

THE 'I AM'S' OF JESUS

Part 12

I AM THE RESURRECTION

Based on the book: "The Great I Am's of Jesus."

By Anthony Coniaris, Light and Life Publications

The tallest mountain in Japan is Mt Fuji. It stands like a great pyramid 3,776 metres high. For miles around, from horizon to horizon... that mountain is part of the landscape. It stands as a great landmark. Its always part of the picture... it is always there in the background.



Same with our life. No matter what we are doing, what we are planning, what we occupy ourselves with... there is one big landmark that will always be part of our bigger picture... death. We will all die.

There once was an oriental king who wanted to shield his son from knowing about death. He wanted to hide the fact of death from his child because he felt that once the little prince knew about death, he would never again be able to enjoy life.

The Book of Job asks the question: *“If someone dies, shall they live again?”* This question has been asked by every generation in history and is still on the lips of people today. And the Book of Job, written more than three thousand years ago continues... *[and please read the masculine non-inclusiveness with an inclusive lense]:*

“A man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He comes forth like a flower, and withers; he flees like a shadow and does not continue...”

[there is more] hope for a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that its shoots will not cease. Though its roots grow old in the earth, and its stump die in the ground, yet at the scent of water it will bud and put forth branches like a young plant. But a man dies, and is laid low; man breathes his last and where is he?”

Rationalism would agree with that. We live, we die.. that’s it. End of discussion. Cold, ruthless cold.

We go to someone’s funeral..., we don’t know what to say. We get away with some conventional phrases: *I am sorry for your loss... my condolences... my sympathies*, etc.

But there was once someone who turned up late for their friend’s funeral and had ***something else*** to say.

When Jesus Christ arrived at Bethany, the sister of the dead man said: “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” Jesus said to her, “Your

brother will rise again.” The sister replied, “I know that he will rise again at the resurrection on the last day.” Whereupon, Jesus said to her, and through her, to all generations of believers, some powerful words that have brought so much comfort to bereaved families through the centuries. He didn’t say *I am sorry...* he didn’t say *my condolences...* he said..., “*I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, though they die, yet they shall live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die.*” And standing before the tomb of Lazarus, Jesus instructs the people to open the tomb. *But, Lord, its going to smell!... Open the tomb...* and then he cries out with a loud voice, “*Lazarus, come out!*” And Lazarus walked out of the tomb still covered with the grave clothes.

Jesus said, “I am the resurrection... *εγώ ειμί η ανάστασις.*” And that is a big statement. No one, no one had ever said that before him and no one has ever said that since. What does that mean? What does that mean for me and for you today?

It means that after death comes resurrection. After decay comes new blossoming. After the dark of the night comes the brightness of day. It means that if our life is messed up... we can fix it... we can change our life... we can turn it around. If we are stuck in a rut, faith in Christ God pulls us out.



In the war between good and evil, the resurrection of Christ is the decisive battle. The resurrection of Christ is the cosmic event that changes people’s lives

today... not just two thousand years ago. The poetry of the Church makes it clear that what we are doing out here in the middle of a cold autumn night, is not something that has to do with the past... it is about something that has to do with today. Here and now.

St John, the Golden-Mouth, Chrysostomos expresses this beautifully in his Paschal sermon.

*“Today salvation has come to the world,
Today forgiveness has risen from the grave.
Let no one fear death; for the death of our Saviour has set us free.
Christ is risen , and evil is thrown down.
Christ is risen, and the angels rejoice.
Christ is risen, and life is released.”*

This, the resurrection, has to do with **today**. Here and now. Changing my life **here and now**. A new chapter **now**... a new perspective **now**... a new power over sin **now**... a new quality of life **now**. **Εδώ και τώρα**.

Every generation of true Christian believers has experienced the life changing effect of Christ’s resurrection. It is in fact the single most important aspect of our faith. Writing one thousand seven hundred years ago, the words of St Gregory of Nazianzus describe the life changing experience:

*“Yesterday I was crucified with him,
today I am glorified with him.
Yesterday I died with him,
today I am enlivened with him.
Yesterday I was buried with him,
today I rise with him.”*

For us Christians, our faith in God is not only deeply personal, it is not merely ‘helpful’ in life..., it is big, it is cosmic. It is the foundation of our entire view of existence.

When Jesus Christ said, “I am the resurrection and the life”... he knew what he was talking about.

Brothers and sisters, this vigil service is continuing into the night to 2am. The “black-belts” will stay. You are challenged to join them.

*Sermon given by Fr Gerasimos Koutsouras
St George Church, Rose Bay, Australia
Easter Sunday, 5th of May 2013*

