

The Power of the Resurrection

Sunday, April 5, 2026

How Christians Should Celebrate the Resurrection of Christ

“But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.” Philippians 3:7–11

As we reflect on and celebrate the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ on this day, we would do well to spend time in deep reflection and meditation on the words of the Apostle Paul in this passage. He is not writing here of his “Resurrection Sunday” experience. Rather, he is setting before us the dramatic effect that the resurrection had on his daily life.

The first thing that stands clear is that there is no resurrection without there first being a death. Before Jesus could be resurrected, He first had to endure the cross. By the instrumentality of the cross, Jesus was separated from this present world. His disciples, His mother and family, and yes, even His enemies no longer had any claim on Him. Who can even begin to imagine the anguish of His heart as He not only suffered the pangs of the crucifixion, but also the shame and judgment of the sins of the world. Nothing could better express His sense of total isolation from all He held dear than His tortured scream in the darkness, *“My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”* (Matt. 27:46).

As Paul pondered on the miracle of the resurrection and his desire to live in the power of it, he was brought into a personal confrontation with the need for death. Three times, he speaks of “loss,” and summarizes it all with the phrase, “[I] count them as rubbish.” The Greek is much more graphic here, using the word *skubala*, which means “human excrement.” It is crucial at this point to remember that he is referring to his former earthly privileges mentioned in vv. 1–6. He had, as a Pharisee, position, privilege, prestige, and power. But when he met the resurrected Lord Jesus on the Damascus Road (Acts 9:1–9), he saw them all as so much human sewage. On that day, Saul of Tarsus died, and Paul the apostle was born again. And from that moment on, his chief pursuit in life was to live out the life of the Savior who had been revealed to Him.

My point is that Paul came to seek the highest pursuit in this life—that is, to celebrate the resurrection of the Lord Jesus every day, by living in that resurrection power. In this passage, we find four negatives (vv. 7–8), followed by four positives (vv. 8b–11). The negatives have to do with death, the positives, with life. His point is that resurrection can only follow death. We can either live for time or for eternity, but not both. This reality brings us to the matter of daily priorities and decisions.

Our spiritual focus ought to be on the positives, not on the negatives. The reason for this is that if we choose the positives, we have already determined the negatives. Consider the four positives of Paul's pursuit: *"That I may gain Christ ... and be found in Him ... that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection ... if by any means I may attain to the resurrection from the dead."*

To summarize, Paul's desire was to know Jesus Christ so intimately, and to experience His fellowship and transforming power so fully, that in his own final resurrection, this devotion and dedication would be acknowledged at the Bema Seat of Christ. This idea is captured in v. 14, *"I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."* Paul is thinking here of eternal reward for faithful service.

In essence, Paul sought to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus every day of his life. His celebration came in the form of a willingness to suffer for Christ and to set aside all things in this life, which were gratifying to him, but would be a hindrance to his fellowship and service to his Lord. This passage is not a call to asceticism, but rather to spiritual discernment. Above all, it is a challenge to each of us to diligently seek to live in the power and the fellowship of our resurrected Lord—keeping Him first in all things in life.

We are living in prophetic times. I have no better way to conclude this article than to again rely on the words of the great Apostle Paul:

"The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts." Romans 13:12–14

May you all have a very blessed Resurrection Sunday. Let each one of us strive to celebrate our Lord's resurrection on a daily basis, by living in the resurrection power of His Spirit.

HE IS RISEN!

Gene