

Christ Alone

(Part II – The Resurrection Dynamic)

Intro:

By way of review:

We are discovering New Covenant dynamics by looking into the face of Christ.

“But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” (2 Corinthians 3:18, KJV 1900)

Based upon that verse, I reminded you of what I used to tell my students:

“When the child of God looks into the Word of God and sees the Son of God he is changed by the Spirit of God into the image of God for the glory of God.”

In our pursuit of Jesus Christ and our New Covenant dynamics, we used Philippians 3:10-14 as our springboard, and we will continue to do so today. We are particularly involved with Philippians 3:10:

“That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;” (Philippians 3:10, KJV 1900)

This verse has special meaning to me because as a 13- or 14-year-old, I chose it as my life verse, and it has served me well. I do, however, prefer to quote it from the original Amplified version:

“(for my determined purpose is) that I may know Him, that I may progressively become more deeply and intimately acquainted with Him, perceiving and recognizing and understanding (the wonders of His Person) more strongly and more clearly. And that I may in that same way come to know the power outflowing from His resurrection (which it exerts over believers); and that I may so share His sufferings as to be continually transformed (in spirit, into His likeness, even) to His death, (in the Hope.) Phil 3:10 (Early Amplified Version)

DYNAMIC # 1 – THE CHRIST LIFE

We have talked about the first dynamic located in that verse, determining to know Him. This is the dynamic of INTIMACY, a New Covenant dynamic which our Lord prophesied in John’s gospel. The Christian walk flows from an abiding life of intimacy. As we learn Christ, this is the kind of intimacy which cements our relationship with Christ, motivates us to submit and to serve under a common yoke. When there is an intimate walk, all that must follow will fall into place.

Today's Lesson Goal

1.) To see the Resurrection as more than a doctrinal fact and, 2.) to understand that the resurrection of Christ is the hallmark of our spiritual authority in Christ.

Our Session Outline

A. The Resurrection Dynamic Flows from Christ's Actual Resurrection. **B.** The Resurrection Dynamic is Excessively Powerful. **C.** This Resurrection Dynamic Endowed Christ with New Authority. **D.** The Resurrection Dynamic Equips You for Warfare. **E.** This Resurrection Dynamic Must Be Exercised with Urgency.

Looking at Philippians 3:10 one more time, we now come upon the second dynamic in Paul's list as we seek to join Paul in seeking to know the power which flows out of this resurrection.

DYNAMIC # 2 – RESURRECTION LIFE

“That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;” (Philippians 3:10, KJV 1900)

My twin brother and I were Chicago area paper boys. We each had separate routes and carried multiple papers morning and evening. We rode our heavily laden bikes most of the year. Those were good days, although I hated the Chicago wind and cold.

One day, a kind lady who lived at the far end of my route handed off a fine, large cabbage to me. It was quite a prize. This was a big cabbage, and as I rode along my arm started to tire. I needed to switch it to the other arm in order to continue on, and so I thought I would see if I could make this switch without stopping my bike. And, sure enough! It was a piece of cake. I discovered I could ride hands free, a skill I did not know I had because I had never used it. Within a few hours I was not only riding hands free, but I was also executing some nice corners and traveling at good rate of speed. I was having a whole lot of fun.

My point is this. I had a skill that I didn't even know I had. Though I possessed it, I had not *experienced* it. Assuming you are saved, you have probably heard about this resurrection power which is in you and flowing through you. You may not have connected the fact that it is this same resurrection power which is flowing through servants of Christ around you, both in and out of the pulpit. If you are new in Christ, the chances are this idea of resurrection power may still be a cerebral thing, a doctrinal thing of sorts. You have not really tried to go hands-free, as it were. You could be missing a whole lot of blessing. So, let's talk about this **resurrection dynamic**, this power which flows from the resurrection of Jesus Christ. We will try to follow a basic outline here to keep us on track, but you know the drill.

A. The Resurrection Dynamic Flows from Christ's Actual Resurrection.

Come with Paul to Ephesians as he makes this resurrection dynamic come alive. Each of Paul's epistles highlight some important aspect of New Covenant truth and none do better at helping us develop our world view than Ephesians and Colossians. Scan the area around Ephesians 1:19-20. Ephesians must be the crème de la crème when it comes to opening our spiritual eyes to great spiritual truths. In this letter, Paul is expressing his heartfelt prayer for these deeply enriched Ephesians and what he desires for them. This prayer goes far beyond praying for Aunt Jane's sore toe. Paul wants these believers to be truly spiritually enlightened. Among other things he prays that the eyes of their understanding would be opened that they might know:

"And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places," (Ephesians 1:19–20, KJV 1900)

Now, there is something I want you to know. Know that there was no resurrection dynamic until that resurrection morning. This power was wrought or energized in Christ when He was raised from the dead, not before.

Anne and I saw a beautiful antique Carmen Ghia this week. As we walked past it, I was just getting ready to pontificate on Porsche and why he designed this vehicle when a man walked up to us and said, *"That Volkswagen is a beauty, isn't it? The keys are in it, let's hop in and go for a ride!"* Now, folks, I drooled over that 1972 Carmen Ghia with the soul of a Volkswagen, I and I would have loved to take it for a spin, but I'm here to tell you. It just can't and won't hold a candle to my Rav4 in any category. Now we love all of God's Word, but I leave this admonition with you one more time. Trying to live your spiritual life by the dynamics of the Old Covenant is like puttering through life in an old Carmen Ghia.

When we talk about the differences between the Old and New Testaments, we tend to reduce the discussion to the matter of the law, and, of course, that is a very big matter. The dynamics of the law place us in bondage, whether embraced by unsaved or saved folks. Moses law should never be equated with the royal law upon which it hangs (as discussed in James, for example) or with the idea that the New Covenant is *merely* a spiritual container for the Torah (as is popular in messianic circles). However, we must not leave the discussion with the law.

I urge you to understand why this Old Testament is inadequate as *a spiritual life model*. Period. Spiritual life dynamics in the Old Testament were throttled or governed. The Holy Spirit was not fully enfranchised to do His work within the heart until the resurrection. Why was this the case? In a word, Christ was not yet fully enfranchised or authorized to do His work on earth and the Holy Spirit works under the authority of Christ. That should hold your attention for a minute or two and we'll come to that momentarily.

Now, look at our second point:

B. The Resurrection Dynamic is Excessively Powerful. (Eph. 1:19)

Look again. Paul is praying that WE will know (the Greek EIDO – perceive, be aware, understand) the exceeding magnitude of this great power which flows from the resurrection. According to this verse, this power was wrought TOWARD US! Yes, this certainly applies to our salvation. Paul makes that clear in 1 Corinthians 15. No resurrection means no gospel! Period. But that is *not* what Paul is talking specifically about here. The whole scope of this book is an effort on Paul's part to help these believers grasp the wonderful spiritual blessings they already have in heavenly places because of their election. These Ephesians may not have figured out that they could ride their bikes hands free, that there was a rich full empowerment at their very fingertips. We do not want to forget this wonderful power.

I am forever leaving things in the wrong place, including my phone. Fortunately, I have a handy button on my watch that makes my \$800 phone ding so I can find it. I find I can also leave something even more valuable behind. I can leave the resurrection at the cross! Worse, I can leave it for Easter Sunday! Paul says, No! Don't do that.

We need the exceeding greatness of this power in our life. We need to understand this dynamic.

C. This Resurrection Dynamic Endowed Christ with New Authority. (Ephesians 1:20-21/ Col. 1:15, 16)

Ephesians and Colossians are mega books. They use mega words and deal with mega themes, and they are written against a mega background – the war and ultimate reunion of heaven and earth. These books are cosmological giants. If you think I am extrapolating, just sit down and read them today – and underline every time you encounter the words heaven and earth and their synonyms. You may just be shocked. Do not underestimate the scope and the scale of these books and their implications! And, folks, there are very few discussions elsewhere in the whole of God's Word which can compete with this matter of authority.

When the Father raised the Son and wrought this mighty resurrection life toward us, he SEATED THE SON AT HIS OWN RIGHT HAND IN HEAVENLY PLACES. And just to be clear, let's continue on with verses 21 and 22 here:

“Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,” (Ephesians 1:21–22, KJV 1900)

When the Father seated Christ is important. This seating was an actual event which occurred subsequent to the resurrection. Jesus Christ was exalted – because of His death and resurrection. This is why Romans 4:25 is so poignant:

“Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.” (Romans 4:25, KJV 1900)

Our justification could not have occurred without this resurrection.

How the Father seated Christ is important. Now, I want to tell you, the courts of heaven rang from one end to the other on that day! There was not a dry eye anywhere! This was the consummate point in the history of the whole creation – heaven and earth!

Where the Father seated Christ is important. He was seated at the right hand of the Father, far above all principalities and powers! Oh, and just so that we understand that this was no private event, understand that Jesus Christ proclaimed this victory all the way to the other end of the universe, to those demons chained at the farthest point from heaven.

On May Day each year the communist nations on our globe assemble their armies and their bottle rockets, toy rifles, and tin can tanks in order to impress us and the God they deny of their great prowess. And they are certainly free to do that. But don't you be intimidated by that, friend! Don't be intimidated by the rhetoric which flows from our own sacred halls in the name of freedom! Christ is seated at the Father's throne.

Now, we continue with this thread, but I do want to offer one free caveat for you readers and thinkers It's only two sentences long, so grab on to it: The resurrected Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father, even as we speak. He is NOT seated on David's throne, as Progressive Dispensationalists would have Him. David's throne will be established right here on earth.

Let's get back to our thread. Your Commander in Chief, the captain of your salvation is reigning as the high King of Heaven, and as such, it raises a stimulating question. All of heaven witnessed this event. All of paradise was moved to heaven as a result of this very event. All of tarturus heard Christ personally proclaim this event. Why was it not echoed on earth? Why were the heavens not opened on that wonderful day when the Father elevated Messiah to His full glory?

It is important for us to understand that the victory has been declared, but the battle is not over. And that statement begs an explanation. It screams “Why?”

The answer may be found in a word: YOU. Yes, you. Like you, I pray every day for the consummation of history. I pray every day that my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ would receive the glory which is due to Him. I want to see my King reign on earth as He does in heaven, right from David's throne as He was promised. And yet, my prayer has gone unanswered still one more day. The first century Christians, and the second and the third and the fourth, and so on, have all echoed this prayer – and yet the heavens never respond.

It is as though the heavens are as brass. Or are they? What is going on? Let me give you that short answer in favor of a longer one that we will provide at a later point. The answer is you! The Lord is still not finished calling out a people from among the nations for His name. At the same time, I want to tell you, the end of the times of this Gentile outreach may just be screaming down upon us. If I did not know Christ, I wouldn't be wasting any seconds, minutes or hours settling this matter – much less days!

Why did the Father seat the Son in such a manner? It is all about **authority**. We are talking about Christ's authority in heaven and earth. Paul makes that point very clear in Colossians 1:15-16. The authority which Christ has always had in heaven is also inclusive of earth.

“Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:” (Colossians 1:15–16, KJV 1900)

That authority was never dispoised by our Lord as some modern video gurus would have us think – either at the garden or at Babylon. Our Savior IS the image of the invisible God, He is the primeval creator of every created thing, and that includes the whole scope of cosmology – every physical thing, every life form, every ruler, and so forth. It was created by Him and for Him.

However, that authority WAS *usurped* on earth. Have you picked up on the fact that we have been calling the resurrection a dynamic? There is a power which flows from it. Well, let me bring yet another dynamic to the table. We call it sin. Sin is not merely cerebral matter. Once introduced, it is a powerful malignant force which always ends in death. At its core, now listen carefully, sin places us in bondage. That is, it places us under the authority of something other than ourselves.

We older folks spend a lot more time divesting than we do investing. We are paring down for a journey. We need less and want less. When I discuss this matter of downsizing with my friends, I always like to quote my little maxim: *“Remember, everything you own owns a part of you, in some way or another.”* That's just a law of materialism. While this is a weak analogy, it serves a powerful purpose. Every sin you have committed has robbed *your authority* and placed you in bondage in one way or another. This is a spiritual law. And, to exacerbate matters, this is true of all the world. We are living in a world which is in dreadful bondage to its own sin.

And please don't be so naïve about freedom as you celebrate our wonderful national holidays. Americans who have declared themselves free from God have no freedom. The more we proclaim liberty, the more we are in bondage to our own lusts:

“While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.” (2 Peter 2:19, KJV 1900)

The world is in a fine mess far removed from our quickened resurrection life. In the words of Paul in Ephesians 2:

“And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:” (Ephesians 2:1–2, KJV 1900)

You’re not in bondage anymore. That is, you’re only in bondage *if you choose to be*. Consider absorbing yourself in Romans 6:14-19 later on this week.

Friend, if you are in bondage to a sin, you are staring right at your solution! It is in the resurrection power which flows directly from Christ. You DO NOT HAVE TO WAIT until Christ returns to rule! So, how does this relate to the resurrection dynamic to which we address ourselves today?

D. The Resurrection Dynamic Equips You for Warfare.

Notice Ephesians 2:5-7:

“Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.” (Ephesians 2:5–7, KJV 1900)

1. It’s About Elevating

As a result of Jesus’ own resurrection He was seated at the right hand of the Father, above all principalities and powers. We’ve got that part nailed down. Ah! But did you pick up on what just happened? Not only was Jesus Christ seated, you and I were raised up with Him in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and, wait for it!!... We too were seated together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus!

As a believer, I died with Christ. As a believer I was buried with Christ. Yup, I was in that tomb. As a believer, I was raised with Christ. And, as a believer I was SEATED with Christ in the heavenlies. And why is that *seating* so important? It is because, therein lies my authority and my victory over the spirit world!

This is no small matter with Paul in Ephesians. He goes on to remind us that this whole plan of reconciliation which would bring us together into one body in Christ was kept as a mystery since the foundation of the world. You can search far and wide through your Old Testament and find many wonderful truths and prophecies which dovetail with this truth, but you will not find this *body truth*. It’s just not there, even though it was eternally purposed – Ephesians 3:10.

2. It’s About Energizing.

You are the channel. That seems like such a strange term to use, but it is only strange because the counterfeit pagan system would have you think you can channel power from the Gods. But, take a look at this benedictory prayer in verse 20 of chapter 3:

“Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,” (Ephesians 3:20, KJV 1900)

This power does not begin with you. You are the channel, only. What is the power that is working in, or energizing us? It is this New Covenant resurrection power. It is this life of Christ flowing in and through us. This resurrection power is standard issue, it is very practical, and it came bundled with your salvation. It is not an add-on which must be activated separately, perhaps at the behest of giving away some seed money to some greedy gospel charlatan or some other man-imposed dictum. It is a power, however, which can be cultivated and enhanced in your life. There is a New Covenant secret, a mystery, which is devoted to showing us how to experience this power even more abundantly.

For today, understand that you have this resurrection dynamic, and it is flowing freely. This is not to suggest, for even a minute, that we can embrace some fantasy like the world does with its superheroes. And trust me, the world does fantasize about superpowers. Why the average worldling thinks that he can connect with the universe at some level and channel some power, if he only tries enough. Silly rabbits! There is only one power source out there for worldlings, and he is called the prince of the power of the air. And trust me, when you sell your soul or any fragment of it to the powers extant in the universe, bondage always follows.

But please get this salient point. That resurrection power is at work in you. It is a work in all of us who know and enjoy Christ.

3. It's About Equipping

Paul offers us a magnificent theological recap of exactly what is happening with this resurrection dynamic in Ephesians 4, and here is where he doubles up on the practicality of this matter.

He reminds us that our placement in Christ's body has resulted in the gifting of believers. We have a theological or doctrinal chain here with links that we often do not see together. We were placed in Christ by the baptism of the Holy Spirit and were thus identified with His death and, of course, resurrection. Having been seated in the heavenlies with Christ we share His authority which he exerts through His body in His absence. This authority is also seen in the grace gifts or the spiritual gifts given to every believer. Now, notice these next statements beginning with verse 8, lest any think I have imagined these truths. We're getting ready to wrap, but we must look at these verses in a block. Ephesians 4:8-13

“Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower

parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:” (Ephesians 4:8–13, KJV 1900)

As you can see, our stream of resurrection power has fast become a river. It leaves us without excuse. The who book of Ephesians leaves us without excuse. The whole book of Colossians leaves us further without excuse. We are endowed! We are imbued!

4. It's About Engaging

Just to be sure we understand that we have not only been declared resurrection victors, Paul reminds us that we are resurrection warriors, Ephesians 6! We wrestle not against flesh and look, but against those principalities and powers over which Christ has already given us victory. We are to put on the whole panoply of God and engage!

E. This Resurrection Dynamic Must Be Exercised with Urgency. (Philippians 2:12-13)

This resurrection power demonstrates itself in the life in many ways, some more noticeable than others.

1. This power is **Person** based. Remember, this power exudes as a result of our intimate walk with Christ. Look at John 14:12 and study the ‘greater than’ passages sometime for a real spiritual lift!
2. Secondly, this power is **practical**. It results in practical authority over sin, but it does not come by waving a wand. That is what Romans six is about. When we go through this wonderful experience of reckoning ourselves dead unto sin and alive unto God, Paul teaches us that this spiritual quickening is resurrection quickening.(Romans 6:8-11).
3. Thirdly, this power is **ambient**. The believer who is walking with Christ radiates the glory of Christ far more than he thinks. This commonly results with those around us experiencing both encouragement and rebuke. (2 Corinthians 3:18)
4. Fourthly, this power is **vocational**. If you picked up anything in this study, I hope you have understood that the whole discussion of resurrection power is MOST ALWAYS in the context of that great battle between heaven and earth. It is a war against principalities and powers. You have nothing to fear. (R8256ead Ephesians 2:15-23)
5. Fifthly, this power is **personal**. It is fitted perfectly to your calling. Paul is adamant. Your spiritual gifts emanate from this resurrection power. It is so perfectly fitted to you, that you often do not even notice how powerful your gift is. (Ephesians 4:7-13).

6. Finally, this power is prayer based. Paul was continually praying that we would experience the exceeding greatness of this power. (Ephesians 1:19-20). I fear this power is latent in too many of us.

We have a choice this hour. We can walk with other Gentiles in the vanity of their puffed up imaginations or you can put off concerning the old man and put on the new man which is after God and created in righteousness and holiness. But please do not trifle with this option, because in the end it is no option at all, it is an urgent dictum. Paul told the Philippians:

“Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” (Philippians 2:12–13, KJV 1900)

We are to work out our salvation with fear and trembling because it is God who is working in us, energizing us to do of His good pleasure.

Where is the urgency? Where is the fear?

Well, there is no fear of eternal damnation. That is for sure. Christ didn't go through all of that for me and pack me up to heaven with Him where the Father seated us together just so He could discard me if I failed. No, we are forever one. I do not fear eternal loss, but here are some of the things we do fear:

- I fear not doing God's good pleasure.
- I fear wasting all this spiritual power on foolish pursuits.
- I fear investing these few short hours on planet earth in things which do not matter in the end.

You know the kind of list I am building.

But I balance that. I understand that Christ alone is sufficient, and that in Him I have all things which pertain to life and godliness – not the least of which is a fountain, no a stream, no a river of resurrection life flowing from the very heart of God.

These are very good days. Let's use them up wisely!