

GOD WORKS A MIRACLE *FOR US*—THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST

Presented by

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In His dealings with His people in the past, God has worked many miracles. Probably one of the most important miracles that God ever performed was the creation of the Universe, which is described in Genesis 1. Joshua 10:13 tells us that on one occasion God caused the Sun to stand still so that the Israelites could win an important battle. In 1 Kings 17:14, Elijah told a widow that she could use flour and oil from her pots to cook food, but that she would never run out of either one of those things—and she didn't! In Acts 16, we read of a time when Paul and Silas were in prison and God used a miracle to open the prison doors so they could escape to go preach the Gospel. In Acts 17:14 we read of a time when Christ raised a widow's son from the dead.

Yes, throughout the ages God has worked many miracles. But God performed one miracle that has a direct impact on **us today!** The Jews and the Romans decided to put Christ to death, which they did by crucifying Him. Three days later, however, God raised Jesus from the dead. Peter said to the Jews on the Day of Pentecost after Christ's death, "You killed the Prince of life; whom God raised from the dead" (Acts 3:14). God did not allow Christ to stay dead and in the tomb. God worked a miracle to resurrect His Son. Of all the miracles that God has ever worked throughout history, this one miracle means the most to us today. But why is that?

In 1 Corinthians 15, Paul told the Christians in Corinth that if Christ had not been raised from the dead, then their faith was worthless and did not mean anything. Why did Paul say such a thing? He said it because he wanted the people in Corinth to understand that if Christ had not been raised from the dead, then they were still living in sin. We all die **physically** because of the effects of sin. But all of us can live **spiritually** because of Christ's resurrection. When Jesus rose from the grave, He defeated the death that came because of man's sin.

Paul also told the Corinthians that if Christ had not been resurrected from the dead, then preaching the Gospel was a waste of time. Why would this be the case? Paul and the apostles had been telling everyone that they had seen Christ after He had been raised from the dead. They also were telling people who were no Christians that they needed to be baptized in water so that they could be raised out of the water just like Christ was raised out of the Earth. Peter even said in 1 Peter 3:21 that baptism "does also now save us." But if Christ had not been raised, then this would mean that there was no need to be baptized since there was no forgiveness of sins. It also would mean that the apostles had lied. That is not something that Christians should ever do.

But there is something else that Paul wanted Christians to realize. If Christ had not been resurrected from the dead, then that would mean that when we die we cannot be raised from the dead either. Think about all the people who have died as Christians. They worshipped God. They gave money to spread the Gospel. And many of them even suffered because of their faith. But what good did all those things do them? If Jesus was not raised from the dead, those things did the people no good at all. There is no point to being a Christian if we cannot look forward to eternal life with God in Heaven. But if Christ was not raised from the dead, then we cannot be raised from the dead either. That means that we cannot go to Heaven when we die.

The truth is that if Jesus was not raised from the dead, then He is not the Son of God. And that means He cannot be our Savior. But Jesus **was** raised from the dead! This means that we can be forgiven of our sin. We can be raised from the dead when we die. And we can live with God in Heaven. Of all the miracles recorded in the Bible, the resurrection of Christ should mean the most to us because it is the one miracle that God performed for you and me. As Paul put it in 1 Corinthians 15:57, "Thanks be to God, Who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." We have victory over sin. And we have victory over death. How thankful to God we should be that He raised His Son from the dead so that we can live with both of them forever!