

# Living In Response to the Resurrection

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Preacher: Jesse Kincer

[ 0 : 0 0 ] Good morning, One Harbor. How are you doing? Good morning. Yeah. Good to see you. If it's your first time with us, man, we are so happy that you're here. Glad you're here with us on Easter. Thanks for joining. This might be, Easter might be the closest thing that churches get to, Christianity gets to being a rager, right? We do our best to amp it up. The service is really exciting. We throw a lot of energy and effort into it.

Some of us, you know, we do cantatas, different things like that. But Easter is a big deal. For many of us, we think about Easter and it's about putting on fancy pastel colored clothes. I'm not sure what the deal is with pastel and Easter, what the connection is. I don't know if it's an Easter egg thing, what's going on, but nevertheless, that's what it's about. And you notice that that is not me. So I'm not like a bah humbug towards Easter. I just like, you know, I don't think my skin does well with pastel. Let me just say that.

So that's what we do. We put on these fancy pastel colored clothes. We go to church, right? Got to pay our respects to Jesus on Easter. Then we're on to the most epic Easter brunch with the family, right? The most exciting part of the day. And if that's you, hey, so glad you're here with us. I'm not knocking traditions. I love traditions. I'm a traditional guy. I'm a little too old school sometimes, my wife tells me. But those traditions, they're great, right? Especially the brunch part. And maybe that's not you. Maybe you don't like wearing pastel colors. You don't like Easter bunnies. You're just here because, man, this is the sermon where we get to shout, he is risen indeed. And we talk about the resurrection. I got to get my one-year fix on the resurrection sermon. And if that's you, we're glad you're here too. And I'm going to indulge you. If that's you, you're really excited about shouting back, he is risen indeed. Because I'm going to now say, he is risen. And you can shout that back, all right? Right? He is risen.

He is risen indeed. All right. Cool. Guys are all clued in. I like it. That's good. Yeah. So we can often limit the idea of Easter.

It's like relegated to this special Sunday. This is the Sunday where we talk about the resurrection and we kind of move on from it. My hope for us today is that we get captivated by the Easter story. I realize that, and I hope we all realize that it's something that is to be celebrated and remembered more than once a year. Easter is meant to be a reality we live in. We live in as Christians every single day because Easter points us to the resurrection. And we're going to be working from the book of Romans chapter six. If you're there, we're going to start in verse four.

[ 2 : 3 5 ] It's also going to be on the screens. It says this, we were buried therefore with him by baptism into death in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead. By the glory of the father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, surely we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. So what is this saying? Well, it's saying the resurrection is eternal life with Jesus today, tomorrow, and forever. You know, often we think of the resurrection, we think of it at that day when Jesus returns or when he calls us home. We get to be in heaven. That's what we think of like the resurrection is about. And who doesn't want to be in heaven one day, right? We know about heaven.

Many of us have heard about heaven. It's the idea of like, man, there's no more suffering. There's no more sorrow. There's no more pain. There's just peace and there's joy. And there's this like huge Easter buffet laid out before us, right? That's what we think about heaven. And who doesn't want to be there? Who can't get excited about heaven, right? That's a cool place. But here's the thing. We can think about heaven, but then there's this other reality. What about the hell that we might be living in today? Is heaven just relegated? Is all that resurrection just relegated to one day, but has nothing for us today? And let me assure you, God isn't just caring about what's going to happen way off into the future. He cares about what's happening today as well. And that's what the thing is, the reality of the resurrection isn't just reserved for heaven. We get to live in it now, right? Christians, we get to live in the resurrection life now. That's what he's talking about. That's what it means to walk in newness of life, right? That's what it was saying there. We were raised to walk in this newness of life, this new way of living. Okay, but what does that mean?

What does that look like, this new way of living? So verse six, it goes on to explain it a little bit more. Let's check it out. We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin. Now, if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again. Death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died, he died to sin once for all. But the life he lives, he lives to God.

So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body to make you obey its passions. Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness. But present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. For sin will have no dominion over you since you are not under law but under grace. What is this newness of life? What does that mean? It means the resurrection, the life we live in now. It means victory over sin's power. I mean, that's crazy to think about. Think about that. Victory over sin's power. Sin has no dominion over us anymore. And that should be amazing news. That should be so freeing. That should be the most exciting thing we hear and dwell in and think about every day that we wake up, right? But so many of us, we actually don't get excited about that because you know what? We actually think we're really not that bad of a person when it comes down to it. I'm not too bad. I work hard. I don't cheat. I don't cuss. And you know, I don't really need that much help. I'm a pretty good guy. I'm a pretty good gal. And you might think that, but I would say to you, if that's you, man, you have just misdiagnosed sin. That's the real issue here. See, what we do is we so often treat sin like we're on safari in Africa looking out for the big game animals, right? We go on safari or even if we go to the zoo, what do we get excited about? We get excited about seeing the rhinoceroses and the elephants and the water buffalo and the lions or the zebra or the giraffes. Like nobody's going and hanging out at the parrot cage all day at the zoo, right? That would be like really weird. We're like running to check out what's going on with the cool big game stuff. And that's what happens for us with sin, right? We have this own list that we keep of what are the really big sins. Maybe it's things like, man, addiction to drugs or alcohol, or it's those people who steal and commit crimes and who commit adultery or they're abusive. We look at those things. Those are our big things on the list maybe. And we say, hey, I don't do those things.

That's not me. So, you know, I'm pretty good. And maybe that's not your list, those things I named, but you got a list. We all got a list. Those things that we look at and say, man, those are the big bad sins. Those are the things that people shouldn't be doing. And you know what? I don't do them, so I'm good. Those other people, they need help. But sin is more subtle than that. Man, sin isn't the big five. It's not the big five that destroys us. The Bible says it's the little foxes. It's the little things that are hard to spot and see. Those are the things that destroy our inner life. Those are the things that destroy us. It's the seeming insignificant sins that ruin us. And those things are the deeper heart motives that are going on. What do I mean by that? Well, let's take adultery, for instance, one of those ones I named. Okay, before there's adultery, there's lust in the heart. Jesus said that, man, that's just as sinful. Having lust in your heart, lusting after someone, and that is just as sinful as adultery. So he's saying adultery is as much the looking as it is the touching. Before there's murder, there is anger in the heart. The Bible says that. If we're angry with our brother, it's like committing murder against them. Murder's hating long before it's killing.

[ 8 : 55 ] Man, think about that, guys. That's a hard standard to live up to. That's a hard thing to accept. We don't like that because it speaks to all of us. We realize, actually, you know what? Sin afflicts all of us. It corrupts everything we do. Even the good things that we can do, it ruins it. Think about this.

Diet and exercise. Good reasons. Good reasons to diet and exercise? I want to be healthy. Those are great reasons to diet and exercise. What are some sinful reasons? Well, we want people to praise us.

We want to get attention. We like to hear compliments from people. And to be honest, maybe some of us, it might be like we want people to lust after us. Here's another example. Why do we work? Why do we go to work? Good reasons? Provide for ourselves or provide for our family. Make a positive contribution to society. Those are good reasons to go to work. But then there's sinful reasons as well. We go to work because we start getting our identity and who we are in our workplace. Our career matter is the most important thing to us. Or maybe through our work, we experience power and authority, and we like to wield that power, and we're addicted to it. Or we go to work because we make money, and more money means I get to buy more stuff. And if I buy more stuff, it makes me happy. And so we become these like materialist consumers. It's easy for us to turn any good thing into sinful pursuits. That's, I mean, that's true with marriage or family or recreation. Anything, anything that's good, sin can turn it into an ultimate thing. Ultimate things that define us. Ultimate things where we get our identity from.

So even think about being a parent. Man, if it becomes more than a calling, it could easily be the way we ultimately identify ourselves with. Our kids become the barometer of our success in our parenthood. And so we put tons of pressure on them. We put tons of pressure on ourselves to make sure that they turn out a certain way that we want. And if they don't turn out that way, the way that we hoped, it just doesn't cause grief in us. Actually, it crushes us. It absolutely crushes us.

See, now you can take out that idea of parenthood. You could take that idea of work, whatever, and fill in the blank with something else. We all have some things that we have turned into ultimate things.

[ 11 : 16 ] What is that thing you and I care about the most? What is that thing you and I want everyone around us to know about? And what are we really wanting from those things? See, that, that is sin's power over us.

That is the subtlety and the control of sin over us. It drives us to find meaning and purpose apart from Jesus. And this, friends, this is where the power of the resurrection comes in. This is where the power of the resurrection is so helpful. It means, and it speaks to us, that we have risen out of that old way of living. We are freed from those ways of sin, those things that enslaved us. Our minds have this new perspective on the purpose of parenting or work or recreation. Our hearts have these new desires, these different desires we never experienced before. Now we want to live for something greater than ourselves. See, the point here is that that freedom from sin, what we're talking about, freedom from sin is only half of what we need. We not only need to be freed from sin, but we need to live for something totally opposite. So in verse 15, it goes on to say this, what does it look like to live for totally opposite? What then, are we to sin because we're not under law but under grace? By no means.

Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness.

But thanks be to God that you, who were once slaves of sin, have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and having been set free from sin, have become slaves to righteousness. I'm speaking in human terms because of your natural limitations for just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, leading to more lawlessness.

So now present your members as slaves to righteousness, leading to sanctification. What is this all about? What is he getting at here? The resurrection, living in the resurrection means we are now free to live in joyful obedience to God. Freedom in Christ isn't just freedom from sin's guilt. Freedom from Christ isn't just freedom from sin's power. Freedom in Christ is joy in obeying God and pursuing his righteousness. Beware the lie that tells you this, you can make a decision for Christ and nothing's going to change about you. That is a salvation story without any power.

[ 14 : 08 ] It is the cross without the resurrection. But Jesus rose again. He died and he rose again, and he ascended into heaven. He's seated on the throne right now. He's ruling and reigning from heaven over us. It says everything's been submitted to him, subjected to him. And from that place of heaven, we see that he sent the Holy Spirit to his people. We have it recorded in the Bible, and he gives it to us today. He sends the Holy Spirit. God himself comes. The very presence of God dwells in us, dwells with us, his abiding presence, which is an awesome idea. I hope you like that idea. I love that idea. God is with us in the form of the Holy Spirit. But too often what we do is we limit and we diminish the work of the Spirit to kind of like a security blanket in our lives, right? He's there to comfort us. He's there to make us feel good. Pour us a hot cup of cocoa when we're kind of feeling down and out, right? Now that is true, and I don't want to downplay the Holy Spirit's work as a comforter. He's called the comforter for a reason, but that's not the only thing he does. I want us to recognize that the resurrected Christ didn't send the Holy Spirit only to comfort us. There's a lot more to what he does. The Holy Spirit's there. He's in us, and he's bringing about this ongoing change in our hearts. We're changing from the inside out.

He is the Holy Spirit. He is the holy spirit. He is making us more holy. He is turning us and conforming us more and more into the image of the Son, Jesus Christ. He's making us more like Jesus.

That's what the Holy Spirit is doing in and through us, and we can't force that. We can't make that happen. That is a grace of God given to us, right? And what does that look like? What does it mean that the Holy Spirit's making us more holy? Well, in the practical sense, it means we're growing in surrender to God's will. We're going in surrender to him. That means we start to see like, man, my will, my way, that is much less important. That is much less satisfying. That is much less powerful than God's will, and so I'm going to submit to more and more of God's will in my life and looking at Jesus just as he surrendered to the Father's will. This means that we're committed to the paths of God's righteousness, just like Jesus was committed, which is also the Spirit's job. His job is to lead us. Check this out from Romans 8. I'm not just talking a bunch of junk here. Verse 14, for all who are led by the Spirit of God, all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of adoption as sons by whom we cry out,

Abba, Father. That word Abba is a real word, a weird word, and literally the best way to translate, I have a four-year-old daughter, and when I kiss her goodnight, I love when she says this to me. She says, I love you, Dada. Oh, that is the most amazing thing, and it's like the most pure way she could express her love to me, and that's the language used here. The Spirit comes in and teaches us to cry out that way to God, right? The Spirit himself bears witness with their spirit that we are children of God, and here's the reality. Living in the reality of the resurrection means we are Spirit-filled, Spirit-led, Spirit-taught. These verses are saying that the Holy Spirit is transforming us and teaching us the way of salvation, right? We're learning surrender, being led by the Spirit. It's talking about that. It's the language of surrender. It's the path of surrender. It's learning those things.

He's teaching us acceptance. Man, we've received the spirit of adoption as sons. We've been accepted by the Father in his love for us, not because of what he's done, but because he chose to love us first and chose us and called us to him through the death of his son. We enter in that way. It's the language of acceptance that we're learning. We have to cry out. We learn to cry out, Abba, Dada, God, and that's a weird thing to say. Hey, I'm like a 40-year-old guy. I'll own it. I'm 40 years old, and to think about God in that way, Dada, that's a tough thing to get over. I'm a grown man, right? To like say that to God is a weird thing, but the more the Spirit's working in us, the more, oh, the purer our love for God is, and that becomes the more normal language. The Spirit's teaching us the language of heaven, the relational language that we have with God. It's an amazing thing, and then he not only does that, he teaches us assurance, right? His Spirit bears witness. The Spirit bears witness with our spirit. There's this assurance that we can know, so living in the resurrection is all these things. It isn't living in fearful obedience of an angry God. It's not that at all. We aren't nervous that God's going to change his mind and cast us out the next mistake we make.

[19:19] Instead, we live in this assurance of our position as children of God, this unchanging, unwavering, secured in the blood of Jesus, sealed position as sons and daughters.

We do that, and we can live in that because of the Holy Spirit who bears witness to that. We don't have to live our whole life wondering if we're still saved. We get to live free from that. Isn't that an amazing thing? We aren't begrudging children who obey on the surface because, man, we don't want to lose that place in heaven, but underneath, we really want to break all the rules. Man, no, we delight in all who God is. We delight in him, including his righteousness. So we obey him. We obey him with joy. I want to ask us this. What comes to mind? What comes to mind when you hear these words, obedience to God? What comes to mind? What goes on in your heart? Is it kind of like you're bummed out?

Oh, I knew it. I got to follow a bunch of rules. God's putting all these rules on me. I'm going to miss out on all the fun. Man, I thought we were allowed to just be free in Jesus. Yes, in Jesus's resurrection, we are given freedom. But make no mistake, while it is freedom from sin and death, it is not freedom to live life on our own terms. To be honest, there is no such thing.

That passage that we just read, it's saying this to us. We are either living free from righteousness and in bondage to sin, or we're living free from sin and in bondage to righteousness. There is no middle ground. There's no other way like, hmm, is there a loophole? How can I get out of either one of those? There's no middle ground. That is why salvation in Jesus is actually such a radical thing.

It isn't just believing so we can grab all the goodies and the benefits of the resurrection that are coming our way. No, before we can live in the resurrection, we must die by faith in the cross.

[ 21 : 32 ] So let's go back to Romans 6, verse 3. Let's jump back and reread some of that again. It says this, Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

We were buried, therefore, with him by baptism into his death. In order that, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. Man, are you here today and having a hard time imagining living for Jesus? Are you having a hard time even getting excited about that? Is your idea of the Christian life kind of like, man, the Christian life is a life lived missing out on a lot of life?

Is that you? I would say, man, that might be proof that you have yet to put your faith in the cross. That might be proof that you have yet to experience how amazing Jesus is.

Here's the thing, guys. Salvation starts with death. It is death to your sin. It is your death to your sin's desires.

It is looking at Jesus's death and saying, I believe. I believe my sin was put on him. I am the sinner. I am the man of sin. I am the woman of sin who deserves to die.

[ 22 : 56 ] But Jesus, he became as a sinner on the cross and he took my place. He died in my place. He died in your place. He faced God's judgment, his wrath against our sin.

So, what does that mean? What does that look like? How do we unite with Jesus in his death then? How do we unite with him? It's kind of a weird idea, right?

Thank goodness we don't go outside and start like, you know, like creating a grave. It's like, hey, if you want to be saved, you got to get down in this and we're going to pour some dirt on you. That's not what happens, right? How do we unite with Jesus in his death?

And it's through faith. We unite through faith. It's not through works. It's not anything that we can do. By faith, it says we're united with Jesus in his death. That is how you and I die to sin.

That is how you and I die to our sinful desires. It says our old self, that man of sin, that woman of sin, who we were through faith, that person has died and was buried.

[ 23 : 59 ] It is no more. It is not you anymore. That's not how you identify yourself. It's no longer who we are. That person is gone. Then, and only then, after we've died with Christ, are we raised to walk in this newness of life. Through faith in Jesus's death, we enter in to resurrection life. And I want to say to you here, if you've never done that before, if you've never put your faith in that truth, that Jesus died for your sin, that you could be buried with him in his death, but through that, that old man of sin, all you were, all your sin, the guilt of your sin, the shame of your sin, that is buried and gets left behind. You could be raised to walk in newness of life.

That is you, man. Today is the day of salvation. And the Bible says, put your faith. How do you respond? If you're in your heart saying, what must I do? This is what you do. You confess.

You confess. You say, I'm a sinner. And Jesus, I need you to save me. I need you to be my savior. You are my only hope. That is all it takes. You put your faith in him. And guess what? That old man, that old man of sin is going to be gone. And if that's you, man, and if maybe you're praying that prayer right now, or you want to pray it with me over here to the right of the stage after this, at the end of the service, man, I would love to do that with you. And I would love to meet you.

Now, if you're here and you're already following Jesus, the cross and the resurrection, man, these aren't things that we move away from. This is what our life is built on.

This is what our life is. We live in those two realities. This is the movement of our life, cross and resurrection, the movement of our life, the spirit-filled, spirit-led, spirit-taught life is dying to sin and living to righteousness. Not once, but every day, all day. That's what it is.

[ 26 : 02 ] You know, we often think of spiritual maturity, those people that are really impressive spiritually as kind of having it all together. Those people that are without sin, they kind of like to brag on their righteousness. And really, it seems like, man, they never make a mistake. Actually, that isn't spiritual maturity at all. It looks a lot more like this. Spiritual maturity is actually, it starts at the cross. It's growing in more self-awareness of who I am.

I am more sinful and broken than I realize the further I press into the cross, the further that I understand who I am. It's not that I have it all together. Oh yeah, Jesse, prove it.

The Apostle Paul, a guy who wrote a bunch of the New Testament, right? He begins and he starts writing and in his early writings, he calls himself a sinner. And then as he progresses in age and he spends more time and grows in grace and the knowledge of Jesus Christ, he goes from thinking himself as a sinner to thinking himself as the chief of sinners, right? You're thinking, wow, Paul, you're going in the wrong direction. And then by the time he writes Romans, which we all believe, Christian history tells us is towards the end of his life, he calls himself, oh, wretched man that I am, who is going to deliver me from this body of sin. See, Paul's self-awareness and pushing into the cross and knowing what was going on as God was sanctifying him wasn't saying like, hey, I'm getting less and less sinful. Actually, he was becoming more aware how sinful he really was. But guess what? That didn't mean he just gave up and said, well, if this is who I am, I'm just going to give into it and I'm just going on my sin world tour and do whatever I want. No big deal. That's not what he does, man. He fights his sin because he goes on to the next part of it. He's trusting in the resurrection. He's saying, I got to consider myself dead to sin and alive to God. I have to remind myself that even though I'm so sinful and

I see that all the time that, man, it doesn't lead me in despair and hopelessness. Even though I have the forgiveness of Christ, I have the power of the resurrection. The Holy Spirit, the same spirit that raised Christ Jesus from the dead, it's at work in me, working in me, reminding me that sin doesn't have dominion over me. I can fight it. I can have victory over it in him. See, if we just focus on the cross, we end up in cycles of despair or cycles of sin. We only end up looking at our sin and not getting to the power of the resurrection over our sin. And that looks like a joyless, hopeless life.

Or if we just focus on the resurrection, we end up in pride where we are ignorant to our sin or are blind to our sin and not willing to own up to our sin. We can't be our authentic selves to anyone. We create masks and walls and we pretend all the time. And we become judgmental and bitter and crusty and all those things. We judge others. But, man, if we move between the cross and the resurrection all the time, what happens? So that slide says we grow in more and more freedom. And that's what the beauty of the gospel is holding out for us today. Freedom from a false image of ourselves. Freedom to behold a greater vision of God's grace and his goodness and his love and an experience of God. So as we come and take communion, if you're believers here, we respond with communion. This is reminding us that we are united with Christ in his death. His blood shed, right? The cup we take, his blood shed, the bread, the body broken for us. This not only points to the cross, but it also points to the resurrection. Through his death, we are raised to new life. Spirit-filled, spirit-led, obedient to God. This is our victory over sin and death. The resurrection life is the place we live in today and tomorrow and forever. Let's pray.

[ 29 : 56 ] Lord, I want to pray a simple prayer for my friends in the room that don't know you are wrestling right now with faith in you that they would overcome. You would overcome their barriers.

I pray for my friends in the room who believe in you, who really struggle with this idea of following you, Jesus. Lord, God, that there's grace for them. Lord, the life you call us to, the resurrection life you call us to, it's a good life. There's freedom. Freedom as we move from death to life, as we move from cross to resurrection. Not just once, but all the time. And I pray as we come to the communion table and partake of what represents you that we would be reminded of. That's how you lived. You went from cross to resurrection. And Lord, help us to stay there and live in that place. Those two realities, that we could be a humble people, confident in your power. Amen.