followers. On that unusual gift was the power

which gave us the Gospels as they were recorded so long after the resurrection. All the little details, parables, and miracles were again made real to the writers of the four Gospels. One of the most astounding facts concerning the Gospels as we now have them is that all events recorded were enacted from thirty to fifty years afterwards. "He will take the things of Christ and show them unto you." The Holy Spirit did exactly that. As the commission was world-wide, so was the ministry of the Holy Ghost worldwide, which was not possible with Christ; He was limited to one place at a time. So we find that in resurrection was the triumph of all the Truths of Revelation. It was all because the Resurrection was the Divine Triumph of the Incarnation.

THE SPIRIT AND MISSIONS

The Spirit alone can separate His saints for missionary service. He is therefore the ultimate Source of supplies for the field. The same Barnabas and Saul, sent forth by the Church, were also sent forth by the Holy Spirit, and in that double fact we have God's voice, announcing the twin condition of all successful missionary ministry; that the laborers shall be closely linked with the Church as its representatives, and be qualified as well as commissioned by the Spirit of God. The authority of the Church is secondary to that other and higher authority; but both are needed as conditions of the higher service. We must not be reckless of forms but must seek a higher than any formal ordination or separation. Where workmen are independent and irresponsible, amenable to no authority, their zeal is sometimes without knowledge, and they are more active than efficient. Not a few who entered by no regular door but climbed up some other way, have proved more adept in subtraction and division than in addition and multiplication, in missionary mathematics. The Spirit says, "Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." Instead of us appointing laborers and then asking them for proper qualifications, must we not invert the order, first waiting to see whom the Spirit appoints and anoints, then send them forth.

The Church that is prepared by prayer and fasting to hear and to heed the Spirit's voice will be a missionary Church. But that is always a still small voice and is drowned by the voices of worldly clamor, of contending passion and hollow mirth. Meetings for fasting and prayer and for deeper spiritual life have been the matrix where missionaries have been molded. While Laodicean churches have lulled their members to sleep with an easy religion of the world and a monotonous drone of ritual, and religious club houses have drawn disciples into the snare of luxuriant indulgence and refined selfishness, the purer, and generally the poorer, Churches have been fertile mothers of missionaries all over the world.

A new standard of giving will be adopted by the Church whenever the Spirit once more pervades it with His living power. Greed today is dominant even among disciples. It is changing some of them into coin, so that they have a metallic ring and will drop into the coffin with a chink. The ministry of money is not understood or appreciated. Men are purse proud because they have no sense of stewardship. They think of their gains as

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