



Prayer of Thanksgiving: that is all of life's circumstances, God's grace is always sufficient to meet our every need. **"9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong." (2Co 12:9-10 ESV)**

Please do not forget to pray for all the shut-ins and isolated brothers and sisters in our congregations Mrs. Jack and C. Campbell (Fredericton) and J. Steffes (Caribou, Me), Mr. Ross Bathurst, P. Ward (Saint John) and others.

Open Hand Food Bank – Moncton - is in need of grocery plastic bags to give out food to those in need. If you are interested in donating your unused grocery bags, you can bring them to church and someone will collect them and bring them over. Those who want to bring food to give to the **Open Food Bank** may do so by bringing to church and giving it to **Michael M.** of the Moncton congregation.

ACTIVITIES FOR THE MONTH OF JULY 2018

Times of worship services: **Moncton** – 10:30 AM every Sunday **except for June 17 services will be cancelled..**

In **Saint John**, worship services will be July 22 at 2:30 PM

Communion- on the second and fourth Sunday of the month.

Address: Moncton—70 King St. —Sage building;

Saint John—50 Newport Cres., Portland United church.

Friday, October 5 and Saturday, October 6 – Thanksgiving celebration same venue as last year – Congregational Christian Church of Moncton, 1530 Ryan St, Moncton.

The good news of the gospel is a message to be shared with others. Please pray that God will give us the love and wisdom to be able to share this message with others in a loving, clear and confident matter as we participate in his missional work on the earth in our generation. **"5 ¶ Conduct yourselves wisely toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. 6 Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person." (Col 4:5-6 ESV)**

Please pray that God will put an end to the senseless violence happening every in our North America continent and other parts of the world.

Pray that we will see the good works that God has prepared for us in advance so that we can enthusiastically participate in the on-going work He is doing now on this earth in bringing people in relationship with him in Jesus by the Holy Spirit.

Please pray, as per Jesus instructions, the disciples prayer, "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. 10 Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Matt 6:9-10) as our world is suffering so much and in need of complete restoration by the King of kings, Jesus. As we are his royal priesthood, let us proclaim the excellencies of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light, as we are instructed in 1 Peter 2.

Pray for the world and for all people: we live in a world that does not know the way to peace. Important to pray as we are instructed by the apostle Paul — **"1 ¶ First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, 2 for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. 3 This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior," (1Ti 2:1-3 ESV)**

THE RESURRECTION: OUR HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

The apostle Paul tells us, "If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith" (1 Corinthians 15:13-14). In other words, if there isn't any

resurrection, our faith is pointless. If Christianity is simply about this physical life and then we die to never exist again, then it really doesn't matter what we do or how we live or what we believe.

Paul said in verse 19, "If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all people." If there is no future for us, then our lives would more sensibly focus on having a good time while we can (verse 32). If there is no resurrection, then it would not be helpful for us to believe in Christ, because that might mean sacrifice and persecution. If there is no resurrection, then the crucifixion of Christ didn't achieve anything for us, and we are still in our sins (verse 17). But there is a resurrection, not only for Christ but also for us, and this is an important part of the Christian faith. Let's look at the significance of this doctrine—not just for the future, but for day-to-day living, as well. It is relevant every day of our lives.

Biblical evidence

The Old Testament doesn't say much about the resurrection. Ezekiel says a little bit, and Daniel says a little bit, but our belief is based mostly on the New Testament. Jesus talked about the resurrection in several parables. He even called himself the resurrection and the life (John 11:25). The resurrection is mentioned several times in the book of Acts, and in the book of Hebrews, but in most passages we don't learn much except that there will be a resurrection.

There are two passages that describe the resurrection in a little more detail—Paul's first letter to the church in Thessalonica, and his first letter to the Corinthians.

In 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, Paul writes,

Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words.

Paul isn't saying much here about the resurrection except its timing. There will be a resurrection, and the reason we know that is because Jesus, the example of true humanity, was raised from the dead. We believe in his resurrection, so we believe that he will also bring back to life all who believe in him, and this will happen when Jesus returns to earth. Christians who have died will rise, and Christians who are alive will be changed and rise into the clouds to meet the Lord as he returns, and we will be with him forever.

In 1 Corinthians Paul goes into more detail, explaining not only that there will be a resurrection, but he also comments briefly on what we will be like in the resurrected state. First, he compares the resurrection to the planting of a seed. The seed looks like a seed, but the plant that grows from it looks quite different, depending on what kind of seed it is (verses 37-38).

So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. (verses 42-44)

After we are resurrected, we will be different, perhaps as different as a leaf is from a seed. The important differences are that we will be imperishable, glorious, powerful, and spiritual—and we will look like Christ:

And just as we have borne the image of the earthly man, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly man. I declare to you, brothers and sisters, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. (verses 49-53)

Here Paul is using a different figure of speech, that of putting on new clothes. The point that he stresses the most, the point that he mentions the most, is that we will be imperishable—our bodies will not deteriorate, and we will never die. We will have new, glorious bodies, transformed by the Holy Spirit to be like Christ.

Eternal significance

What significance does this doctrine have for us? The significance is that we will live forever—and not just live forever, but we will live forever with Christ—and not just that, but we will have glorious bodies that are like his, with power and glory and life that's far better than what we know now. There is a great reward waiting for us, a reward that far overshadows the difficulties we sometimes have in Christianity. The eternal reward is important. As Paul said, if faith is good for this life only, then it isn't good enough. But there is an afterlife, there is a resurrection, and there are wonderful rewards waiting for us. No matter what kind of sacrifices we make in this life, they are well worth making, because we will be given 100 times and more in the world to come. The resurrection is an important part of this picture.

Day-to-day significance

Our belief in the resurrection has important consequences for our day-to-day lives, too, as noted above. For example, knowing about the resurrection helps us deal with the difficulties and persecutions of believing in Christ when most people around us do not. When our life and ministry runs into problems, we do not just quit. We do not say, Let's eat and drink and be merry, because nothing really matters much. No, there is a future, and life does matter, and we want to live with our future in mind.

The doctrine of the resurrection goes hand in hand with the doctrine of the judgment. As Jesus said, some will rise to a resurrection of life, and others to a resurrection of judgment. God cares about the way we live. He has something to say about the way we live, and he will call us into account for the way we live. The gospel tells us that we will be accepted on the day of judgment—we will be found righteous through faith in Christ. The gospel is built on the reality of the resurrection and the judgment. The existence of the resurrection explains why the gospel is necessary, and why it is good news.

The gospel is good news not only for people who believe, but also for people who do not yet believe. There is an infinite significance to the gospel. We are not talking about a few years of better feelings, or even 70 years of good things—we are talking about eternal life, an eternity that is infinitely better than anything this life has to offer. Whatever we do in serving Christ, whatever we do in supporting the gospel, is worth doing. It is important for all who need to hear the gospel.

The fact of the resurrection emphasizes the importance of sharing the good news with other people. This is the way Paul ends the resurrection chapter: "Therefore [because there is a resurrection], my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain" (verse 58). The resurrection is not just an interesting bit of trivia about the future—it has practical consequences for our lives today. It gives us reason to work, and reason to persevere through whatever difficulties we might face.

The resurrection is also relevant for day-to-day Christian conduct. We see this in Romans 6: "We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life" (verse 4). The resurrection to come means that we have a new life now, a new way of life. Paul explains in verse 6 that "our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin"

Paul is talking about a change in behavior. When we identify ourselves with Christ, we put to death the deeds of sin. We put them out of our lives, and we walk and live in a new way, just as Christ was raised from the dead into a new life. So our behavior reflects the death and resurrection of Christ. Out with the old, and in with the new. In verses 11-13, Paul tells us,

In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness.

Because there is a resurrection, we are to live in a new and different way. Instead of serving the desires of the flesh, we want to serve the Lord, because we will be with him forever. God's grace doesn't mean that he does not care about the way we live. He does care, he still makes commands, and understanding the resurrection helps us walk in newness of life. As 1 John 3:2-3 says, "Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure."

John goes on to say in verses 4-6 that when we live in Christ, we do not go on sinning. We quit. But if we do sin (as we all do), then we have a defense attorney standing by, Jesus Christ, and the atoning sacrifice has already been given for us. So there is no condemnation for us, but there is still the fact that people who believe in the resurrection also change the way they live. Knowing that we will live with Christ forever changes the way we live with him right now.

Last, knowing about the resurrection gives a new perspective to death. We know that death does not end it all; we know that we will see our loved ones again; we know that life will go on forever. Hebrews 2:14-15 tells us that Jesus shared in our humanity "so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death."

By knowing about the resurrection, we are freed from the fear of death. That enemy has been conquered, and we share in the victory that Christ has won! He has triumphed over death, and we share in his life, freed from the fear of death. As we read in 1 Thessalonians, we do not grieve like other people do. We still have grief (and that's OK, because death is still an enemy, even though a defeated enemy), but we have a hope that others do not have.

Knowledge of the resurrection helps us die faithfully, in hope and confidence for the future. We know that the best is yet to come. As 1 Thessalonians 4:18 says, "Therefore encourage each other with these words."

Author: Joseph Tkach, president - GCI

*(Excerpt from We Believe – GCI - You are encourage to read and study it all. I believe you will find it a great blessing.
<https://resources.gci.org/we-believe>)*

15.19 What is the Christian view of marriage?

As revealed in the Holy Scriptures, and as stated by Jesus, God established marriage as an exclusive, sacred union between one man and one woman. That union is a unique, living witness that reflects and honors God's covenant relationship with his people in Jesus Christ. It is a union that involves a unity—a difference and a harmonious coordination of being and action in holy loving. That unity, which normally has the potential to be fruitful by generating new-born life, bears witness to the life-giving nature of the triune God through the union and communion of the Father and Son in the Spirit. Christian marriage, lived as a witness to God's faithfulness, honors God and builds trust between human beings, especially between men and women. (Gen 2:18-22; Matt 19:4; Eph 5:22-23; 1Cor 7:1-5; Rom 1:24-27)

"18 ¶ Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." 19 So out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. 20 The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. 21 ¶ So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. 22 And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man." (Ge 2:18-22 ESV)

"He answered, "Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female," (Mt 19:4 ESV)

"22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior." (Eph 5:22-23 ESV)

"1 ¶ Now concerning the matters about which you wrote: "It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman." 2 But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. 3 The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. 4 For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. 5 Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control." (1Co 7:1-5 ESV)

"24 Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, 25 because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen. 26 For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; 27 and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error." (Ro 1:24-27 ESV)

GCI principle website and Moncton Websites—www.gci.org, www.worshipim.ca, www.facebook.com/GCIMoncton; For a wealth of helpful articles about God, grace and his plan for salvation, who we are, etc., please see the GCI.org website. *Contact Information: Pastor's contact information: email—evautour47@outlook.com*