

Sunday, April 16, 2017
Did You Know?

The Resurrection

“He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.”
(Romans 4:25)

Happy Resurrection Day! We Christians bank everything on the historical truthfulness of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. We Christians truly believe that the God-man Jesus Christ was a living breathing being that walked this earth, that he was executed on a Roman cross, placed in a known, marked tomb, and three days later he was raised back to life from the dead. The Apostle Paul tells us that the resurrection is the pin that holds the entire machine of Christianity together. Pull out this pin and it all falls apart. Here are his words:

“And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith”
(1 Corinthians 15:14)

That the resurrection occurred is almost impossible to deny as an historical fact, but I do not want to get into that here. If you're interested, you can read *The Case for Christ* by Lee Strobel or *The Case for the Resurrection of Jesus* by Gary Habermas and Michael Licona.

Equally important however, is the meaning behind the resurrection. Here's how the great theologian John Calvin puts it in his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (p. 321), revealing to us the intricacies between the meanings of the death of Christ and his resurrection:

Hence, although in his death we have an effectual completion of salvation, because by it we are reconciled to God, satisfaction is given to his justice, the curse is removed, and the penalty paid; still it is not by his death, but by his resurrection, that we are said to be begotten again to a living hope, (1 Pet. 1:3); because, as he, by rising again, became victorious over death, so the victory of our faith consists only in his resurrection. The nature of it is better expressed in the words of Paul, “Who (Christ) was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification,” (Rom. 4:25); as if he had said, By his death sin was taken away, by his resurrection righteousness was renewed and restored. For how could he by dying have freed us from death, if he had yielded to its power? how could he have obtained the victory for us, if he had fallen in the contest?

Calvin is telling us that in the resurrection of Christ is the guarantee of the victory of our faith, which means that death will not have the last laugh for all who are in Christ. We, too, will conquer and rise again with Him. As well, it is through the resurrection that we are justified. It is not only in the death of Christ, but also in his death-defeating resurrection, that we, sinners, are declared ‘Not guilty!’ before a holy and just God.

Soli Deo Gloria!

Pastor Peter