

## Summary:

Our resurrection life begins now in spirit and soul, transforming us into Christ's image. Through faith in Jesus, believers experience inner renewal, becoming "children of the resurrection" with hope, joy, and a heavenly purpose.

## Call to Worship:

Grace and peace to you from the one who is, who always was, and who is still to come; from the sevenfold Spirit before his throne; and from Jesus Christ. He is the faithful witness to these things, the first to rise from the dead, and the ruler of all the kings of the world.

## Prayer of Humble Access:

Coming boldly and confidently into our Father's presence: Our dear Father by your eternal provision and goodness to us you set our souls in the ship of our bodies, not to expect any port of anchorage on the sea of this world, but to steer directly thorough it to Thy glorious Kingdom. Lord Jesus, appointed ruler of the restless nations, may your holy will be our rule and your gracious hand our only guide. In your sweet name, we pray, Amen

## Hymn: by J Robinson, M Farren, R Thompson

What gift of grace is Jesus my redeemer, there is no more for heaven now to give  
He is my joy, my righteousness, and freedom  
My steadfast love, my deep and boundless peace

The night is dark but I am not forsaken, for by my side, the Saviour He will stay  
I labour on in weakness and rejoicing for in my need, His power is displayed

*To this I hold, my hope is only Jesus. All the glory evermore to Him  
When the race is complete, still my lips shall repeat: Yet not I, but through Christ in me*

No fate I dread, I know I am forgiven, the future's sure, the price it has been paid  
For Jesus bled and suffered for my pardon, and He was raised to overthrow the grave

With every breath I long to follow Jesus for He has said that He will bring me home  
And day by day I know He will renew me until I stand with joy before the throne.

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## Prayers with the persecuted church -militant on earth.

Lord, why were You forsaken and abandoned on that tree of curse and shame  
Why were you left alone bereft of your Father's love and care?  
Today your people seem forsaken, left alone in cruel hands.  
Persecuted, violently abused, martyred.

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Make real to them Your presence and Your love.

Lord, Victim, Priest and King, come to Your suffering people,

Heal their brokenness, bind up their wounds, remove their distress,

Be their hope in the future.

### Prayer: Before hearing the Word of God, read and preached.

Dear Father, grant me a heart to hear that I should shine the light of your Word in my attitude and behaviour and that I will pull no blind against your light, the light of your Word shining into any part of my soul you choose to look upon. In Jesus' Name.

### Scriptures:

- Luke 20.34-38
- 1 Corinthians 15.50-58

### Sermon: Children of the Resurrection: Live what you are

We often speak of the Resurrection, and our sharing in Christ's resurrection as if it is all in the future. Our future resurrection will happen because we are already raised in spirit and soul now. Let's explore that exciting and important theme. Are you living a resurrection life that honours the one who gave it to you, the Raised Lord Jesus?

This happened to the first followers of Jesus. The change in the first followers of Jesus was dramatic and wonderful. These first-century Jesus followers, fishermen and tradies, were changed and then they changed the world because they were not only convinced but personally connected to the risen Christ.

Chuck Colson, the infamous Watergate "hatchet man" and Chief Council to USA President Richard Nixon learned many years ago that what appears important is really of no value at all. And what is of utmost importance is the truth that gives us a comprehensive understanding of reality, the ultimate reality. Faith in the Risen Lord Jesus. On the change the resurrection makes in people's lives he said: "I know the resurrection is a fact, and Watergate proved it to me. How? Because 12 men testified they had seen Jesus raised from the dead, then they proclaimed that truth for 40 years, never once denying it. Everyone was beaten, tortured, stoned and put in prison. They would not have endured that if it weren't true. Watergate embroiled 12 of the most powerful men in the world and they couldn't keep a lie for three weeks. You're telling me 12 apostles could keep a lie for 40 years? Absolutely impossible."

So what does the Bible tell us about these things, for there is no other source of information adequate for these matters?

Sunday is the Lord's Day, the day of Resurrection and it is celebrated all around the world as such. It is the historic reason why we have a weekend and why Sunday, the day of resurrection is the first day of the week. So let's refresh how our Lord's

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resurrection comes into our lives. What it means to be what Jesus gloriously called believers: *Children of the Resurrection. Luke 20.36*

Yes, we are promised amazing Resurrection bodies which are patterned on the body of Jesus who walked on water, went through closed doors and was free of harm and disease. But right now this resurrection life is to commence in our personalities and our characters, in our spirit-souls, the inner part of us, our eternal DNA. That is who we really are. That's what it means to be saved.

The moment you start trusting Jesus, His life, His resurrection life begins growing in you. Now that is amazing. And it is powerful. In Christ you and I are a new species of life. We are actually already entering into the process of our next life. Resurrection has begun. Jesus said; *Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection. Luke 20.36*

Listen to how the Apostle Paul describes it (Ephesians 2): *And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you used to walk when you conformed to the ways of this world and of the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit who is now at work in the sons of disobedience. All of us also lived among them at one time, fulfilling the cravings of our flesh and indulging its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature children of wrath.*

*But because of His great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in our trespasses. It is by grace you have been saved! And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages He might display the surpassing riches of His grace, demonstrated by His kindness to us in Christ Jesus.*

*For it is by grace you have been saved through faith, and this not from yourselves; it is the gift of God, not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance as our way of life.*

No other worldview, religion or power has offers let alone enables this; it is unique to our Lord Jesus Christ.

You and I cannot be a citizen of the eternal New Creation unless we are safe to be with. To have all the powers of a resurrected body in heaven we must have a transformed life to match it. A life that is holy, blameless and pleasing to God

The Lord's prayer shows this truth. 'Your kingdom come, your will be done *on earth* as in heaven.' God's holy will actually happening in human beings on earth who trust the Lord Jesus.

This is stage one of resurrection life; Now see v6, above. *God raised us up with Christ* It is something given to us not anything we can think up by meditation or inherit from ancient forbears. No, it is a gift activated the moment a soul trusts Jesus by turning away from their unbelief and wrongdoing and their constructed view of morality.

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You must give up your efforts and failures and start listening to his inner voice leading you. Listen to this: *Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory . . . throughout all generations (Galatians 3.19,20)* It is in this state that your spirit and soul is brought to life by God's free gift and spiritual power.

V6 above states; *made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in our trespasses*. This life must come from outside you. It is not your own. It is a gift from God, from Heaven. Spiritual death is your state, because of your sin. You can't change yourself or get into this life, you are dead to the life of heaven.

Without this faith, you didn't know God. But knowing him is a sign of life. Do you have vital signs of life? Do you want to know God? You may be hearing all this for the first time. You may not really know God or this resurrection life. That will all change. See v10. *For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance as our way of life*. Now a new birth has happened to you, not only in the eyes of heaven but in your own soul, your own moral and spiritual anatomy, we might say.

Creation gives us many pictures of this. It is like a grub, a larvae that is gradually turning into a butterfly. It is called metamorphosis and that is the exact word used in the verse: *Do not be conformed to this world, but let* ['let' is a middle-passive verb because you are the one to whom this work is being done, it is not an active verb with you making it happen, yet its middle idea in Greek depicts you cooperating with the One doing the work in your motives and desires] *yourself be transformed (metamorphosed) by the renewing of your mind (Romans 12)*

The word means something which is being done to and for you which you can engage in and which you are urged to cooperate with. I think this is the most exciting thing on this side of heaven. As the Lord changes us, giving a desire for what is good. Even beyond our imagining as the Galatians teaching (above) states.

You can stay as you are or you can become what God in his great grace toward you will make of you. This is why genuine Christians have had such an influence for good and have managed such feats and indeed changed communities. They sow peace and justice.

But let's go further. 2 Corinthians 3.18 *Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the glory of the Lord, are being transformed-(there it is again-metamorphosed) into His image with intensifying glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit*. Being transformed. Receive Jesus and his Spirit will build and guide resurrection life in you

This is the very practical and frankly, thrilling part of it all. I have never in my 56 years as a pastor seen or met anyone who hasn't lived this way and been anything but joyful, confident and lived usefully and abundantly. Scripture gives us a working, say, Constitution, an eternal law operating in your life. Resurrected life.

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Colossians 3: *Therefore, since you have been raised with Christ, strive (seek, look for, expect) for the things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things (take that literally, of course asking Lord Jesus to help and show you how). For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. (imagine these things and breathe out thanksgivings as they become clearer) When Christ, who is your life, appears, (that is his Second Coming) then you also will appear with Him in glory. (We certainly have an exciting future.)*

You will feel these following verses find agreement in your spirit with a desire to do them. That is the Holy Spirit of the resurrected Jesus living in you

*5 Put to death, therefore, the components of your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires, and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming on the sons of disobedience. When you lived among them, you also used to walk in these ways. But now you must put aside all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips.*

*9 Do not lie to one another, since you have taken off the old self with its practices, and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, (it's totally multicultural) slave, or free, but Christ is all and is in all.*

*12 Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with hearts of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Bear with one another and forgive any complaint you may have against someone else. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which is the bond of perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, for to this you were called as members of one body. And be thankful.*

*16 Let the word of Christ richly (see that, you are not just trying a new idea, Christ Himself raised and alive, is walking with you) dwell within you as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.*

And so your resurrection character and personality – the real you is forming. Death cannot touch this part of you. It is Life from heaven. It will be completed with an outward resurrected form, a body!

And the chapter goes on with information about Resurrection living for families, parents, and children. And this dear friends is the fruit of our Lord Jesus's willing death on the cross, to bear all our shame, fallenness and sin and to lift us up, raise us up with Himself to Life. To live as we were created to live.

Yes, sometimes you might be perplexed, but you will not despair. Sometimes you may be called on to bear some hardship momentarily. But you will never be without hope, you might have the privilege of attracting opposition or mockery for being one of

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Christ's beloved followers. But you will be journeying in the very life of the resurrected Christ who you will love more and more. Fears will melt away. New opportunities will come to you.

### Prayer:

Lord Jesus thank you for taking me as I am and making me what I can be according to your gracious will. I trust you Lord Jesus for the removal of my sins and wrongdoing, I receive and trust you with my soul and body, please give me your Holy Spirit that I might live the resurrection life. In Jesus Name, Amen

### Hymn: by C Wesley

1. O thou who camest from above, the pure celestial fire to impart,  
kindle a flame of sacred love on the mean altar of my heart!
2. There let it for thy glory burn with inextinguishable blaze,  
and trembling to its source return in humble prayer and fervent praise.
3. Jesus, confirm my heart's desire to work, and speak, and think for thee;  
still let me guard the holy fire, and still stir up the gift in me.
4. Ready for all thy perfect will, my acts of faith and love repeat;  
till death thy endless mercies seal, and make the sacrifice complete.

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### Benediction:

Now may the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with every good thing to do His will. And may He accomplish in us what is pleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

*This service was prepared by Rev Ian Clarkson for HopeNet SA*