

EFCA Doctrinal Statement 4 part 4

5/28/18

This week we are thinking about Christ dying under Pontius Pilate and raising bodily from the grave. This is the heart of the Gospel. Jesus as both God and man died on the cross to pay the price for our sin, and He rose bodily from the grave to conquer death and give us new life. What an amazing truth!

In 1 Corinthians 15:1-9, Paul outlines the basics of the Gospel. He says that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures. The unique Good News of Jesus is that God took on flesh in order to pay the price for our sin, and then raised again that we might have new life.

The problem with sin is that it can't be undone. It can't be outweighed by the good we do. It can't be overlooked. Sin carries with it an automatic death sentence. (Romans 6:23) In order for God to continue to be just a payment had to be made. The unique thing about the Gospel of Jesus Christ is that God became both just and the justifier. He provided the way for our sin to be atoned for. God gave His Son Jesus to be our sacrifice of atonement. (Romans 3:23-26) It is only through responding to His gracious gift by faith that God's righteous wrath and judgment against sin can be satisfied. We are indeed saved by grace through faith. (Ephesians 2:8-10)

We were, however, not just saved from Hell. We were saved to an entirely new life. As Paul goes on to describe in 1 Corinthians 15, Jesus was raised from the dead and so will we be. There are two crucial results of Jesus' resurrection, **hope and power**.

We have an absolutely secure hope that we too will be raised and have new resurrection bodies. Our earthly bodies will die, but we will be raised with Christ to a new life. We have a blessed hope of eternity with Christ. (John 14:1-4; 1 John 3:1-3; Romans 8:18-25) This assurance that the Bible calls hope is the thing that causes us to continue to live this life on God's terms. As Paul said in 1 Corinthians 15:19, if our hope is for this life only we are to be most pitied.

The second thing that we have been granted is power. It comes from having a new nature. We are no longer just sinners. We are those who have been given a new nature and a new life. That is what Paul prayed that the Ephesians would understand. (Ephesians 1) It is what he declared in Romans 5. We have been given new life. We have been raised with Christ. Our lives are hidden in Him. While we continue to struggle with sin, we have the ability to say no to it and live in the power of the Holy Spirit. Paul declares the solution to our sin problem in Romans 8. We live this life in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Good News or Gospel of Jesus Christ is that we can be saved from the penalty of sin to condemn us, and the power of sin to control us. Jesus died on our behalf and rose to prove that the penalty had been paid and sin and death had been overcome. (1 Corinthians 15:56-57)

What is a proper response to what God has done? We choose to believe it. We have faith in what God says He has done for us in Christ. Then we choose to live every day by faith in that reality. We are saved by faith in Jesus Christ and we walk by faith in Jesus Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Questions to consider:

