

Resurrection

The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the most important event in human history, although, of course, there would not be any humans had God not created them in the beginning. The resurrection of Jesus changed everything and made everlasting life available to men and women and provided a means of eternal salvation for us all. Already there has been the mention of the words eternal and everlasting, giving the concept of something very wonderful and way beyond the mortality of mankind. Resurrection does exactly that, as all human beings are certain of one thing, that is that they will die: resurrection opens up the possibility, rather the certainty, of something beyond death and dying and provides a hope for all mankind.

If Jesus Christ did rise from the dead, and for the author there is no doubt about it, then He is the one to whom all must come, as alive from the dead, to receive the life He has to give. Many books have been written by educated scholars who have looked at the details of all that happened in the Biblical accounts and provide excellent evidence for the resurrection. It is not therefore the intention of this pamphlet to go into all those details, but rather to accept that it is true and use the Bible's truth on the resurrection to encourage all Christians; Jesus Christ is alive from the dead. Of course there are many theologians, Christian or supposedly Christian ones, and other atheistic, humanistic, secular and agnostic commentators, who pour scorn on the possibility of any resurrection. They contradict the straightforward eye witness evidence of those who say they saw Jesus alive from the dead, who have written their accounts, which are recorded in the Bible, by far the best attested and most read book in the world, but no doubt they all have their reasons. Paul the apostle writing to the Corinthian church comments that *"If Christ is not risen then your faith is in vain"*, so true Christianity depends totally on the resurrection of Jesus Christ and without that one historical fact is completely false. Of course the teachings of Jesus can be used as a basis for living a good and moral life, *"Love your neighbour as yourself"*, and many have done just that. However it does not go far enough and only provides a possible basis for life in this world and does nothing for our eternal prospects. Also to take away the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the teachings of a Man who called Himself *"The resurrection and the life"* in many ways negates all He said and undermines His authority, making it impossible ever to trust His words. The resurrection was so central to all that Jesus taught. In Matthew 16 we read *"From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day"*, and in John 2; *"Jesus answered and said unto them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up'. Then said the Jews, 'Forty and six years was this temple in building, and will thou rear it up in three days?' But he spoke of the temple of his body. 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"*. To have no resurrection would mean that Jesus was a total liar. Also there are many references in the Old Testament to the resurrection of someone from the dead, so the theme is very much central to the whole Bible message and the revelation of God to man, so without a resurrection the whole authority of the Bible is lost. That is how important the resurrection is and why it is the most important event in the whole history of mankind.

But as mentioned above the real purpose of this teaching is to encourage Christians in the truth and certainty of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and promote their confidence in Him and their boldness in declaring the faith they know. Living in the Western world, there is a general opposition to Christians and Christianity through many who deny the resurrection, maybe that is true of every part of the world. We live in a society dominated by science, so called, and riddled with teaching on evolution which pours scorn on any concept of the possibility of the resurrection. Most people exist without any living hope and have little or nothing to offer when someone dies. Flowers are placed, candles lit, nice things said, counselling provided for the bereaved, but there is no concept of eternal life and the sureness spoken of it in the Bible. Today Christians live in that sort of spiritual atmosphere and it can be very

invasive into their lives, meaning they can begin to lose the hope of eternal life being a constant joy in their hearts, and pick up the attitude of the world and allow it to affect their thinking. Perhaps there is a fear of being mocked, if ever a Christian were to mention the resurrection and the hope we have of everlasting life. It can be quite hard too when someone dies, for the Christian to declare his/her hope through his knowledge of Jesus Christ, when it is clear those bereaved friends and relatives have no hope at all, and by declaring their faith imply that the dead person is lost forever. Yet the Bible tells Christians to *"Be ready to give an account of the hope that is in us"*, and maybe the more we are assured of that hope, the easier it will be to pass it on.

The Bible tells us that Christians are *"born again to a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead"*, so the whole basis of that hope is Jesus' resurrection and our new birth is only because *"He is risen"*. If that is not the case we are still in our sins, and spiritually and eternally dead as far as God is concerned. In the book of Acts we have the preaching of the early apostles in those wonderful days of revival and, if we look, we will see that what they preached was the resurrection of the dead. Whether the preaching was to the Jews or the Non-Jews the message was just the same, and must continue to be so in this generation, if we are again to know the power of God in our lives and the *"Word of life"* held out to those who have not yet received Jesus Christ.

So, Acts chapter 2, let's start at the beginning. This is the first message preached after the coming of the Holy Spirit into the lives of the first apostles. They had seen the resurrected Jesus with their own eyes. Luke, the doctor, the man to whom facts would have been important and who was used to analysing data to achieve a diagnosis, tells us *"To whom 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."* So these men had seen Jesus in what are described as infallible proofs, (the word proofs is TEKMERION in the Greek which means a sure sign) and yet they had been told to wait until they had received the Power of the Holy Spirit; then they could be witnesses. So when the Holy Spirit came these apostles went out and preached and explained what had happened to them; they had received the Holy Spirit, and this was the fulfilment of the prophesy of Joel, that *"God would pour out His Spirit on all flesh"*. Peter then went on to explain why this had happened; *"Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: **Whom God hath raised up**, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be held by it"*.

There we have it, God had raised Jesus from the dead; it was just not possible that death should hold on to Him. Peter quotes David's psalm written 1000 years or so before, the Spirit of Christ being in him testifying of the sufferings of Christ and the glory which would follow, to confirm that God *"Would not allow Jesus' soul to rest in hell neither would He allow His Holy One to see corruption"*. Peter then adds *"He, seeing this before, spoke of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses"*. Peter continues *"The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand" and "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made the same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ"*. So here is the full testimony given by Peter; *"We are all witnesses."* Who are the witnesses and what are they the witnesses of?

David the psalmist is a witness; he talked about the resurrection 1000 years before it took place. Joel is a witness in that God has poured out His Spirit, which would not have been possible without the resurrection of Jesus. *"All we apostles"* are witnesses as we have seen Jesus crucified and yet alive from the dead. We are witnesses not only of the death and resurrection of Jesus but also that He has ascended into heaven and is now *"Lord and Christ"*. The positioning of Jesus at the right hand of God is the

for a moment to Hebrews chapter 1, we read *"Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee"* and *"But unto the Son he says "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever"*. These 2 scriptures, again from the wonderful psalmist David, confirm the truth that God has begotten, or brought back, His Son from the dead and also that

He has established His throne forever. So the message, in this first preaching, is of resurrection, but also of the establishing of the eternal authority of Jesus Christ, in this world and that which is to come.

This is the truth which Christians need to have confidence in and get established so firmly in their hearts. It will provide such assurance, and a dynamic in Christian lives which is irresistible. In Acts 4 the church cried out to God under the pressure and continued threat of persecution. There was no thought of backing off or running away for these believers, but rather a desire to take the battle to the enemy and demonstrate with signs and wonders the power of God. The result of their prayers was that the place was shaken, they were all filled again with the Spirit of God, and *"With great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus"*. It was the resurrection which they gave witness to, it was at the heart of all they preached; Jesus is alive and His power is working in our lives. In the next chapter of Acts, once the issue of Ananias and Sapphira was resolved and the sin and compromise removed from the church, out went Peter and the apostles bearing witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus and even Peter's shadow was able to work miracles. All those who had come from miles around into Jerusalem with any sickness or problem were healed. This was the confidence these early Christians had in the resurrection of Jesus Christ and even the rulers had to recognise *"You have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine"*.

In Acts 3 we have the remarkable account of the healing of the man at the beautiful gate. Peter, when he was confronted with the need of the lame man, said *"Silver and gold (i.e. money) have I none, but in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk"*. "Jesus of Nazareth" is mentioned in Acts 2 also, identifying all that happened with the miracle with this man, Jesus, who had a natural birth, though He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and grew up in Nazareth and was well known by the people there, being the son of a carpenter called Joseph. He really had lived and had been crucified; they had all seen that; yet this Jesus was risen, He was alive. There is nothing nebulous (shaky or cloudy) about this man, he had had a natural life and now He had eternal life. So sure were the two disciples of what they knew about Jesus that they command this man in the *"Name of Jesus to rise up and walk"*. He is healed before their eyes and off he goes, *"Walking and leaping and praising God"*: the whole city is in uproar, so amazed are the people at what has taken place. Everyone would have known the man, some may well have given him money, perhaps more than once, on their way into the temple, but here he was walking and leaping. Peter explains to them how it happened. These are his comments; *"But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all"*. The resurrection is again at the heart of their preaching and it is "His name through faith in His name" that has healed this man. Why? Because He is alive, He is risen from the dead, and therefore has an ability above and beyond the strength of the lameness which had spoiled this man's life.

In Acts 10 we read of when Peter went to preach to the first Gentiles to hear the gospel, again he mentions the resurrection. God had given Peter a special vision to confirm that it was right to go and speak to Cornelius and his family. Until that point it would have been totally out of the question for Peter to do such a thing, as it was very much against the Jewish culture, which kept them separate from all non-Jews. But the gospel of Jesus Christ knows no barriers and is for Jews and non-Jew alike, it is the gospel to the whole world. Peter spoke to Cornelius *"Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons.... how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power..... Him God raised up the third day, and showed him openly....that through his name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins.... the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word"*. So we see again it is "Jesus of Nazareth", confirming the natural origins of the man, then His resurrection and the forgiveness of sins available in Jesus' name. All that heard were filled with the Holy Ghost, demonstrating in their lives the power of the gospel and of God towards them, in raising His Son from the dead, enabling them to be forgiven their sins and receive the Spirit of God.

Back in Acts chapter 2, after Peter had preached, the listeners asked him what they should do. His reply *"Repent and be baptised for the remission of your sins and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost"* So there was the same outcome as for the family of Cornelius, the same promise for all who would respond to the Lord Jesus. They could have their sins forgiven, could receive the Holy Spirit into their lives, and find the transforming power of God working in them. It is all quite remarkable and shows the immense spiritual effect of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Finally, as far as the preaching is concerned, we can look at Acts 17 and see what Paul preached on Mars Hill in Athens, the centre, at that time, of debate and philosophy and where *they "Spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing"*. Paul's final words were *"Because He (God) has appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained (Jesus Christ); whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that **He hath raised Him from the dead**"*. Some mocked, we are told, when they heard of the resurrection but others wanted to hear more, but again the very essence of the preaching is the resurrection of the Lord Jesus and all that it means. As mentioned above, the resurrection has an immense eternal spiritual effect, and maybe it is good now to look at Paul's letters and look further into the outworking of that immense power in human lives. In Ephesians 1 Paul prays for the church members, that they will have the *"Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him..... the eyes of their understanding being enlightened....that they may know... the exceeding greatness of His power towards us who believe, which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead"*. What is needed as we go through the Bible's teaching on these truths is the revelation to our hearts. We live in an age when so much is taught to human minds: that is information, but what is needed is "revelation, not information", as only the revelation of this truth will bring the power of God to our hearts.

We need first to pop into Romans 1, vs 3 & 4 *"Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead"*. Again we see the same truth spoken by Peter, in that this Jesus was born after the flesh. Peter uses *"Jesus of Nazareth"*, Paul, *"of the seed of David"*, but both confirm that the Jesus who rose again was indeed a natural man. The comment by Paul has an additional significance in taking us back in the natural origins of the Lord Jesus to King David: if we read in 1 Chronicles 17, there is the promise that God would raise up a man from David's seed, his descendants, to sit on his throne for ever. So Jesus fulfils both the natural outworking of this promise, made 1000 years before He came to the earth, in that He is raised up a natural descendant, but He is also the fulfilment of the *"throne for ever"* by being raised from the dead to sit on the eternal throne of God. Only that resurrection provides what the book of Hebrews describes as *"The power of an endless life"*. Isaiah tells the same thing in the famous chapter 9 of his prophecy, *"Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, **upon the throne of David**, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this"*. These words follow on from the phrase *"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given"* So by the birth of the baby Jesus, the child is born, from the descendants of David, but much more, the Son, the Son of God, is given who will sit on the throne of God for ever. We are told the *"zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this"*, and how better can the zeal of the Lord be expressed but in that He raised Jesus from the dead?

No wonder Paul says in the verses in Romans, *"Declared to be the Son of God with power by the spirit of holiness (the Holy Spirit) by the resurrection from the dead"*. What a declaration! God shouts it out for all to hear! He shouts it out in heaven, on the earth, in hell and everywhere, Jesus is Lord; He is risen. We are all witnesses if we have received the testimony of God and the Lord Jesus into our hearts. Hallelujah!!!

So back to our pursuit of the outworking of the resurrection in our lives. We read in Romans chapter 4 *"But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification"*. Perhaps, if you are able, it would be good to read the whole chapter in your Bible, which talks to us about "justification by faith", and goes through the faith of Abraham believing God's promise about the provision of his son Isaac, and how God imputed, or reckoned, this faith to Abraham for righteousness. It says that it will be imputed/reckoned to us also who believe on Him who raised Jesus from the dead. It is important to understand righteousness, right-wise-ness, is what the word means. The "wise" bit is old English meaning way or manner, so it is being in the right way or right manner; but the right way or manner is with God. It is right standing with God, but also a rightness which is outworked in our lives as a result. It is surely true that anyone who is in a right standing with God must see that rightness work out in their lives: how can we be right with God and sin in our lives? Everyone needs right standing with God. Jesus said *"Unless your righteousness exceeds that of the Scribes and the Pharisees you cannot enter the kingdom of God"*. So righteousness is imputed or reckoned to us. Again, it is helpful to understand the word 'impute' or 'reckon' in the original language. It means to reckon up or to count, as

someone would do if you went to buy some goods. They would add it all up. They would look at the price of each item and then do some simple addition and get an answer. These days almost worldwide we have calculators, they are on mobile phones, computers, even on watches, and work brilliantly, and for us when God reckons, it is as if He gets out His spiritual calculator and reckons righteousness to us.

On what basis? We find this in the last verse of Romans 4. *"He was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification"*. All the sin of the world was laid on Jesus Christ and He was delivered to death for it. *"He was made sin who knew no sin"*; when you sin you die, and that is exactly what happened to Jesus and His blood was literally shed, as well as His spiritual lifeblood. *"We were redeemed not with silver and gold but with the precious blood of Christ"*. That was the price which had to be paid and is the calculation God had to make when He sent His Son. But Jesus was raised from the dead. The power of death is sin, so by raising Jesus from the dead, the power of sin is broken. Jesus being raised from the dead justifies us, in that He has taken sin out of the way. It is gone! Jesus won the battle and sin has no more power.

The righteous judgement of God on us because of our sin has been taken by Jesus, and that judgement is totally satisfied in that Jesus died for the sins of the whole world. Instead of death we have life. We believe, we put all our trust on this work of the Lord Jesus, on the one offering or sacrifice, and God can take out His calculator and reckon us righteous, right with Him. He reckons to us the righteousness of His Son, obtained in that the just suffered for the unjust, Jesus did the will of His father, and rose again proving that there was no unrighteousness in Him. Hallelujah. All we need to do is to believe. No longer do we need to try and do it all by good works, but just simply believe on what God has done for us in His Son and we receive this wonderful grace into our lives, the righteousness which is of God by faith. Paul, as we commented earlier, says, *"If Christ is not risen you are still in your sins"*, but Jesus is alive and is the perfect sacrifice for sins so that we can be free of them. John tells us in his first letter, *"If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness"*. Confession of our need is required: there is the requirement for honesty with God and a recognition, as King David recognised, that *"Against you and against you only have I sinned"*. Ultimately our sin or wrong doing is against God, and once we repent and confess then the way is opened for us to be forgiven and justified, on the basis of the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus, who was raised again for our justification.

But the resurrection has more power in our lives than just the basis for our justification, wonderful though that is. Paul, in Philippians 3.10 says *"And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death"*. So once *"in Christ"*, in His righteousness, we can know Him. This is the personal relationship with the Lord Jesus, which is, of course, available to all Christians and really what Christianity is; *"This is eternal life that they may know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent"*. It is knowledge, fellowship, oneness etc. There are many words to describe the closeness into which we are brought with the Lord Jesus and fulfil the promise of the New Covenant *"They shall all know me from the least to the greatest"*. That is great, but then it is for a purpose, *"to know the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings."* This is to be deeply involved with the Lord Jesus in His care for His church and the world, and the laying down of our lives in our service of Him. The laying down of our lives, if it is to continue, must have the principle of resurrection within it. As we lay our lives down, so this great principle of eternal life just springs up in our hearts enabling us to follow Jesus; *"dying, behold we live"*.

Paul, writing to the Romans in chapter 6 says, *"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection"*. We have been baptised, immersed or totally joined into Jesus death. That is eternally when He died for

us. *"I am crucified with Christ"* says Paul, and thus the Holy Spirit joins us in that death when He baptises us into Jesus' death. Once in that death, we are raised up together with Jesus, to walk in newness of life. This is the lifestyle of the Christian, newness of life. It is not new life, but newness of life, as there is only really one life and that is the life of God, which is always new. It is eternal and therefore does not age, and this is the life we receive when we receive the Lord Jesus. We are to live in it, walk in it, triumph in it, it is a total joy; the

fulfilment of Jesus' prayer, *"That my joy may be fulfilled in them"*.

In this newness of life we are to *"Reckon ourselves dead indeed unto sin but alive unto God through our Lord Jesus Christ"*. We have seen how God calculates as He reckons righteousness to us, so now we calculate by faith and reckon ourselves dead to sin but alive to God. Why? Because we are alive from the dead, spiritually, we are in Jesus' resurrection, no longer *"dead in trespasses and sins but raised up together and seated together with Him in heavenly places"*. This is the power of His resurrection and it is exceedingly great, as Jesus was raised by the might of God and set at His own right hand in the heavenly places, *"Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that fills all in all"*. Jesus puts us into this same place and all other names, powers/authorities and so on are subject to Him. His name is greater, His authority is greater. Jesus raised us up into a place where no other spiritual power, whether it be ancestral, cultural, national, or worked against us by others or our own sin, has power or need have power over us. This is freedom, not to please ourselves but to serve the Lord. 2 Corinthians 5 says this *"For the love of Christ constrains us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again."* This is again another spiritual judgement we make in faith. Jesus died for us, He died for all, and in that He died for all, those who live should not live any longer to themselves but unto Him who died and rose again.

We have seen that Jesus raised us up together with Him to walk in newness of life. Romans 8 tells us that the *"Spirit is life because of righteousness"*, so we are alive, we are alive in Him because our spirits are alive, because of His righteousness. Therefore we are among those who live, but we don't live unto ourselves but unto Jesus. It breaks the selfishness in our lives, hallelujah, the self-interest that dominates so many people and in the end brings them back to what they want. The word on their lips is *"I"* and they love themselves, plan their own future and promote their own self-interest. Praise the Lord, how great to be free of this power of sin and to walk in newness of life, putting the Lord Jesus' will at the centre of our lives and trusting Him to lead us in the right way. It is so good to be able to trust Him and to walk in faith and walk in the light. This is how we can fellowship in His sufferings.

Of course it is unusual, although it still happens, that Christians are killed for their faith in these days. Many suffer persecution but for all of us, once we are free of the self-centredness of our lives, Jesus, having put His love into our hearts, can then share with us the cares and burdens of others, to help them, pray for them and minister the gospel to them. There is a place where we cannot accept deliverance but *"follow Jesus"* and go the way of the cross and thereby achieve *"a better resurrection"*. We can then be conformable to His death, a life laid down for the will of God, with no sin, bitterness, unforgiveness, but just pure love. Paul writes this in Romans 14 *"For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living"*. Here is our certainty, Paul never considered His life dear to himself, assured that whether he lived or died He was the Lord's. Oh! How resurrection leads us to this freedom and we are no longer living in *"bondage through fear of death"*. It is not that we want to throw this life away, until we have fulfilled the will of the Lord but, when the time comes *"To be with Christ, which is far better"*. So many Christians live this life as if that is all there is, and are no different from their non-Christian neighbours, but here is our hope, the hope of everlasting life to which we are born by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. It is wonderful and yet practical as we live unto God and see all our lives with purpose, unto the day when Jesus comes back again.

Paul tells us *"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwells in you"*. Even our mortal bodies can be made alive, quickened is the old English word, by the Spirit of God which dwells in us. Even with our bodies we are not limited to natural ability, in mind too, but we can be quickened unto rightness, and the things we do in and with our bodies, with that rightness and holiness working in us, truly produces fruit unto God. *"The fruit of the Spirit is"* Jesus said *"He that abides in me, and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing"*. This is our wonderful privilege in serving the Lord. Paul says it this way *"For we who **live** are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the **life** also of Jesus might be made*

manifest in **our mortal flesh**". It is the same principle just put another way. Resurrection changed everything and when we receive the risen Christ He changes us and we can be fruitful in God's will.

There is also another change that will come in the day when Jesus returns *"For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall **change** our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."* This is the final act to complete our salvation, He will change our bodies to be like His glorious body. *"We shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is"*. Though our spirits can be regenerated and our souls saved, our bodies will die. Even Jesus laid down his natural life, but was raised from the dead, so also our bodies will die. We need resurrection at that time too. Our souls go into the presence of God as we are raised up with Him, *"To be with Christ which is far better"*, and resurrection is also ours when He comes again *"We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory"*. It all happens in a moment, so fast that we will not see death or corruption, as our Lord Jesus did not see corruption. *"So also is the resurrection of the dead."* *"It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body"*. *"Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you"*.

The Bible is overwhelmingly clear: there is eternal life, there is forgiveness of sins, there is newness of life, there is the power of His resurrection and there is resurrection of the body. All are sure and certain because of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. There is sure hope for us all. *"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead"* is Paul's comment. We don't just have hope in this life but in that which is to come, for Christ is risen from the dead, the hope of eternal life with God for ever. Most people have no hope, Christians have hope in this life and in that which is to come!! This then can be our manner of life until the day of the Lord Jesus *"For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal"*.

This is the joy for the Christian, seeing Jesus raised up, seated at the throne of God for us: to Him we look in this life and for His coming. Even if our outward man perishes, our inward man, that from where the newness of life comes and in which we have our relationship with the Lord Jesus, is renewed day by day. It is newness of life, eternal life, which never ages and will keep us ready for the day of Our Lord's return. Even so come Lord Jesus. Will you be ready?