

Knowing Christ - His Resurrection 1 Lance Lambert

If you would turn with me to John 11:25-27:

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; and he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" She said to Him, "Yes, Lord; I have believed that You are the Christ, the Son of God, even He who comes into the world.

Then if you will turn to 1 Peter 1:3-9:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.

Then lastly, Ephesians 1:15-21:

For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which exists among you, and your love for all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come.

Could we have a further word of prayer:

Beloved Lord, we are so thankful when we come to the ministry of Your word, that You do not leave us according to our own talents or energy or knowledge. You provide us with an anointing, that anointing grace and power which You make available to us. It makes all the difference. We don't want to just speak words, translate words or hear words. We want to meet with You. We want to receive from You. We want that word of Christ to dwell in us richly. We want to hear your voice this night. We want to be touched by your Holy Spirit. Therefore Lord, by faith we stand into that anointing which You have provided both for the speaking of of Your word, translating of Your word and

the hearing of Your word. Lord, fulfill Your design and purpose in our being together tonight. We ask it in the name of our Lord Jesus, Amen.

My responsibility in these times together in the word of the Lord is “Knowing Christ in His resurrection.” I cannot think of a more wonderful theme. Brother Stephen is going to speak on “Knowing Christ in His death” and Brother Christian, “Knowing Christ in His ascension.” My responsibility is resurrection. What poor people we are if we do not know the resurrection of the Lord Jesus! We would simply be nominal, religious Christians. It would just be a question of ritual, a question of doctrine. But to know Christ in His resurrection - that is the dividing point between religion and experience.

It is a most remarkable fact that the Lord Jesus never spoke of His death without, at the same time, speaking of His resurrection. His death was to accomplish something that in His resurrection He could make real in each one of us. The Bible is all about life and life and more life. Death is only a means to life. Everywhere you turn in the Bible, you will find life - not just flesh life but spiritual life, eternal life, the life of God, undying life, everywhere you turn. In the very beginning of the Bible, you see the tree of life and at the end of the Bible, you have the tree of life. You go from one tree of life to the last tree of life - the same tree. You go from a river of life and you find at the end, the river of life. It is life, everywhere. Now all I want to be able to get, by the spirit of God, how wonderful it is to be a child of God.

To be a child of God, you must have been born. You are not stillborn; you are not born dead. You are born alive. It is therefore a tremendous matter we are dealing with! Wherever you look in the Bible, it is the matter of the fruitful life, the power of life. Life more abundant, everywhere you turn.

The first thing I want to underline this evening is in John 1:4. It is speaking about the Lord Jesus:

In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

This life is the life of God. If I may so speak of it – undying life. Life that has no beginning and no end. Undying life. Endless life. This is why God is called simply the living God. All other gods are gods of stone or of wood or of silver or of something else and that there are demons behind them. There’s no doubt that there are spiritual forces behind these principalities and powers. But God always reveals Himself as the living God. He revealed His name to Moses when Moses asked what His name was. He said My name is I am. Not I was. I am. I am that I am. The living God. Now when you realize how tremendous it is when you hear these words I am, that is, in the Lord Jesus was life and this life was the light of men. This is the life of God in the Lord Jesus and that life becomes light. Jesus put it Himself in another way – I am the light of the world. He that follows Me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life. Not the light of knowledge, the light of life.

This is another kind of knowledge. One kind of knowledge is up here. The other kind of knowledge is here. You understand? That is why the Apostle Paul prayed to the church

at Corinth - that the eyes of their heart might be enlightened that they might know what is the hope of His glory. Not know about it. That's theology. Now there is nothing wrong with pure theology but there is a vast difference in studying theology and knowing the Lord. When you know the Lord, there is an impact on you. What you see in the Lord, it has an effect upon you. You can study something just as a doctrine and it can leave you cold. Your life is unchanged. You just have a little more knowledge in your head but when you see the Lord, it is the knowledge of life and it changes you and your whole life is challenged. You are redirected; you cannot be the same. This matter is so important!

You see in John 14:6, the Lord Jesus declared it:

I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.

Jesus said that, "I *am* the life." He didn't say, "I declare the truth." He said, "I *am* the truth." He didn't say, "I point to the way." He said, "I *am* the way." He didn't say, "I express the life." He said, "I *am* the life." Now I say that this is tremendous once it dawns on you.

I have said it before and I will say it again - the term "Christian life" is nowhere to be found in the Bible. The term "Christian" is found only a couple of times but the term "Christian life" is nowhere found in the whole Bible, not in any of the 66 books from Genesis 1 to Revelations 22. You might say, "Well, of course, you don't expect to find it in the 39 books of Old Testament but the 27 writings of the New Testament, how come the Christian life is not mentioned once?" After all, book after book after book after book has been written on the Christian life. Conference after conference, convention after convention have shared on the Christian life. But the term never comes up once in the New Testament. Not once. Does that mean there's no such thing as a Christian life? Of course not. What the word of God calls "eternal life" is the Christian life.

Now you can turn to 1 John 5:11-12 and this is how it reads:

And the witness is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God, does not have the life.

Now let me put it another way to bring it home to you. And the witness is this that God gave unto us the Christian life and this Christian life is in His Son. He that has the Son has the Christian life. He that has not the Son of God has not the Christian life. Now just wait - I don't want to upset anybody but I have to be very clear on this. You can have baptism but not have eternal life. You can have the Lord's table, the bread and the wine, and not have the Christian life, not have the eternal life. You can be on the church membership roll and still you're not a possessor of eternal life. Only a living experience of the Son, only a direct relationship to the Lord Jesus - this alone brings you to be a possessor of eternal life. Now listen to me further - your great grandfather might have been a wonderful Christian. Born of God, walking with God, hearing God and bringing others to the Lord but that does not make you a Christian. Your mother may have been a wonderful Christian but that does not make you a Christian. Do you understand? I remember Billy Graham putting it simply - if you were born in a garage, that doesn't make you a car. There are a lot of people who think that because one was born in a

Christian family, this makes them a Christian but they never had a saving experience of the Lord Jesus. Only those who have had a saving experience of the Lord Jesus are Christians. We have to make it as clear as we can.

I once went to a church located in Kentucky. I noticed the whole place, the whole assembly, was bursting with life. I asked the pastor what had happened to this place. He told me that his predecessor held a week of meetings and he brought in a very well-known evangelist. He told all the church members to invite people who are not Christians. On the first night, there was no one there but Christians. On the second night, there was no one there but Christians and on the third night, there was no one there but Christians. So the evangelist said to the pastor if he should go over the teaching but the pastor said no, thinking that maybe tomorrow they will bring in people. But the evangelist was a real servant of God. That fourth night, he preached on making your calling and election sure and then he asked if there was anyone here that was baptized (this was a Baptist church) but felt in their heart that they do not think they know the Lord. He also asked if maybe there are others here who are even teaching in the Sunday school but not sure if you have a real experience of the Lord Jesus to please get up and come forward. Two thirds of the assembly went forth! Suddenly people in all kinds of offices in the church found the Lord but the original pastor was very angry. He felt he had lost face. He was very very upset and thought he should stop the meeting but something happened in the assembly and he could not stop it.

I learned that many of those had come into the church at age four or five years old by putting their hands up and then being baptized the next week but no one ever sat down and talked with them to make clear what the gospel really is. Isn't this amazing? This is exactly what Constantine did in the 4th century who called everybody who wanted to be could be a Christian.

Now all I'm saying is this – you must make your calling and election sure. We don't put our faith in ceremony, important as they may be, but we can only put our faith in the Lord Jesus. Every single one of us need our own experience of His saving grace and power. This Christian life is not something artificial. It is not something projected, it is something inside. You begin to experience the Lord. You don't just read books about others who experience the Lord. You and I begin to experience the Lord ourselves. The word begins to live through us. We hear the Lord. You understand? It is a tremendous thing we are talking about.

Some people think that just because they have Christian parents or Christian grandparents – it is a very interesting way the apostle Paul put this – he said to Timothy - the faith that is in you first dwelt in your mother and in your grandmother. It wasn't second generation or third generation. As someone once said - God does not have grandchildren. He has only children. What dwelt in your grandparents, dwelt in your parents, must dwelt in you. That is, you may have known these things from a little child but these things must be made real to you. This is tremendous.

Now I want to say something else. Jesus said as it is recorded in John 11:25:

I am the resurrection and the life.

Now have we got it wrong? Shouldn't He say, "I am the life and the resurrection"? Why did He put it that way? Well, if you look at the Scripture that we read through - it is interesting because He said he that believeth on Me though he die yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth on Me shall never die. Why did the Lord Jesus put this matter of resurrection first and life afterwards? For this eternal life to be yours or to be mine, someone had to die. In other words, I cannot but become the possessor of God's eternal life unless it begins with the resurrection. Someone had to love me. Someone had to die for me and then in His resurrection I am saved. I am talking of course about the atoning death of our Lord Jesus. There was no way you and I could have become the possessor of God's life.

The Christian life is not dressing up a corpse or dressing up a person who is unsaved. It begins with a death. You have to be born again. Now I find this tremendous because if you look at Romans 6:23, we read that the wages of sin is death but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Now maybe you're saying "Why is he preaching the gospel to us?" We are all believers. We know this. It is very important to get this absolutely clear.

Consider Romans 5:10:

For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

Or "in His life" as it is literally. That is, when the Lord Jesus died, through His blood you and I have been justified and more than that. The alienation, the divorce between us and God, has gone and we are reconciled. Now all the glorious power of life can be ours. We are saved in His life, love and joy and peace. All these wonderful things - everything is in that life. His death clears the ground but in the gift of His life is everything you and I need. All practical genuine experience of the Lord begins here.

Let me take you to 1 Peter 1:3:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

Born again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Isn't that an amazing phrase! Listen - unto an inheritance incorruptible, and a salvation ready to be revealed unto the last time. Born again! Do you realize how marvelous it is to be born of God? Do you know when you were born of God, the spirit of God was sent upon in your heart crying, "Abba Father!"? You know that Abba is Hebrew for "father." The French say "papa." You Chinese says "baba." This is so simple. You realize what happened when you were born again? The spirit of God was sent upon in your heart saying "Papa." A direct personal relationship to Him.

Let it come into your head. Some children of God are so afraid to begin to stand on the promises. Some are afraid to appropriate what is theirs in the Lord Jesus. They feel they are not worthy. They feel somehow they are more distant relatives. But the spirit of God has been sent upon in your hearts. You are not a cousin that's a thousand times remote. You are a child of God. You've been born again. You belong to Him. You belong to His family. You belong to the household of faith. He loves you. He wants to hear you. He wants to speak to you. What a wonderful thing birth is. Look at you all. All sitting here in these seats. So many years ago, all of you were this size. Amazing! You came out of your mother as a tiny little foot of flesh. Now look at you – just look at you. All of what you have now came from that little foot of flesh.

When I was first born, my mother thought I was so ugly. First of all my eyes did not open for a couple of weeks. Then I was a lovely kind of tomato red. My mother said to my father, "I think they've mixed up the babies. You're so good looking and I'm not bad myself, how could we produce something like this?" I had a big head so my mother had a very hard time but I was born all those years ago and everything I've got today came from then, except the clothes, of course! But isn't the wonder of birth amazing – to be born again with a relationship to God?

Now what are the evidences of birth? First thing, you breathe. A very simple thing, very simple. I think everybody here is breathing. It is so simple and yet you cannot live without breathing. You were not told by your mother, "Now, begin!" You began breathing. The nurse took you up and whacked you. First thing.

Second thing, you could cry. That's the second thing. Your lungs were not much there but they could make you cry. Isn't it true?

Third thing, your eyes open. A new world suddenly, your eyes open. You couldn't focus too well but little by little, your eyes focused.

Another thing, you began to hear. Before long, you could tell your mother's voice from a thousand other ladies' voices. You could tell your father's voice. You began to distinguish between your uncle's voice and your father's voice, your mother's voice and your grandmother's voice.

These are the evidences that you are alive. If someone does not breathe, they are stillborn, born dead. If their eyes don't open, they are dead. If their ears don't start to hear, they're dead. If they don't ever cry...what baby does not cry? Some more than others. I cried so much that my mother took me to a specialist. And he went through all the examinations and then he said, "Mrs. Lambert, you have a very, very strong-willed son. Wheel him down to the bottom of the garden and leave him there." But I had great allies in the neighbors who when they heard me yelling at the bottom of the garden went all the way to the front door and rang on the door, knocked and said, "Mrs. Lambert your son is crying at the bottom of the garden" and my mother would say, "I know he's down at the bottom of the garden because I put him there."

Well now, listen carefully. Are you spiritually breathing? Listen, have your eyes open to a new world? Then you are a child of God. Listen, are you speaking, that is, do you feel a need to pray? That's an evidence that you are born of God. There are some other things as well.

The sign of a healthy child is that the child has an appetite - hunger and thirst. What kind of baby would it be if he had no hunger and no thirst? If there is no hunger or no thirst, there's some disease. Something is wrong. There are thousands of Christians who do not hunger for the Lord. They don't pray; they don't feed on the Word. They don't drink of the spirit. Do you understand? Something's wrong.

Isn't it an amazing thing that when you were born and before very long, without reading a book, you stood up. The first time a baby stands up, it's exciting in the family. All around, everywhere people on cell phone, "Little so and so, Tommy has stood up." Folks, you might think, "What is so remarkable about that?" Millions and millions of human beings have stood up. It's a sign that something is happening. So and so is growing. For the first time, they are standing. Then they take their first step, they start to walk. What's so remarkable about that? Millions and millions of millions of human beings have walked. And then they run. Think of that! And then they fight. But the Scripture speaks of standing in Christ, walking in Christ, running the race, fighting the good fight. These are the evidences that someone is born of God.

Of course, when you are first born, we don't expect you to stand or to walk or to fight and we don't expect you to eat a steak when you are one week old. But when you are 20 years old in the Lord and you cannot pray and you cannot hear the Lord, you cannot walk with the Lord, you cannot run and you cannot fight the good fight of faith, something is wrong.

So dear folks, what an amazing thing this is! And isn't it interesting what the apostle Paul said in that amazing testimony he gave recorded in Philippians 3 – he counts everything but loss that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings being made conformed of the Lord unto His death. Now note the order: that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection. That has to come first. You cannot know the fellowship of His sufferings if you do not know the power of His resurrection. To enter the fellowship of His sufferings would spiritually finish you; you did not know the power of His resurrection life. It is amazing what the Lord entrusts to some of His children and the key to it is knowing the Lord Jesus in the power of His resurrection. Actually, you cannot experience His resurrection life and power without being conformed to His death. But the only way any child of God can know what it is to be crucified with Christ is through His resurrection life. Otherwise, it becomes just dead religion. That I may know the power of His resurrection. Not know *about* Him, as I've said already, but know Him.

And I want to just finish by pointing out to you in the Ephesian letter how amazing it is the apostle prayer for the church in Ephesus. He knew that what he was writing could easily just become a truth, sound truth, doctrine, pure doctrine, and he was afraid of it. It

is not because he was afraid of pure doctrine or of sound truth but he wanted them to know more than that. He wanted them to experience what He meant when He prayed for them that the Lord would grant them a spirit of wisdom and revelation, a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus. Revelation, illumination. When God opens the eyes of the heart. What you know here suddenly, you see it here and you're stunned. Up here, leaves you untouched. But when it comes here in the heart, you are stunned. You are filled with a sense of awe and wonder. How great the Lord is! How amazing what He has won for us. The eyes of your heart enlightened that you may know what is the hope of His glory. It dawns upon you. Not everything...that will take a whole lifetime. But something dawns on you. And this has something to do with His inheritance in the saints. You know it up here but here, it makes all the difference.

And then this – and what the exceeding greatness of His power to us who believe according to that working of the strength of His might when He walked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead. The whole of hell was mobilized to keep Christ in the tomb. Every demon, every principality, every power, every world ruler of the darkness - they were all focused on one thing – to keep him in the tomb. Oh the power that God wrought when He raised Jesus from the dead!

Now listen, it is the same power available to you. But many of us, we are so sorry for ourselves. It's all very well for Him to talk up there. If he only knew what I'm suffering. If he only knew the circumstance that I have or the situations that I have or the problems I've got or the obstacles in my way at present. If he only knew my husband, if he only knew my wife, if he only knew my parents, he'd understand, I am in a special case. It is too much for me. Of course, we would never say it like this but this is what we're thinking, "I blame God for this." He's put too much on me. He's allow too much to happen. But to know Christ in His resurrection. The same power of the spirit of God that raised up Jesus from the dead is the power that's working in you. Believe it.

If you could say tonight, I have tremendous problems but greater is He that is in me than he that is in this world. Go to the Old Testament, the Lord of Hosts is with us. That is a wonderful term, the commander of the army of heaven is with us. The god of Jacob is our refuge. Power and grace. The Lord of Hosts, the god of Jacob. The commander of the army of heaven with us. The god of Jacob, our refuge. To know the Lord in this way is something so real.

Well, you say, I don't think He would do it for me. I am not a very exceptional or significant person. I think you are. I am not trying to inflate your pride. Let me tell you something. God so loved you that He gave His only begotten Son for you. How can you be so insignificant? The price God placed on you is the worth of His own Son. Oh, you say, I can't believe that! But that's the problem – you are an unbeliever. That's the problem. You are a Christian unbeliever. It's tragic. You say, well I don't think I'm worth enough but He loved you and gave Himself for you. I would have thought if the Son of God loved the person, that person had to be significant. You must be marked out. You must be. Think. The devil comes to you again – don't listen to him. He doesn't know what he's talking about. You know yourself. You know you're insignificant. You

know you're unworthy. You know you're not very special. But listen to me, the word of Gods says, He loved you and gave Himself for you.

You can never explain the love of God. It is totally beyond. I know people have tried to explain it. You cannot explain it. He loves you because He loves you. This is the only explanation. Wouldn't it be wonderful if the Holy Spirit could touch your heart tonight and you could hear the Lord saying to you personally, "I love you" and wouldn't it be wonderful if the Holy Spirit could touch your heart to your ears and you could hear the Lord Jesus say "I've loved you and I gave myself for you"? What would your response be?

Shall we pray:

Oh, dear Lord we do pray this night that You would touch our hearts. It's not our heads that need to be touched. It is our hearts. Lord, touch our hearts and somehow reach us this night. We want to know the Lord Jesus in His resurrection. We want somehow the wonder of that resurrection life of our Lord Jesus to become a reality. Touch us oh Lord, In Your great mercy and love, we ask it in that name of Yours, Amen.