

Easter Sunday: Some Greek worshippers sought an interview with Jesus. In response, Jesus teaches about the purpose and work of the Son of Man.

The potential, passion, productivity, praise, and personalizing Christ's purpose

The nature of a seed, dying and becoming fruitful, is a demonstration of Jesus and his life, death, and resurrection. *When God established this natural principle, He had the Resurrection of Jesus in mind, giving us a picture of how our lives should be spiritually lived in following Christ.*

Take this personally: The missing link is personal repentance and faith, understanding, and applying a union with Christ. *Take Christ's life to your heart, home, and life, and plant it*

What God opened, we must by faith enter into/receive His gift.

See the life of Christ in the seed; see YOUR life in the seed - *it's me, it's me*

What Christ is, we are called by God to be . . . To empower and fuel this calling for us, Jesus weaves into this response to these Greeks blessed promises describing the kind of future those who serve and follow Jesus will experience.

What are the promises Jesus makes for those who will serve and follow Him?

- Even though a seed seems so tiny and insignificant, God has ordained a seed to have great importance and potential for multiplication. (Every person's life, brief yet sacred)
- Don't think you can get lost in the crowd- God is intimately acquainted with all your ways.
- We will stand before God as an individual seed, with one short life to live: Col. 1:27-28
- Therefore, we must individually surrender all (the trouble!) and serve Jesus by following Him. The salvation and formation of your soul is at stake . . . maturity and growth are worth the trouble and passion . . . Jesus will empower and bless this

What belongs to Jesus and is true of Jesus becomes ours - by virtue of His work of redeeming, adopting, and uniting us to Him. *"Walk while you have the light . . . believe in the light, so that you may become sons of Light." (John 12) Those in darkness are lost - they have no idea where they are going.*

Why Jesus, and not myself? He is declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead (Rom. 1:4)

- Therefore, everything is His - He is really and truly LORD
 - And by virtue of union with Christ, all is ours as well - great things! (Ps 119)
 - Thomas (John 20:28)
 - Peter (John 21:22)
 - Paul (Gal. 2:20)

Those who serve Christ - follow Him - these are the promised benefits and results. Following John 12, in John 13, Jesus takes a towel and serves them.

Blessed are you if you do these things! (These are main, repeated truths; also warnings)

1. Your life will bear fruit like Jesus.

- a. "If a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it bears much fruit."
 - i. If it does not die, it will remain alone. (Luke 9:23-24)
- b. "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing." (John 15:5)
 - i. You will be pruned to bear more
 - ii. You are abiding in His words
 - iii. You are abiding in His love
 - iv. You will keep his commandments
 - v. Your joy will be full . . .
- c. Rather than fruitless, alone . . . no growth, stagnant and dead; purposeless; stagnant; no effect on others - "It is not good for man to be alone."
- d. You will be changed in nature and character to become like His
 - i. A new creation in Christ (2 Cor. 5:15)
- e. You will make an impact on others... evangelism and example, and inspiration
 - i. Do you even realize or care about the impact you make on the lives of others?

2. Your life will be forever like Jesus.

- a. "He who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal." (v.25)
 - i. If I love my life, I will lose it. (Luke 9:24)
- b. "Because I live, you too shall live" (John 14:19)
- c. "This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent" (John 17:3)
- d. "Just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes . . . He who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life." (John 5:21-24)
- e. Death is the fear underlying every fear; the looming dread like a deadline hanging over your heart; it is a penalty; we are each under a curse (Rom. 6:23) - yet now the devil has a nail-scarred footprint on the back of his neck. (CS Lewis)
 - i. Our aging is a mark and sign that something is wrong. Like the seed, this natural process is self-evident; death and judgement inevitable: Heb. 9:27
- f. If you live for the next world, you get this one in the deal; you live for this life only, you lose them both.
- g. He is no fool who gives what He cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose
- h. Life comes from death. Death to self-rule; self-will. . . and faith in Christ
- i. I will give them eternal life - He who has the Son has life; He who does not have the Son does not have life . . . absolute eternal security . . .

3. Your life will be found with Jesus

- a. "Where I am, there My servant will be also" (John 12:26). *This is the goal!*
- b. "I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am, there you may be also" (John 14:1-3); *Therefore, let not your heart be troubled . . .*
 - i. Here, we stay near the shepherd. Then, we are found where He is
 1. Daily walking in the light, walking with Jesus by His word
 2. Ultimately, forever, we will rule and reign with Him
- c. How do we keep the heart near God? (Prov. 4:23)
- d. Rather than being lost, alienated (Luke 15) we are found
- e. The proud and foolish wicked remain lost- like chaff, 'they are no more' (Psalm 37:10)
- f. My servant will be where I am. .that where I am, there you will be also
- g. Where is Jesus? Colossians 2:8-15
- h. Where are you?
- i. 1 Thess. 4:17-18: "and so we shall always be with the Lord."
 - i. all together: never separated. .with Him forever
 - ii. Abraham and Isaac and Jacob: comfort one another
- j. "The excessive misery of my suffering while in slavery will only enhance my joy and happiness when finally set free (F. Douglass-16 years of age)

4. Your life will be favored like Jesus.

- a. "If anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him." (12:26)
- b. God speaks audibly to Christ: "I have and I will"
 - i. God speaks to us, since we are now in Christ and adopted by the Holy Spirit through the Word
- c. God speaks in this conversation: *I have and I will . . . Father/Son intimate unity*
- d. Remember Jesus' prayer in John 17: "Be with me where I am so that they may see My glory which You have given me for you loved me before the foundation of the world . . . "He who overcomes, I will grant him to sit down with me on my throne." (Rev. 3:21)
- e. Rather than dark, lost, alienated, and dead . . . under wrath and curse, those who serve Christ will enjoy and share in His beauty, glory, and perfection.
- f. A voice of praise, and honor - 1 Peter 5; God himself will perfect you
 - i. 1 John 3:1-3: We will have His favor, His honor, His beauty, and the words will match the reality! Now, through a glass darkly - then face/face
- g. After all, John is *the Beloved Disciple* - personally loved - to hear and be with him
 - i. John's nearness: at the table, cross; beach; John, behold you mother - my beloved brother .. so John hears the words of intimate family talk.

Is the resurrection of Christ operational, the dominant force in your life, giving weight to Christ, His life and work, His word?

Changing the way you interact and respond to people and the world - where's the joy?

The peace? Would the people around you say: He believes Jesus is risen because he... how pleasant are you??

Resurrection passions of the new community - priorities, adjustments, personally

- Worship; God's Word; Fellowship; Making Disciples; Service; Holiness; Prayer

"If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto myself" - Therefore, practically speaking, get him up!

Go, and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life." (Acts 5:20)

"The apostolic preaching and teaching about God and Christ and the Holy Spirit was not mere information transfer but was instead the God-appointed means through which real spiritual life is conveyed." (Ames)

For all things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future — all are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's. (1 Corinthians 3:21–23). You Christians own everything. So, relax. You don't need it now. Kids get themselves in trouble. They're called prodigals. They get themselves in trouble by demanding inheritances ahead of time. You have an inheritance. It's called everything. Everything — all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places. The world, life, death, fellow heirs with Christ who made the world, owns the world. It's coming. (John Piper)

"But the taproot of our entire salvation, and the true NT frame for cataloguing its ingredients, is our union with Christ himself by the Holy Spirit. That is, to be more precise, our implantation, symbolized by the under-and-up-from-under of water baptism, into the twin realities of Christ's own dying and rising (see Rom 6:1-11; Col 2:9-12). In this union we have a salvation that is not only positional through the cross in the terms just stated, and relational through our sustained faith-communion with our Lord, but is also transformational through the regenerating and indwelling Spirit, who stirs and motivates and empowers us to express our new hearts' desires in new habits of action and reaction constituting Christlike character ("the fruit of the Spirit" in Gal 5:22-23).

"Atonement in the Life of the Christian," in *The Glory of the Atonement*, 417 (J.I. Packer)