**Jesus and The Feast of Firstfruits**

**by Pastor Fee Soliven**

**1 Corinthians 15:20-26**

**Sunday Morning**

**April 9, 2023**

**1 Corinthians 15:20-26**

20 But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. 21 For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. 23 But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming.

24 Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. 25 For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. 26 The last enemy that will be destroyed is death

Saints, Easter is the celebration of the greatest message ever delivered. What first appeared to be a defeat turned out to be the accomplishment of an amazing mission by Jesus Christ, who overcame death and lives forevermore!

**Feasts of the Lord Chart>**

**One of Jesus’ first agendas on coming to earth was to destroy the works of the devil!**

**1 John 3:7-9**

7 Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. 8 He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. 9 Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.

**If you’ve been a Christian for any length of time, you’re probably very familiar with the story of Jesus Christ’s resurrection**.

It’s your comfort when you stand by the grave of a loved one and a truth you count on for your own salvation.

**But has it changed how you live?**

**What impact does Christ’s resurrection have on your thinking, conversation, and conduct?**

The resurrection is a truth that not only changes your eternal destiny, but it should also affect how you worship God and relate to Him in your private devotions as well as how you relate to others.

**Truths About the Resurrection**

The first step in evaluating the impact of Christ’s resurrection is to review some basic scriptural truths we say we believe.

**Jesus Christ is alive at the Father’s right hand.**

**Hebrews 10:12**

“But He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God”

We believe that Jesus’ sacrificial death was sufficient to pay for all our sins, and His resurrection and ascension are the proof.

**We are forgiven and eternally secure in Christ**

**Ephesians 1:13-14**

13 In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

Saints, because Jesus died for our sins and rose from the grave, all who believe in Him can know that they are eternally secure, not based on their performance, but on Christ’s payment for their sins. The Holy Spirit who indwells every believer is the guarantee of a heavenly inheritance.

**We are going to live forever!**

**John 3:16**

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish, but have eternal life”

Christ’s promise of eternal life is a truth that encourages us to live righteously now and gives hope for eternity.

**We too will be physically Resurrected!**

**1 Corinthians 15:42-49**

42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. 43 It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. 44 It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

45 And so it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. 46 However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual. 47 The first man was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is the Lord from heaven.

48 As was the man of dust, so also are those who are made of dust; and as is the heavenly Man, so also are those who are heavenly. 49 And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man.

Saints, Jesus Christ’s resurrection guarantees that we will have the same experience. All the sin and weakness of our present bodies will be a thing of the past when Jesus returns to raise us up.

**Heaven is our home!**

Jesus promised,

**John 14:3**

“And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also”

Because of God’s grace provided to us through His Son, we will one day be made perfect and enter the heavenly place He’s prepared for us, never again to be separated from our Savior.

**John 10:10**

“The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly”

**We will see our Loved Ones!**

Saints, right now we are absent from the Lord, but we have this hope:

**2 Corinthians 5:8**

“We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord”

Saints, our saved loved ones are in the Lord’s presence right now, and when we arrive in heaven, we will be reunited with our Lord and with those we love who have gone on before us.

Saints, we have all these scriptural promises as the result of what Jesus Christ has done for us. However, they are not given to us simply so we can acknowledge them to be true. They should affect how we live each day.

**Has Christ made a difference in your life?**

**Are you growing in holiness?**

**1 Peter 1:15-16**

15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."

**Hebrews 12:14**

“Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord”

This is not a matter of perfection because that will not happen until we reach heaven. A holy life is one committed to Jesus Christ and to obedience in every aspect of life to the truths of His Word. Although many mock holiness, this should be the desire of our hearts and the goal of our lives.

**What is your message as a believer?**

Having trusted Jesus as your Savior and placed your eternal future in His hands, are you sharing your testimony of what He has done in your life with others so they too can be saved?

**Are you a beacon to the people with whom you work and live?**

Saints, your conduct and conversation ought to show that you are different from the rest of the world because Christ’s life is on display through you.

**Ephesians 4:30-32**

30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. 32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you.

Saints, you must guard against being consumed with your own concerns, and instead, make an effort to tell others about the peace and security you’ve found in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. The truth you offer could change someone’s eternal destiny.

**Are you serving the Lord in the power of the Holy Spirit?**

At the moment of salvation, the Holy Spirit came to indwell and empower you to serve the Lord. Your confidence is not in your own capability but in the Spirit’s sufficiency through you.

He’s the one who brought you to salvation by convicting you of sin, revealing truth, giving faith, and coming to dwell within you, and His work in you will continue all the way to glory.

**John 16:8-11**

8 And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9 of sin, because they do not believe in Me; 10 of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; 11 of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

The Holy Spirit now equips and enables you to accomplish whatever God calls you to do, and this includes giving you the courage to fearlessly share the good news of Christ’s death and resurrection with others.

**Romans 1:16-17**

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

**Do you realize that you are never alone?**

When you trusted Jesus as your Savior, you gained a Friend who will never leave or forsake you. Jesus came to live within you through the Holy Spirit. Therefore, you never have to feel lonely because He is always there.

**Hebrews 13:5-6**

Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." 6 So we may boldly say: "The LORD is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?"

News of the resurrection of Jesus is a message the world desperately needs to hear, and we have been given the privilege of praying for people and telling them about the hope of eternal life available through Christ. We have been showered with the blessings that accompany our salvation, and it’s our responsibility to share the good news with others. RESPONSE

**1. How often do you think about Christ’s resurrection?**

**2. What hope does it offer in the midst of your daily life?**

**3. How has Jesus’ resurrection affected how you live?**

**4. Is death to sin evident in your character, conversations, and conduct?**

**5. Could those who know you well say that you are living a new kind of life, or would they say you are still living as you did before salvation?**

Saints, Soon and Very soon, Jesus is about to appear, we are almost out of here!

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

**1 Corinthians 15:50-54**

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

**Short Movie Slide>**

**Acts 2:38-39**

38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

**Let’s Pray!**

**Benediction**

**"May The LORD bless you and keep you, May The LORD make His face shine upon you, May The LORD be gracious to you, May The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His (Shalom) peace.” In Jesus Name!**