

Easter Sunday: ALIVE FOREVER MORE (Calven Celliers)

“One day you will hear that Billy Graham has died. Don’t you believe it – I’ll be more alive on that day than I ever was!” [Billy Graham]

Read John 11: 25 & 26. Everyone who lives believing in Jesus does not ultimately die. Do you believe this? Yes, the day will come when we, as born-again believers, will die. But the reality is that we’ll be more alive on that day than we ever were. Do you believe this?

Do you believe that this life is not all there really is? Do you believe that this life is preparation for a life to come, and that you’re going to spend far more time on the other side of death than you will ever get to spend here? I want you to imagine that this rope has no end, it just goes on and on and on, wrapping itself around the world a few times before travelling on into infinity and beyond. And I want you to imagine that this rope is a timeline, a timeline of your existence. And you see this red part (*tip of the rope*), this represents your time on earth, your lifetime on earth, the 70, 80, if you’re lucky 90 years on earth. You’ve got a few short years here on earth, and then you’ve got all of eternity somewhere else – *“The one who believes in me will live, even though they die.”* And the tragedy is that so many people only ever think about this red part. They’re consumed with life on this side of eternity as if it’s all there is. I’m going to go to school, so I can go to university, so I can get a good job, get married, have children, work hard, and save, save, save, so that I can retire and really enjoy this part right here. How crazy does that sound right now? And what the Bible teaches is that what we do with this teeny tiny little red bit is ultimately going to determine how and where I’m going to exist for millions and billions and trillions and zillions of years thereafter. And the reality is that this can end at any second for any of one of us, this is our one chance, and then comes eternity.

Read Matthew 6: 19 – 21. To make the most of life you have to keep the vision of eternity continually in your mind and the value of it in your heart. There’s far more to life than just the here and now. You must live in the light of eternity! Do you believe this?

The validity of all this is of course based purely on what we commemorate today. Christianity becomes nothing more than a vain religion without the resurrection. Everything we know to be part of Christianity hinges on the resurrection of Jesus. Without the resurrection there is no hope, no grace, no peace, and no Gospel message. Without the resurrection everything that you and I believe and stand for would be nothing more than futile, useless, a waste our time. We would be, as the apostle Paul said, of all people most to be pitied.

Read 1 Corinthians 15: 13 – 19.

Jesus’ being raised to new life three days after His execution pumps the heart of the Christian gospel, and it is Christianity’s central supporting fact. The truth of Christianity stands or falls on Christ’s resurrection. In other words, the basis of the Christian faith is the fact that Christ rose from the dead. Jesus’ claim that He was the Son of God and that He had come to reconcile mankind to God and God to us would all fall flat on its face if He had not risen from the grave. Without the resurrection we have nothing. If Jesus did not rise from the grave after being put to death on the cross, our faith is worth nothing. We would be a pitiable bunch hanging our hope upon something that is nothing more than fantasy.

"If Christ is risen, nothing else matters. And if Christ is not risen – nothing else matters."
[Jaroslav Pelikan]

Read 1 Corinthians 15: 20 – 22.

"Jesus didn't come into this world to make bad people good. Jesus came into this world to make dead people live." [Lee Strobel]

All that are born in Adam are dead in their trespasses and sin, estranged from God, and without hope in the world. But in His grace, God sent His only begotten Son as the one and only sin-substitute for the entire race of fallen humanity. Those who believe in Him are redeemed. They are not condemned and are eternally positioned in Christ – **Read Romans 6:23.**

The resurrection of the once-dead Jesus Christ from death is the foundation upon which our lives are built. The resurrection of Jesus from the dead gives us as believers hope.

Jesus was crucified. Jesus died. Jesus was placed in a tomb. Three days later Jesus was no longer in the tomb, because He had risen from the dead. And now, we, live in the light of that historic event, we live with the hope of an eternity spent with Him and everything is different because of it.

Because of the resurrection of Christ, we as followers of Christ, get to experience a double resurrection. First, we are resurrected out of our spiritual deadness – **Read Ephesians 2: 4 – 6.** You and I, as born-again believers, have been raised to life so that we can experience the beauty and glory of the gospel right here, right now – **Read John 10:10**, that's resurrection living.

And then there's the second resurrection; it's that final moment when we blow out our last breath and we will be resurrected out of this horrible, broken, and groaning world to live forever in a Kingdom of righteousness and peace and harmony; a Kingdom where there is no suffering, no hardship, no pain, no lack, no sin and no death. On that day we will be more alive than we ever were, and we will live with our Saviour forever and ever. What a day, glorious day that will be!

What a day that will be
When my Jesus I shall see
As I look upon His face
The one who saved me by his grace
When he takes me by the hand
And leads me through the Promised Land
What a day, glorious day that will be...

It all hinges on the resurrection. Do you believe this?