

# JESUS WILL SET US FREE

By Pastor Mike Taylor

**31** “Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;

**32** And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.....

**35** And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.

**36** If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.” (John 8:31-32, 35-36)

Have you sat down and thought about why it is, what you believe and why you believe it? The Bible is full of reasons for Christianity, and its teachings...But if you are thinking about it right now, what is the one thing that stands out as unique about the Bible to you? What is it about our belief in Jesus Christ that makes it different than any religion found on this earth?

There are numerous answers to those questions. Some will find different answers that are just as valid concerning with being a Christian and a follower of Jesus Christ as another. But what makes it (in my mind) to stand out independent of all other religions on earth, it's an all or nothing perspective on Who and what we believe in.

Just think of all the many different details that surround our belief system in Jesus Christ, as the Messiah, and our Lord and Savior...if any of those details that surround the life and ministry of our Lord Jesus are false, then the whole Gospel message just falls apart. If the Bible did not tell the story exactly as it happened, how Jesus lived, what He accomplished in His life, what He did to save us from our sins, and to rise from the grave on the third day, according to the time line of facts that the bible lays out, then we are a people that are most certainly misled and the Bible account of the most important Man/God that ever lived, collapses in on itself.

**12** “Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?

**13** But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen:

**14** And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.

**15** Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.

**16** For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised:

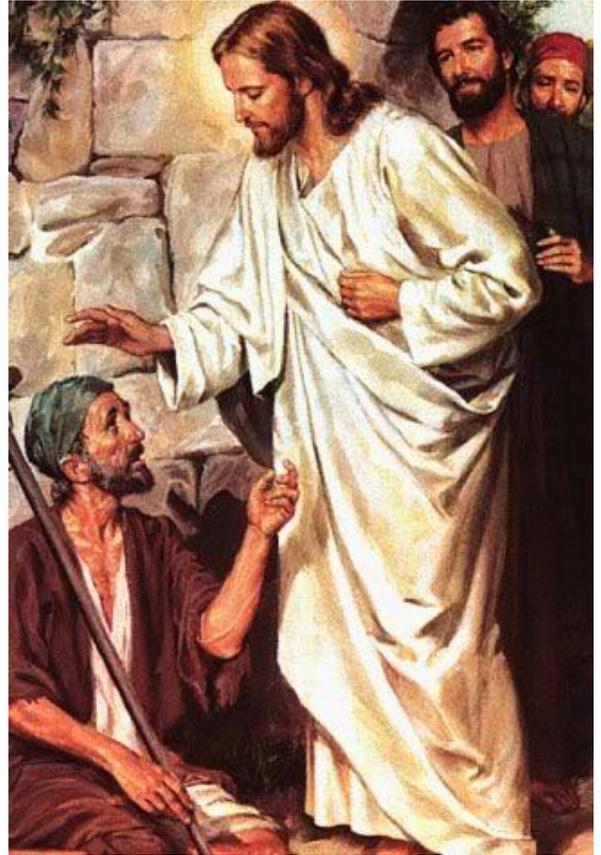
**17** And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.

**18** Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished”. (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:12-18)

There are many secular so-called Christian scholars who deny that the Resurrection was an actual event, but instead take a contemporary view of Greek philosophy which believes that the soul is immortal, but not the body. Which if you think about it, why are they even called Christian, or followers of Christ, when they deny the Biblical resurrection of Christ? They are actually Gnostics who deny Jesus is the risen Christ bodily and glorified.

## JESUS THE FIRST FRUITS OF THOSE BORN OF THE DEAD

But the bible tells us that one day, the spirit of man will be reunited with a glorified raised physical body for those raised belonging to Christ, at His appearing. It has and will come in stages....Jesus the first fruits of those who are born of the dead, then those who are raised to new life, at the catching away of the church at the appearing of our



Lord. The Bible calls it by definition, 'harpazo' which literally means be "taken by force". Some call it the rapture. Then the next stage is those who are raised to life at the end of the Tribulation, who are the Tribulation saints who died in Christ as martyrs, and this is the first resurrection.

**5** "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.

**6** Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." (Revelation 20:5-6).

Christian doctrines mandates that all men will be resurrected, some in the "first Resurrection" from Jesus being raised, till the Tribulation saints are raised, this encompasses the first resurrection..But there is one final resurrection at the Great White Throne judgment. It will be those NOT found in Jesus Christ and they will be damned to an eternal punishment in the Lake of Fire where Satan, the Anti-Christ, and the false prophet end up, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

But note that the Resurrection of Christ, being the first fruits of those born of the dead, MUST have a real historical event, or the entire doctrine collapses. And as Paul tells us, then if there be no resurrection, then we are all (including himself) found to be liars, as Paul pointed out to the Corinthian Church:

**13**But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen:

**14**And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.

**15**Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.

**16**For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised:

**17**And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins." (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:13-17)

In continuing our investigation that I started last sermon, was the "Apostles Preaching a Fraud", let us look even more closely into that aspect of our faith.

The New Testament story is based entirely on eyewitness testimony. The Apostles wrote what they saw. So if they did not witness an actual, bodily Resurrected Christ and yet claimed they did, then none of the rest of their testimony is reliable

### **THE APOSTLES PREACHED A RISEN CHRIST**

Yet everyone of them (save John the Beloved) chose to die a martyr's death rather than recant their eye witness testimony. They recanted not one word of what they saw and heard. To further ram home the obvious point, if they knew their explanation was false, and their witness was a lie, why would they choose to be killed for a lie? Doesn't make sense does it?

Men throughout history have given up their lives for what they thought was true, which turned out to be false. Men die for an unworthy cause, which they believed was a true and a noble cause, but turns out was not true at all. But I know of no historical case, where a person would willingly die for something they knew to be FALSE. Reason being, the sympathetic nervous system has a fight or flight safety mechanism to preserve life at all cost. Courage makes you charge into danger for a just cause, knowing it could cost you your life, but no man in their right man charges into danger, when they know the cause is anything but truth.

To argue that the Gospel is not true means arguing that ALL the Apostles faced painful, torturous deaths that they could have avoided by simply recanting.

The skeptic denies the apostles' eye witness testimony that was written down as a record to help them believe in the only Begotten Son of God, but fail to give an explanation for their skepticism. Why would the apostles give up their way of life, for a life of misery, deprivation, heart-ache and pain at the hand of a pagan government, culminating in a torturous death just to spread a myth?

As we discovered last time, why would any man, on any level, being a reasonable, sane individual make up a story that ruined their lives, costing them their family and friends and trading it for a life of persecution ending with a miserable death as a criminal of the state? For what? So their names would be known 2000 years later and they would be famous?? Now does that sound reasonable to any person of logical deduction reasoning?

## **SOME DENY OBVIOUS PROOF, EXCEPT SECULAR WRITERS**

Why is it that nobody denies the accuracy of some of the Greek philosophers' writings, such as Plato, Socrates, or Homer? Or Suetonius, or Flavius Josephus (save the part where he actually refers to Jesus as a real historical figure)?

Before the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls our earliest Hebrew copy of the Old Testament was the Masoretic text dating around 800 A.D. The Dead Sea Scrolls date around the time of Jesus copied by the Qumran community, a Jewish sect living around the Dead Sea. But there are other texts that confirm the validity of our faith.

We also have the *Septuagint* -- a Greek translation of the Old Testament dating to the second century B.C. The oldest existing original manuscript of a New Testament book dates to 125 A.D. It was found in Egypt, some distance from where the New Testament was originally composed in Asia Minor.

In all, there are more than 24,000 ancient manuscripts against which to compare our modern Bible. Now that is a huge body of work and PROOF!

If you compare the amount of evidence for the existence of Jesus and His crucifixion and subsequent resurrection, the evidence is astounding the amount of material available to prove the whole of Christianity. When compared to other historical writings, such as Caesar's "*Gallic Wars*" (10 Greek manuscripts, the earliest 950 years after the original), the "*Annals*" of Tacitus (2 manuscripts, the earliest 950 years after the original), Livy (20 manuscripts, the earliest 350 years after the original), and Plato (7 manuscripts).

The New Testament manuscripts agree in 99.5% of the text, compared to 95% of say the Iliad. Most discrepancies of the New Testament are in spelling and word order. A few words have been added, but the minor changes do not change the doctrinal significance of the whole of the Gospel message.

Skeptics, liberals, atheist, and cults of false religions baseless claims that the Bible has been tampered with have been proven completely false by extensive, historical manuscript evidence.

We who are pre-Tribulation rapture believers would be completely refuted if there is no bodily resurrection of Jesus. If the Resurrection is not a completely historical event then the tragedy is only compounded. (Not only are you putting your hopes in a false promise of redemption, but you are still dead in your sins). If there is no resurrection, there is no Comforter in the Holy Spirit that indwells you as an earnest deposit awaiting your future glorification.

Yea, and we are then found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God :

**15** "Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.

**16** For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised:

**17** And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.

**18** Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.

**19** If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

**20** But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept." 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:15-20)

Other confirmation come from the book of Job, the oldest book, chronologically, in the Bible, spoke confidently of his own resurrection:, even before the time of Abraham: "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." (Job 19:25-27)

But Jesus gave us additional revelation, a new 'mystery' for the Church, telling us exactly what happens when we die. There is no 'soul sleep' as those who read the OT prophets supposed.

Jesus spoke specifically about the moment of death when our conscious spirit moves on...lives on, awaiting the resurrection of the dead, when our spirit awaits the reuniting with our glorified body. Paul spoke of in a mystery of our glorious change in 1 Corinthians 15:52:

“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.”

But John reveals what the transformation shall be when he proclaimed: “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is” (1<sup>st</sup> John 3:2)

### **FRET NOT AS ONE WITH NO HOPE**

But as Christian people, when a loved one dies, we are heartbroken...why is that? Even when we know that their race is over, and they have received exactly what we want to receive. We miss them, because we are deprived, for a little while, of their companionship. Amazingly, every one wants to go to heaven, but nobody wants to die. But some erroneously believe they are only sleeping.

But we aren't 'sleeping' while we wait. During the Dispensation of the Church, the Apostle Paul noted that for believers to be 'absent from the body' meant to be 'present with the Lord.'

**6** “Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:

**7** (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

**8** We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

**9** Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him” (2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians 5:6-9)

The Apostle Paul wrote of physical death as it pertains to believers, saying;

“But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.” (1 Thessalonians 4:13)

### **JESUS WILL SET ALL OF US FREE AT HIS COMING**

On this earth, in this life, we have a sure and lasting promise of a time that is coming when Jesus will ascend from heaven with the voice of an archangel and the Trump of God and “the Son will set us free”.

**14** “For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

**15** For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

**16** For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

**17** Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

**18** Wherefore comfort one another with these words.” (1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 4:13-18)

Jesus has been resurrected, and history proves that many speak of a historical Jesus, who really lived on this earth...We have eye witness testimony of our Risen Lord by thousands of people who spoke with Him, touched Him, and ate with Him, after His resurrection. We have historians that give proof of the life and death of Jesus Christ, and we have the eye witness testimony of His Apostles who went to their death for One they lived and died for. Logic tells us, that they had to be telling the truth, as no one dies for a lie...the evidence is overwhelming.

And for us, living in the end of the Age of Grace, we have an even greater promise that will possibly be fulfilled in my lifetime. Jesus promised that from the blooming of the fig tree which is Israel, that a generation who sees this happen will see the return of Jesus Christ.

**32** “Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh:

**33** So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.

**34** Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

**35** Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

**36** But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.” (Matthew 24:32-36)

A generation is 70 years, and 80 years by strength. Anyone can add each number to 1948...it shows how close we could be. Many Christians are watching the heavens looking for that blessed Hope to return to take His church out of this world. If you have followed any of my messages, you know I propose that it MAY happen on the next Feast Day to be fulfilled, the Feast of Trumpets...now no one knows which one, or which day, as there are two day of that particular feast day, as God has fulfilled each one on the very day of its observance by Ancient Israel...I will be looking to the heavens this fall, listening for a trumpet blast....I pray it is coming soon.....but we don't know the year...but we watch and pray.

But as a side note, I had one person give me an interesting observation....their question was something I had not thought about and they may be just looking for a clue to the time of Jesus' return, but the reader pointed out one current event related to our political climate on this verse:

**52** “In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last TRUMP (my emphasis): for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.” (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:52)

As anyone knows, we just elected as POTUS....the last TRUMP...was God sending us a message? I don't make any predictions, but I found it interesting.

But assuredly, the signs of His soon return are all around us....I believe that when the time of the Lord's return is close, God may just give us the same revelation He gave Noah before the flood...God told Noah, after 120 years of preaching a coming flood, that in 7 days, the rains would begin....will God give us a revelation of His Son's soon return, by bringing a man into the POTUS with the same last name, as the last “TRUMP”? We don't know, and again, I make no predictions...I just hope and pray it is so...but when it happens will you be found rising to meet him in the air? Because it is going to happen; maybe sooner than anyone thinks.

If not, you will be missing the greatest event in our history, next the Lord's resurrection. Better get ready for the time could come without any warning...How will you get ready?

**16** “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

**17**For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

**18**He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” (John 3:16-18)

Jesus will surprise those who are not looking for Him...it will be as a thief in the night.

**1** “But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

**2** For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

**3** For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

**4** But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

**5** Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

**6** Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.” (1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:1-6)

So all that believe in Jesus, believe in His resurrection after being crucified on a Roman cross, are in the light, even as He is in the light, and we will not be surprised...we will be joyful and our hands lifted high in praise to His Holy Name. But to those who are in darkness and do not believe what I just wrote, then you will be sorely

surprised and in remorse, when you finally understand what has just happened....but as a “watchman on the wall” our job, those who preach His soon return are to warn those who do not have Jesus in their heart and lives...

"When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at *thine* hand." ([Ezekiel 33:8](#)). So my friend, consider this a warning delivered in love, that the hour is close and very soon, our Lord will ascend from heaven, and ultimately..JESUS WILL SET US FREE. How about you?

This is Pastor Mike Taylor, praying you are ready at the trumpet sound. If you need prayer, counseling, or just a friendly ear, Email me at [realteam1999@sbcglobal.net](mailto:realteam1999@sbcglobal.net). God bless you all.

**TILL WE MEET AT JESUS FEET**