

# *The Nature of The Resurrection*

(Sermon Notes)

By Warren Zehrung – 5/4/2013

Brethren, we are in that time period in the midst of the counting of the seven weeks between Passover and Pentecost. God tells us to “count fifty.” It is 50 days from the Wave Sheaf Offering to the Day of Pentecost.

If we were marking the days we would note that today is day number 35 and that Jesus’ ascension into heaven would occur this coming week on day number 40.

But God does not ask us to celebrate or observe the ascension of Jesus into heaven – it is just one of the details God shares with us to help us put the entire picture together.

Jesus had to go away. If Jesus remained in the flesh – as He was during His public ministry – He could not send the Holy Spirit to brethren all around the world. Jesus put it this way:

## **John 16:**

**7** Nevertheless I tell you [disciples] the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter [which is God’s Spirit] will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send it unto you.

That coming of God’s Holy Spirit took place at Pentecost just after Christ’s ascension into heaven.

Jesus was resurrected from death on a Saturday evening by His Father – but **He did not immediately ascend into heaven**. The question is why? Jesus Christ remained on earth and began to appear to the disciples and the other brethren.

He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, then to two disciples on the road to Emmaus, then to the apostles behind closed doors, except later to Thomas, and at one point He appeared to more than 500 of the brethren all at once.

Then forty days after His passion He was taken into heaven. Mark recorded it this way:

## **Mark 16:**

**19** So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, **He was received up into the heaven**, and sat at the right hand of God.

## **Acts 1:**

**1** The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of **all that Jesus began both to do and teach**,

**2** Until the day in which **He [Jesus] was taken up**, after that He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments unto the apostles whom He had chosen:

You can read the entire gospels of Matthew and John without finding any direct reference to the **ascension** of Jesus Christ a little over a week before the Day of Pentecost. The Protestants blur the definitions of the **resurrection** of Christ and His **ascension** into heaven some 40 days later. Luke recorded the occasion of Christ’s **ascension** this way:

**Luke 24:**

**51** And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He was parted from them, and **carried up into heaven.**

**Acts 1:**

**3** To whom [the apostles] also He showed Himself alive **after His passion by many infallible proofs**, being seen of them **forty days**, and speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.

The apostles were all eyewitnesses that Jesus died – that He was dead and buried for three days and three nights in the grave.

**Jesus gave them infallible proofs** that He had been dead – but that now He was alive again. Jesus gave surefire proofs of His resurrection from death. Jesus worked miracles after His resurrection from the grave to prove that He had come forward from death to Life.

Brethren the facts of Jesus' death and resurrection are extremely important – because if Jesus was **not dead** – and **if Jesus was not resurrected** back again to life – we are still hopelessly in our sins and facing eternal death.

Protestants have a great deal of difficulty in understanding why the Bible places so little emphasis on the ascension of Jesus. To Protestants, the ascension should be a great deal and a big occasion – like they make the Easter sunrise resurrection into a big deal – but it is not emphasized in the Scriptures that way, is it?

The Protestants wonder, “Why do none of the gospel accounts make much of the ascension of Jesus Christ?” The answer is that Jesus earthly ministry was, at this point, transitioning into His ever present spiritual ministry as head of the called out brethren. Jesus is the head of the Church brethren. Jesus said:

**John 14:**

**18** I will not leave you comfortless: **I will come to you.** [The Father and I will make our abode with you verse :23.]

**Acts 1:**

**4** And, being assembled together with them, [Jesus] commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the **promise of the Father**, which, saith He, ye have heard of me.

**Promise of the Father** was the coming of God's Holy Spirit that they would receive a little over a week later on the Day of Pentecost.

**Acts 1:**

**5** For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence.

**Act 1:**

**9** And when [Jesus] had spoken these things, while they beheld, **He was taken up;** and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

To the world Jesus Christ was gone after His ascension! But for the Church brethren, Jesus was not gone and unavailable.

For us, Pentecost shows that Jesus is **ever present** with us.

The specific purpose of this sermon is to show that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is a type of **our own coming resurrection**.

One of the things that we have not emphasized enough in God's Church is our integral and fundamental **part in the resurrection of Jesus Christ**. Please understand that **we are participants** in the resurrection of Jesus. The Bible accentuates this point of our resurrection and the resurrection of Jesus being joined together as one resurrection.

This fact is most important to reflect upon this as we draw near to Pentecost. The Feast of Pentecost is intricately tied to the **resurrection of the saints**.

Today we will be looking at the Scriptures that **tie** the resurrection of Jesus to our own resurrection to eternal life.

First we need to ascertain from the Scriptures that Jesus in fact died and that He was subsequently raised back to life by His Father. When we speak of a resurrection, we are speaking of an awakening from the dead, whether it be the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the saints, all mankind, or the incorrigibly wicked.

We need to understand how to put God's Word together correctly – less we become deceived.

#### **John 2:**

**18** Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign [‘miracle’ in the Greek] show thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?

The Jews were seeking proof of Jesus' authority to clean out the Temple like He had just done. They wondered, "Just who do you think you are – upsetting things like this?" "Who gave you, Jesus, the authority to clean out the Temple?"

Remember, Jesus had only just begun His public ministry a few days before. Jesus was turning water into wine at the beginning of this chapter in the Book of John.

#### **John 2:**

**19** Jesus said, "*Destroy this temple [referring to His being killed], and in three days I will raise it up [referring to His resurrection].*"

Brethren, do you know that you will be resurrected in this same manner as Jesus was resurrected? Meditate on these things.

Jesus did not say that He would bring Himself **back to life** on His own – as the Protestants believe.

The Protestants relish the thought of a physical resurrection – they say that Jesus raised Himself physically from death; they emphasize the flesh and bones of Jesus after His resurrection.

The Protestants do not understand that **Spiritual composure** is far superior to **physical existence**.

Spiritual is more **real** than physical.

**1 Corinthians 15:**

**44** It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

Jesus' resurrected, glorified spiritual body was able to be seen and touched like a physical body. But Jesus had supernatural abilities and was able to go through walls and locked doors and His funeral wrappings while maintaining all the appearances and characteristics of His previously crucified physical body.

Jesus was able to exit His stone tomb without the stone being rolled away from the entrance because He had a spiritual body at this point.

Yes, the stone was rolled away, but by the angle of the Lord, and that was so that the disciples could see that He had risen without so much as disturbing His linen funeral cloths. The linen funeral cloths in which Jesus had been wrapped just collapsed in place when Jesus' body was changed from physical to spiritual.

Jesus' body had miraculously passed through the wrapping material leaving it conspicuously in place. The angels said:

**Matthew 28:**

**5** And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.

**6 He is not here: for he is risen**, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. [His body was not there any longer.]

**7** And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goes before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.

So John and Peter have a foot race to the tomb to see how fast they can get there – John was faster the Scripture tells us:

**John 20:**

**5** And [John] stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying there; yet went he not in. [John deferred to Peter.]

**6** Then came Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulcher, and saw the linen clothes lie,

There was something special about the way the linen wrappings were lying – it is as though they were not disturbed – just lying there collapsed – all but flattened out on the stone slab – but there was no body of Jesus inside them.

But the cloth that covered Jesus' face and head had been moved to another location. That was significant and that was something that indicated that Jesus was alive again!

**John 20:**

**7** And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place **by itself**.

The way that the cloth that had covered Jesus' face and head was folded and set aside from the linen burial clothes gave Peter and John great pause. In fact, it caused them **to believe** and understand the nature of Jesus' resurrection.

**John 20:**

**8** Then went in also that other disciple [John], which came first to the sepulcher, and he saw, **and believed**.

They believed that Jesus was alive – again!

**John 20:**

**9** For as yet they knew not the scripture, that He must rise again from the dead.

The Scripture was there in the Old Testament – but without God's Holy Spirit leading them – they had not been able to put it all together. That inability to understand would change when the Day of Pentecost fully came – and God, through His Spirit, would lead them into more and greater understanding.

When Jesus said in John 2:19 Destroy this temple [referring to His being killed], and in three days I will raise it up [referring to His resurrection]. The world gets tripped up on this Scripture. How can we avoid being deceived?

Jesus did not say that He would bring Himself **back to life** on His own. Nor did Jesus say that He would rebuild the physical stone temple at Jerusalem in three days. Jesus allowed the Jews to believe what they wanted. He did not clarify His meaning to them.

The Jews wanted to believe that Jesus was talking about putting Temple stone upon stone – until the Temple was rebuilt!

**John 2:**

**20** Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?

But that was not the intent of the words of Jesus – That is not what He was saying.

**John 2:**

**21** But he spoke of the **temple of His body**. [There – it is clarified for us.]

Brethren, there are **two things** that we must fully incorporate into our mind-set if we are to properly understand John 2:19 that is so easily misconstrued to say that “Jesus raised Himself.”

When the Worldwide Church of God went into apostasy they taught that “Jesus raised Himself.” It came out in the Pastor General's Report and the World wide News. The Plain Truth Magazine in September of 1994 had this: “Jesus spoke of raising Himself. (p.11) I immediately spoke on the fact that in more than two dozen places\*, the Bible undeniably identifies God the Father as raising Jesus to Life by His exceedingly great power. I was subsequently fired and disfellowshipped for presenting the Truth of the Scriptures to God's people.

**First**, we need to believe all the Old Testament Scriptures which prophesied of the Messiah.

**Second**, we need to properly put together all the words of Jesus with regard to His death and resurrection. Notice:

**John 2:**

**22** When therefore He was risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this unto them; and they believed the **Scripture**, and the **word** which Jesus had said.

The Jews would use their interpretation of Christ's words to **condemn** Jesus.

Jesus, the Lamb of God, knew that He would be killed – that He would be sacrificed for the sins of the world. But Jesus believed in the resurrection – as we must also believe.

Jesus understood through His perfect Faith that God the Father was the source of Life, and that He would not allow His body to see corruption in the grave.

**Psalms 16:**

**10** For thou wilt not leave my soul in [the grave]; neither will thou allow thine Holy One to see corruption.

The Holy Scriptures clearly distinguish between Jesus' fleshly and spiritual existence.

**Hebrews 5:**

**7** Who [Jesus] in the **days of His flesh**, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him [God the Father] that was **able to save Him from death**, and was heard in that He revered Him.

Notice the perfect Faith of Jesus. He knew His Father could be fully trusted to restore Him to Life – not fleshly life – but to the glorious eternal life that they had shared for all eternity up to that point. Jesus said:

**John 10:**

**17** Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.

**18** No man takes it from me, but I lay it down of myself.

Brethren, do we lay down our lives as Christ gave us example? God the Father saved Jesus from death **after** He was dead! Jesus **could not resurrect Himself** from death to life.

Brethren, what was the greatest miracle of all time? Was it the angelic creation? Was it the creation of the vast universe? Or perhaps it was the creation of man? No.

Picture this: Jesus Christ – who created all things – was dead. He was not glorious. He had no thoughts, no memory, no breath, and no existence at all – only a lifeless body.

When Jesus was dead in the tomb, at that time, God the Father was **all alone** with His memory of what and who Jesus once was.

In the most **exceedingly powerful miracle** of all time, God the Father brought again Jesus Christ into existence in full glory.

**Philippians 2:**

**9** Wherefore **God also has highly exalted Him**, and given Him a name which is above every name:

**Ephesians 1:**

**17** That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him:

**18** The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

When God calls us – what is our hope – what can our expectations be? What are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints – what is our future lot?

**Ephesians 1:**

**19** And what is the exceeding greatness of [God the Father's] power to **us-ward** [toward us] who believe, according to the working of His mighty power,

**20** Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places,

Can you imagine the enormous magnitude of the exceeding **great power required** to resurrect and restore Jesus to what He once was – the Almighty Creator God – with all the wisdom and power of the universe at His mere finger-tips?

God the Father in (:19) the exceeding greatness of His power raised Jesus to Eternal Life - from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places where He was once before.

**John 17:**

**5** And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

But brethren, do not miss the importance of these verses as they apply directly to us. Let me repeat that. Do not miss the importance of these verses as **they apply directly to us**.

These verses were recorded that we might see the **inheritance** – the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints – which is promised to us – the saints – the children of God.

And the first thing we will inherit will be the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The same exceedingly **great power required** to resurrect and restore Jesus to what He once was – will be used in our resurrection to eternal life. We will be restored to life – no matter how we die.

Read **Ephesians 1:19** again: And what is the exceeding greatness of [God the Father's] power **toward us** who believe in God.

The same exceeding **great power required** to resurrect Jesus to what He once was – will be used in our resurrection to eternal life! Not only was that the greatest miracle of all time – you and I are included in it.

When I am counseling a new convert for baptism, I always go to Romans 6 because Paul so clearly shows that we bury the 'old man of sin' – we are buried with Christ – we die with Christ – we are crucified with Christ...

But, these verses unmistakably also reveal that we are also participants in Jesus Christ's resurrection.

Let's look at a few of these Scriptural verses that show that we, the saints, are essentially and vitally **tied into the resurrection** of Jesus Christ. At our baptism we buried the old man of sin. We share in Christ's death.

**Romans 6:**

**3** Know ye not, that so many of us [that is the saints – not the world] as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

**4** Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was **raised up** [resurrected] from the dead by the glory of the Father, **even so we also should walk in newness of life.**

This verse says that we will be resurrected just like Jesus was.

**Romans 6:**

**5** For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, [at baptism], we shall also be [raised] in **the likeness of His resurrection:**

The purpose of this sermon is to show that the **nature of the resurrection** of Jesus Christ is a type of **our own coming resurrection.**

The Bible emphasizes this vital truth over and over again.

**1 Corinthians 6:**

**14** God hath both **raised up the Lord**, and will also **raise up us** by His own power.

**2 Corinthians 4:**

**14** Knowing that He [God the Father] who **raised up the Lord Jesus** shall **raise up us also** by Jesus, and shall present us with you.

So we saw here that Jesus has the **same power to resurrect** those who are His. Let's develop that thought for just a second.

God the Father is the source of Life.

**John 5:**

**21** For as the Father raises up the dead, and **quickens** [makes alive] them; even so the Son quickens whom He will.

Jesus is able to resurrect and to make alive – just as the Father has. John clearly tells us that Jesus Christ has the power to resurrect the dead. Jesus – sitting at the right hand of the Father in supreme power also has the ability to **give life** to whom-so-ever He Will.

**John 5:**

**26** For as the Father has life in Himself; so has He given to the Son to have life in Himself;

It is so important for us to realize that we are lead by the Spirit of God who makes His abode within us – so that **we might become like Him**. Paul wrote:

**2 Corinthians 4:**

**10** Always bearing about in the body - the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the **Life** also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

**11** For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the **Life** also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

If we are able to understand it – this points to our resurrection. Note the explanation in the following verse:

**Matthew 22:**

**32** I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, **but of the living**.

We are 15 days away from Pentecost – showing the coming of God's Spirit. It keeps going back to the resurrection...

**Romans 8:**

**11** If the Spirit of Him [God] that **raised up Jesus from the dead** dwells in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also **quicken your mortal bodies** by His Spirit that dwells in you.

Over and over the Scriptures tie the resurrection of Jesus Christ to our resurrection. Peter understood about our common resurrection with Jesus Christ.

**1 Peter 1:**

**3** Blessed be the **God and Father** of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by **the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead**,

Our resurrection – our hope of the resurrection – is inextricably linked to the resurrection of Jesus.

**Ephesians 2:**

**4** But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us,

**5** Even when we were dead in sins, hath **quickenened us together [made us alive ] with Christ**, by (grace ye are saved;)

**6** And [**God**] hath **raised us up together**, [Jesus and us – resurrected together] and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

**7** That in the ages to come He might show the **exceeding** riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

We are in that **firstfruits resurrection** with Jesus Christ – the better resurrection. Brethren as you read your Scriptures – be on the lookout for verses that subtly and not so subtly tie the resurrection of Jesus to our own resurrection.

### 2 Corinthians 13:

4 For though He [Jesus] was crucified through weakness, [that is in the flesh and willingly allowing Himself to be sacrificed] yet **he lives by the power of God**. [That's the resurrection] For we also are weak in him, but **we shall live** with him by the power of God toward you. [That is our resurrection.]

We will see here in Colossians 2, one of the more than **two dozen\* instances** of where the Scriptures clearly show that it was God the Father who raised Jesus – from the death – to Life.

### Colossians 2:

12 Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also **ye are risen with Him** through the faith of the operation of **God, who hath raised Him from the dead**.

13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, **hath He quickened together with Him** [made alive together – resurrected together], having forgiven you all trespasses.

We too, brethren, are made alive in the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Jesus hung around on earth for 40 days to give **us many infallible proofs** that He had been resurrected from death. He did that so that we might know that we are to take part in His resurrection.

The nature of the resurrection is such that we are to share in the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

End: The Nature of the Resurrection

\*Here is a partial listing of Scriptures indicating that Jesus Christ was raised from death by God the Father:

Acts 2:24, 3:25, 4:10, 5:30, 10:40, 13:30, 13:33, 13:34, 13:37, 17:31, Romans 4:24, 6:4, 8:11 (twice), 10:9, 1 Corinthians 6:14, 15:15, 2 Corinthians 1:9, 13:4, Galatians 1:1, \* Eph 1:18-20, 2:5, 2:6, Philippians 2:8-9, Colossians 2:12-13, 1 Thessalonians 1:10, 1 Peter 1:3, 1:21, 3:18, Hebrews 5:7, and 13:20.