



R O M A N S 4 : 1 8 - 5 : 2

THE JUDGE WHO WAS JUDGED

LEADER GUIDE

April 5

AN EASTER STUDY

on Romans 4:18-5:2

April 5

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Beijing, China
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Written by TJ Johnson

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Sermon Overview

FNear my home is a running trail my wife and I like to run occasionally. It just so happens that this trail passes through a small cemetery. I always find it odd when I run past it. Across the street from a bustling mall, tucked away behind the trees, is a reminder of death. I've never seen anyone there. It almost feels forgotten by time. But I imagine this Sunday that little cemetery will be rife with activity. It is, after all, 清明节 (Tomb Sweeping Day)—the day people visit the tombs of their ancestors.

It's a bit serendipitous that on the weekend billions of people will be visiting tombs, we too are invited to a tomb. Not to burn paper money. Not to mourn. Nor to honor the dead. For the tomb we are invited to is empty. Two thousand years ago, just outside Jerusalem in a garden, the body of Jesus briefly occupied that tomb for three days. But on Sunday morning, as the sun rose from its slumber, so too the Son rose from the dead.

It was all very shocking, for the women, for the Roman soldiers, and even for the Apostles. The Romans had crucified Jesus. A soldier had thrust a spear into Jesus' side, from which blood and water flowed. They had taken His lifeless body off the cross. A few faithful followers had hastily wrapped His body and placed it in a tomb. A stone was rolled over its entrance. There's no doubt, Jesus was dead. And yet now... here He was living, breathing, talking...very much ALIVE.

But what does it all mean? Aside from the fact that it's a bit odd and mysterious—and quite an amazing thing to accomplish—what does His resurrection actually mean? Why should I care about this event? Why should you care about the resurrection? Why should the billions of people who will be eating Easter brunches and hunting eggs this Sunday care about the resurrection?

It is my hope that as we gather this Lord's Day—through our singing, praying, preaching, and partaking of the Lord's Supper—that question will be answered. Jesus HAS risen. But what does it all mean? In preparation for Sunday, I encourage you to read through Romans 4:18–5:2.

Waiting in anticipation with you,

Elder TJ Johnson



Christ Has Risen

Sermon Outline

Proposition: Jesus' Resurrection is God's final judgment on Jesus, sin, and His elect, so let us rejoice in what Jesus has accomplished in His resurrection.

- 1. The Resurrection means Christ was judged worthy.**
- 2. The Resurrection means sin, death, and the devil was judged defeated.**
- 3. The Resurrection means Sinners have been judged justified.**

Sermon Notes

Sermon Applications



Christ Has Risen

Discussion Questions

1. Read Romans 1:4; 4:25; and 1 Timothy 3:16. What does it mean that Jesus' resurrection justified (vindicated) Him, and why is this important for our salvation? (See also 1 Corinthians 15:14–17.)

Jesus' resurrection vindicated Him by proving that He truly is the Son of God and that His sacrifice for sin was accepted by the Father (Romans 1:4). It demonstrated that His death was not a defeat but a victorious payment for sin (Romans 4:25). Without the resurrection, faith would be empty and believers would remain in their sins (1 Corinthians 15:14–17). Because Christ rose from the dead, His righteousness is credited to those who trust in Him. The resurrection guarantees our justification, confirms the truth of the gospel, and gives believers assurance of forgiveness, new life, and future resurrection with Him.

2. Read Romans 4:25 and Colossians 2:13–15. Who are the rulers and authorities in this passage? In what ways has Jesus' death and resurrection disarmed them, and what does that mean practically for Christians? In other words, does this mean the spiritual forces of evil can no longer tempt or afflict us?

Rules and authorities are demonic powers. According to ESV Study Bible "The cross of Christ marks the decisive defeat of the demonic powers. On the cross, they were stripped of their power to accuse Christians before God. (Gk. diabolos, "devil," means "accuser, slanderer.") Nevertheless, these demons continue to exist and to exercise power to incite evil, so Christians must continue to struggle with them".

3. Read Colossians 2:13–15 and 2 Corinthians 11:14. Satan's strategy is disguise—appearing as an "angel of light." Where do you see this happening in your own life? While Satan and his ways can seem right and enjoyable (an angel of light), in what ways has the resurrection of Jesus "shamed" Satan in your own eyes so that his power over you has diminished?



Christ Has Risen

Discussion Questions

Satan often disguises temptation as something good, attractive, or harmless. Just as in the Garden of Eden, he distorts truth and presents sin as beneficial while hiding its destructive consequences. In our lives, this can appear as pursuing comfort, success, or pleasure in ways that slowly pull our hearts away from trusting God. However, the resurrection of Jesus exposes Satan's deception and proves that his power is defeated (Colossians 2:15). Christ's victory shows that sin, shame, and death no longer have ultimate authority. Because Jesus rose, we see Satan's lies more clearly and find freedom to resist temptation and walk in obedience.

4. Read Romans 4:25; 1 Corinthians 6:14, 15:12–23; 2 Corinthians 4:14; and 1 Thessalonians 4:14. Think of a current difficulty in your life. How should the reality of Christ's resurrection—and the guarantee of your future resurrection—change the way you view that situation?

Whatever struggle we face, Christ's resurrection changes our perspective by giving certain hope beyond present suffering. Romans 4:25 teaches that Jesus was raised for our justification, assuring us that God has accepted His sacrifice and our sins are forgiven. 1 Corinthians 6:14 promises that God will also raise us, encouraging holy living now. 1 Corinthians 15:12–23 reminds that Christ's resurrection guarantees our future resurrection. 1 Corinthians 4:14 strengthens endurance because God will present us alive with Christ. 1 Thessalonians 4:14 comforts with hope over death, knowing believers who sleep in Jesus will rise again with Him forever.

5. Read Romans 6:4–5; 8:10–14; Ephesians 2:4–6; Colossians 3:1–4; and Philippians 3:10–11. Resurrection power is not just for the future but for how we live now. Where in your daily life do you most need to experience the reality that you have been "raised to a new life"? What might be some reasons a Christian is not living in resurrection power?



Christ Has Risen

Discussion Questions

Resurrection power should shape our daily lives, especially in areas where we struggle with sin, discouragement, or fear. Romans 6:4–5 teaches that we are raised to walk in newness of life, while Romans 8:10–14 calls us to live by the Spirit rather than the flesh. Ephesians 2:4–6 reminds us that we already share in Christ's risen life. We most need this power in our thoughts, choices, and relationships. Christians may fail to live in resurrection power because of unbelief, attachment to old habits, neglect of prayer and Scripture, or relying on human strength instead of the Holy Spirit's transforming work daily.

6. Read Romans 4:20. What unbelief do you currently have in your heart? As Abraham "grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God," in what ways can we regularly give glory to God for Jesus' resurrection? Are there any healthy habits you need to start cultivating?

Abraham grew strong in faith by trusting God's promise despite circumstances. In the same way, unbelief can appear when we doubt God's timing, question His goodness, or rely more on our own understanding than His Word. We glorify God for Jesus' resurrection by living with gratitude, trusting His power over sin and death, and worshiping Him daily. Healthy habits that help include regular prayer, studying Scripture, personal worship, and reflecting on Christ's victory. Giving glory to God also means obedience, serving others, and choosing faith even when situations seem uncertain, remembering that God always fulfills His promises faithfully.

7. What is one practical way you can bear witness to the true meaning of the resurrection in your daily life this week?

One practical way we can bear witness to the resurrection this week is by living with visible hope and kindness toward others. By forgiving quickly, encouraging someone who is struggling, and speaking about Christ's victory in natural conversations, we demonstrate that Jesus is alive and actively transforming our attitudes, actions, and relationships daily.



Christ Has Risen

Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

Prayer Requests

A large, empty rectangular box with rounded corners, intended for writing prayer requests.

Praise Reports

A large, empty rectangular box with rounded corners, intended for writing praise reports.