

Down In the River to Pray

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See print copy for words.

*Old Orchard Church
Fourth Sunday of Easter
May 15, 2011 — 10:15 to 11:50 a.m.*

*Those who are considered worthy of
taking part in...the resurrection...
can no longer die;
For they are like the angels.
They are God's children since they are
children of the resurrection.*

Celebrating the Immortal Jesus as the Resurrection Community of Prayer and Faith

Having been raised with Christ,
Children of the resurrection
See the glory of his Kingdom
And set their hearts on things above
Where Christ is seated at God's right hand:

In all their play, in all their work;
In all that's hard, in all that's full of pleasure,
They pray through the Son to their Father—
"Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven!"

Blessed be our risen Lord Christ,
Who in his death made satisfaction for our sins,
in his resurrection won our justification,
And now lives and intercedes for us Above.

It's our high privilege to carry everything to him in prayer—
To him whom the angels adore, the demons fear,
And the planets obey.

Bless the Lord this Resurrection Day, with all his saints.



Today's Scripture

Gospel Readings: Luke 24:1-12; Acts 12:1-17

Today's Sermon

"At 30: Numbering Our Days, Finding Our Wisdom" (Part II)
Psalm 90
Ron Lutjens, pastor, preaching

Life After Easter

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live even though he dies, and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11:25)

When do you expect to walk into church and hear a sermon about the birth of Jesus? I would venture to guess your answer is, "December." Rightly or wrongly, the birth of Jesus remains a decidedly Christmas theme. Similarly, we tend to focus on Jesus' resurrection during Easter. Granted we talk about the resurrection here and there, but have you ever witnessed a resurrection sermon in July? Maybe. Have you ever heard a series on the theological implications of the resurrection and how this truth affects our lives as believers in September? Probably not. On the other hand, we do not confine the events of Good Friday to one time of year. The atoning sacrifice that Christ made on our behalf is rightly proclaimed every day throughout the church calendar, and thus we frequently speak of the death of Jesus. But how can we so easily divorce the death of Jesus from His resurrection?

In this Easter season, let us set a new trend by considering the implications of Christ's resurrection for our lives every day, throughout the year....

We know that the truth of the resurrection has encouraged the faith of many. But in our haste to preach the atoning death of Jesus Christ to unbelievers and believers, we neglect the resurrection. I know this from personal experience. When I first began avidly sharing my faith with others as a college student, I often approached people with a helpful presentation tool that led them through the plan of salvation. It did have a brief mention of the resurrection. But, by that point in the presentation, much truth had already been communicated and the other person would start looking at the time. So I would just simply say, "Oh, and Christ also rose from the dead...."

Among the many reasons we neglect the resurrection, one key factor is that we have given inadequate theological reflection to the resurrection of our Lord. Even the Westminster Shorter Catechism only refers to Jesus' resurrection in a single, very short, passing reference under Question 28. This is also the case in preeminent works by systematic theologians. For example, Charles Hodge in his magisterial systematic theology of some 2,300 pages only devotes five pages to explicit discussion about the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This simply will not do. We should not continue neglecting the resurrection—either in our theology or in our proclamation of the Gospel.

As we look to John's Gospel in particular we observe that the resurrection not only is to be proclaimed to help the unbeliever believe, but also to deepen the faith of the believer.

— *David Chapman (2001)*