

Elementary Truths of Christianity – Resurrection of the Dead Part 1

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- According to the Hebrew writer, there are elementary truths that the Christian must know before reaching maturity
 - Hebrews 5:11-6:3
 - They all revolve around Christ
 - And this should come as no surprise
 - 1 Corinthians 3:11 describes Jesus as the foundation
 - Repentance from acts that lead to death
 - Faith in God
 - Instruction about baptism
 - Laying on of hands
 - The resurrection of the dead
 - Eternal judgment
- This is just common sense – with everything, one must learn the basics before being mature at anything
 - Musical instruments take time and practice to get good at
 - Math skills are the same way
 - Even sports
 - It should not surprise us that the Hebrew writer is telling us that Christianity is no different
- In this sermon, we are going to focus on the resurrection of the dead
- We're going to break this one into 2 parts as there are many things to discuss in relation to this one
- Let's begin by looking at several people who were raised from the dead physically in the Bible
 - Widow of Zarephath's son (1 Kings 17:17-24)
 - Keep in mind that God just performed a miracle for this woman and her son through Elijah not long before this (vs 7-16)
 - The woman and her son had very limited food, and what little they had left – the woman used it to make a meal for Elijah
 - It was so bad that she thought her and her son were going to eat this last meal together and die
 - But God had other plans – they were given food from God
 - But now her son gets sick – and he does die (vs 17)
 - Elijah cried out to the Lord for this woman's son and he was raised from the dead
 - Notice – it was Elijah's cry, but God did the raising of the dead
 - And by this – the woman knew that Elijah was a man of God and that his words could be taken as truth, as they were truly from God
 - That was always the purpose of miracles – to confirm the message (John 3:2)

- Shunammite woman's son (2 Kings 4:18-37)
 - This woman was very kind to Elisha – prepared a room for him to stay when he came to the area to visit
 - God gives her a son
 - But this son has issues with his head and he dies from those issues not long after in his mother's arms
 - You can imagine the distress this must have caused her
 - And she went to find Elisha
 - So Elisha sends Gehazi ahead of him and his attempts to raise the boy were unsuccessful
 - Finally, Elisha gets there and this time – the boy was raised from the dead
 - You can see God working through Elisha here
- Man raised out of Elisha's grave (2 Kings 13:20-21)
 - Here we read of Elisha's death and burial – the previous verses tell us that he had some sort of terminal illness
 - Some Israelites were burying a man and saw Moabite raiders
 - So they threw the body into Elisha's tomb and when it touched the bones of Elisha, the man was risen from the dead
 - So even with Elisha dead, God was still performing miracles through his bones
 - Just goes to show it was never Elisha doing these miracles – but God through him
- Widow of Nain's son (Luke 7:11-17)
 - Now we move to a few NT examples – Jesus performs this one
 - Jesus comes to a town called Nain
 - A dead person was being carried out as He approached the town gate
 - This dead person was the only son of a widow – so this was a big deal, this woman had no one to take care of her
 - The Lord felt compassion for this woman and He raised her son with His words
 - And the people praised God as a result – notice again that miracles weren't performed for the benefit of the sick or the dead, but to display God's glory to mankind (John 3:2)
- Jairus' daughter (Luke 8:40-56)
 - A ruler of the synagogue, Jairus, came to Jesus on behalf of his daughter who was dying
 - So Jesus makes His way to Jairus' house and heals a woman of her bleeding on the way
 - Before they could get to the house, the girl died
 - But Jesus continued anyways and when He got to the house, He raised the girl from the dead
 - A very interesting statement is made in vs 55 – we'll discuss momentarily
- Various saints in Jerusalem (Matthew 27:50-53)

- At the moment that Jesus died on the cross, we're told that numerous things happened
 - The curtain of the temple was torn from top to bottom proving that no man could have done this
 - The earth shook and rocks split
 - And many holy people who had died were raised to life – apparently, they stuck around for a few days and appeared to many people
 - Lazarus (John 11:38-44)
 - In vs 43 – why did Jesus have to specify Lazarus? They were in the tomb of Lazarus
 - I can't confirm this of course, but it's very possible that because if He hadn't specified Lazarus, all of the dead everywhere would have been raised
 - The word of the Lord is seriously that powerful
 - Here we have another example of Him raising the dead with His words
 - Tabitha (Acts 9:36-43)
 - Tabitha, or Dorcas, was always doing good and helping the poor
 - And she eventually died
 - So some disciples call Peter
 - Peter prayed for her and she was raised from the dead
 - This time, it is God through Peter who does the raising of the dead
 - Notice again that God was praised as a result of this (John 3:2)
 - Eutychus (Acts 20:7-12)
 - Paul is preaching in Troas – he wasn't leaving until the next day, so he took this time to preach
 - Until midnight – Paul is preaching
 - Eutychus falls asleep – Paul must have been somewhat boring. Or the fact that it was midnight, I'm sure people were just getting tired
 - Not a wise decision here – Eutychus fell asleep while sitting in an open window on the third story of this meeting place
 - And of course, God raises Eutychus from the dead through Paul which greatly comforted the people
- Now all these folks were raised from the dead physically – let's look at 2 more unique examples – further proving God's greatness
 - Isaac (Hebrews 11:17-19)
 - A reference back to Genesis 22 of course
 - As we discussed in our lesson on faith, notice that it was by faith Abraham acted here – his faith was a working faith
 - And ours must be as well
 - When God told Abraham to sacrifice Isaac, Abraham just assumed that God would raise Isaac from the dead
 - So in a way, Isaac was already dead

- When God stopped Abraham from sacrificing his son, in the same way – Abraham received Isaac back from the dead
 - God is God and Abraham is but a mere man, but you can see the similarities here between Abraham and Isaac and compare that with God the Father and God the Son, Jesus
 - Jesus (**Luke 24:1-12**)
 - Death could not hold the king of kings
 - Why was the stone rolled away from the tomb? So that Jesus could get out? Of course not
 - It was so that others could see inside and find that Jesus was not there
 - Jesus didn't need that stone to be removed to get out – He created it
 - The angels approached the women in these verses and say “*Why seek the living with the dead.*”
 - Amazing words – Jesus lives and He is alive today
 - If Christ wasn't raised, our faith is useless (1 Corinthians 15:14)
 - This is what we imitate in our baptism – our old man of sin is raised from the dead spiritually through baptism and arises a new creature, just as Christ did (Romans 6:1-11)
 - The single most important set of events in human history – Christ's life, His death, burial, and resurrection
 - Praise God for this indescribable gift (2 Corinthians 9:15)
- These physical examples we provided all went through a physical change of state
- The Bible discusses a spiritual change of state that you and I can go through if we choose to take God up on His plan of salvation
 - **Ephesians 2:1-10**
 - We were dead in our transgressions at one point
 - But thanks to God's love for us – He made us alive with Christ
 - And by grace, we can be saved
 - But only those who are obedient to His terms – His gospel plan of salvation
- God's plan of salvation is simple and must be followed (just like Naaman's situation in 2 Kings 5)
 - **Step 1: Hearing the gospel** – *Romans 10:13-17*
 - Gospel = Jesus Christ died for our sins, was buried, arose, and appeared to many – *1 Corinthians 15:1-8, Romans 1:16*
 - **Step 2: Believing the gospel** – *Mark 16:16, John 3:16*
 - **Step 3: Confession that Jesus is Lord** – *Romans 10:8-10, 1 John 1:9*
 - **Step 4: Repentance of sins** – *Luke 13:3, Acts 2:38*
 - Repentance: a turning away from sin, disobedience, or rebellion and a turning back to God. Change of mind that produces a change in action.
 - **Step 5: Baptism into Christ** – *Galatians 3:27, Acts 2:38, Romans 6:1-10, 1 Peter 3:21-22*
 - Baptism: immerse or submerge
 - **Step 6: Live faithfully** – *Revelation 2:10*