

## Resurrection Made Personal - Philippians 2:1-14

**Introduction** – Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! It is a glorious truth to proclaim and celebrate. Those who are cold in heart often still come and celebrate Easter. On the other hand, the truly devout come with honest praise and joy. But even that response falls short of all that God has for us in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Death and Resurrection are themes that are to be applied very personally. They are themes that must begin in the heart for sure, but if they have truly rooted themselves in new hearts, they will bear the fruit of death and resurrection in the life of the believer and through the community of Christ's body.

**Christ, our Resurrected Savior** – A horrible lie about the Christian faith is regularly purported, and done in so-called Christian churches. The idea is that it is not important to believe in the miracle of the resurrection. They teach that we can follow the example of Jesus' humility and love towards others, while denying the resurrection as an historical fact. But the basis of the commands of vv1-4 is vv8-11. If there is no resurrection, there is no Jesus to follow.

**You Cannot Have it Both Ways** (1 Cor 15:12-19) – If there is no resurrection, there is no forgiveness for sins. If there is no resurrection, there is nothing but empty faith and empty preaching. The most inspirational messages are nothing more than emotional fluff. Instead, let us eat and drink (and do whatever we want to do) for tomorrow we die (1 Cor 15:32). It is one of the most destructive lies in the church today – to proclaim that there is no incarnation, no atonement, no resurrection, no eternal judgment, and then to dress up like an upstanding Christian and citizen and talk about treating others well. *“But now Christ is risen from the dead.”* (1 Cor 15:33).

**Christ, our Resurrected Example** – With the historical resurrection firmly before us, Paul does command us to see Christ's humiliation as an example to follow (v5). *“This mind”* is referring back to verse 3 – a *“lowliness of mind.”* Consider what Christ did, and likewise, what we are instructed to do.

**Changing “Forms”** – This word is being used with regard to Christ's visible reputation. Externally, He changed forms, from a position of exaltation before the Father, to one of a lowly servant – a human. Verses 6-8 are not denying Christ's full divinity (at all times), nor are they denying a real taking on of human flesh. They are emphasizing that, while He had every right to shine forth as the glorious, majestic King of all creation, that is, as God Himself, He humbled Himself and became a man.

**What Are We To Imitate?** – Christ's humility consisted in lowering Himself from the highest pinnacle of glory to a point of the lowest place of disgrace. Our humility consists in refraining from exalting ourselves through our own false self-estimation. Our flesh remains bent towards *“selfish ambition and vain conceit”* (v3). The unity commanded in verse 2 cannot occur without the humility of verse 3, and that humility cannot occur unless we are studying and imitating Christ. But we need more than imitation. We need death and resurrection.

**Christ, our Resurrected Power** (Phil 2:12-13) – The question then comes. Either I cannot humble myself in such a way, or I do not want to. If I don't want to, what will change me? If I can't, what will empower me? I am commanded to work out my salvation with fear and trembling (v12), but Christianity is not a religion of works-righteousness. We must connect that command with the promise of verse 13. The power of the resurrected Christ in me is what gives a man a new heart (born from on high) and the same power will work out that salvation in a change of desires and abilities (our sanctification). Faith is the instrument that connects that power, not law.

**Death and Resurrection** (Gal 2:17-21) – There is no exaltation without humiliation. There is no empowerment without utter defeat. There is no forgiveness without blood. There is no resurrection without crucifixion. Our union with Christ in His death and resurrection is a one-time event bringing eternal life, and an ongoing lifestyle, purging our old flesh and bringing forth holiness. You must have faith in an eternal, sovereign, and untamed God while He has His way with you. But what has He promised us in our death? Resurrection from the dead and glory with Christ, who was given the name above all names.

**Christ, our Resurrected Lord** (Phil 2:9-11) – God has highly exalted Christ and every knee shall bow. Yours and theirs.

**Your Knee** – Humbled servants are a different kind of husband, wife, friend, parent, child. Humbled servants love, forgive, and serve in a different kind of way. Humbled servants worship and pray and seek Christ in a different kind of way. Humbled congregations have a different view of the body around them and of the world around them. Humbled servants know whom their master is when a false-master (sin) beckons them to come. And humbled servants will follow their Lord and Savior in all His exalted glory all the way to death and all the way to the final resurrection.

**Their Knee** – Too often, these kinds of messages cause you to think about someone else's knee. It is true that their knee must bow as well. Some of you need to understand that your influence upon others will come as they see you imitating Christ in the power of Christ. Some of you need to quit putting up smoke screens, demanding of the Lord, *“what about him?”*

**Every Knee** – You have heard the name of Jesus, the name of the exalted, ruling, King of kings. He is risen indeed. At the right hand of God the Father, He now calls all men to repent and believe on Him. His kingdom is everlasting and it extends from heaven, to earth, to everything under the earth. It extends to your heart as well. You must hear. You must obey. You must believe. You must follow. Death to your sins and Life in Jesus Christ is yours. Hear clearly His Word – Every knee will bow.