

# THE224 Christian Narrative 2 Redemption

## Unit 2a The Resurrection of Christ

Presented by the



**LANCASTER BIBLE COLLEGE**  
CAPITAL SEMINARY & GRADUATE SCHOOL

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Welcome to Session 2A of Christian Narrative 2. In this session, we will look at the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ. Our main teaching point today is that Jesus is the prototype of redemption. That is, we can learn something about ourselves through both Christ's resurrection and his ascension because he has redeemed us back to God, and in our redemption, we are like Christ. So let's take a look at some of the things that we can learn both about Jesus' resurrection and his ascension. First, let's take a look at the credibility of Christ's resurrection. There's a lot of different texts that we can look at, but one of the things we want to start with is the fact that the gospel writers all confirm that Jesus both died and rose back to life. So it's really critical that each one of the four gospel writers notes that Christ physically died and that he completely died, and that those around Jesus, both his followers and his enemies, looked at him as if he had died. And so it's an important point for us to note that we talk about the resurrection confidently because we firmly believe that Jesus died.

Now, Jesus' resurrection, his coming back to life is unique in two ways because if we look throughout Scriptures, there are other times when people come back to life. We have Lazarus as an example. We have Elijah healing the boy of the widow as an example. And there are others where people actually come back to life. So what we want to look at is what is unique about Christ's resurrection, different than all of the rest that preceded it. First, it's unique because Jesus resurrected himself of his own power. And so we read several passages that help us understand that. John 10:17-18, "For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This is the charge that I have received from my heavenly Father."

A little bit later in Chapter 2 of John as well, we read in Verses 19 through 21, "Jesus answered them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.' The Jews then said, 'It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?' But he was speaking about the temple of his body." "I will raise it up," he said there in John 2. Or we read in Hebrews 7:15-16, "This becomes even more evident when another priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek, who has become a priest, not on the basis of a legal requirement concerning bodily descent," and here it is, "by the power of an indestructible life." Jesus had the ability and power in himself to raise himself from the grave. And so his resurrection is unique in that he resurrected himself of his own power.

But it's also unique because Jesus Christ serves as the firstfruits or the prototype of God's kingdom or humanity. 1 Corinthians 15:20-23 talk about this. "But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ." So the uniqueness of Christ's resurrection is twofold. First, it was done in his own power. And second, his resurrection now becomes the firstfruits or the prototype for all who have now been redeemed, that we, in some way similar to him, will be resurrected. So we have credibility. We have uniqueness.

Now let's take a look at the nature of Christ's resurrection. There are several. First, we see there are, in fact, some similarities with his old body. So we see that he was recognizable by those who knew him. And there's plenty of verses here. We can look through these quickly. In John 20:16, Jesus interacts with Mary. It says there that "Jesus said to her, 'Mary.' She turned and said to him in Aramaic, 'Rabboni!' (which means Teacher)." In other words, she recognized him. Matthew 28:9, "And behold, Jesus met them and said, 'Greetings!' And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him." They

recognized who he was. John 20:19-20, "On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you.' When he had said this, he showed his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord." They could recognize him. Again, John 20:26-28, "Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put your hand at the place of my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe.' Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God!'" John 21:12, "Jesus said to them, 'Come and have breakfast.' Now none of the disciples dared ask him, 'Who are you?' because they knew it was the Lord." Luke 24:28-29, "So they drew near to the village to which they were going. [Jesus] acted as if he were going farther, but they urged him strongly, saying, 'Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent.' So [Jesus] went in to stay with them." Acts 10:41, "Not to all the people but to us who had been chosen as God's witnesses did Jesus stop and eat and drink with us after he rose from the dead."

So plenty of places where people interact with Jesus and recognize who he was. So in his resurrection, Jesus had some similarities with his old body that he could be recognized. Now, we also see him eating food like he did prior to his resurrection. Luke 24:33-37, Jesus has this meal. He shares it with his disciples. And so we've got to recognize that there's this moment. We can also see, as we've read through a number of these passages and others that Jesus' body could be touched and interacted with like a normal human body. Thomas, my favorite probably, "I won't believe until I can put my fingers in his hands and my hand in his side." And so what does Jesus do? He appears and he says, "Go for it, Thomas. Experience this. Believe. I am the one who you were waiting for. It is I, Jesus Christ, and I am resurrected." So Jesus could be recognized. He ate food. He could be interacted with like a normal human being. So his resurrected body has similarities with his old body.

But there are some new realities of his resurrected body that we're unfamiliar with, particularly 1 Corinthians 15:42, 43 and 53. "So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is now imperishable. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power." Imperishable, glory, and power. Three keywords that describe Christ's new resurrection body. Verse 53, "This perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality." So Jesus had put on immortality in his new body. His new body was now filled with power and glory. It was filled with eternity or immortality. Christ would never experience death again like he experienced it on the cross because he has a new body.

So there's some significance here in Jesus' resurrection that we have to recognize for ourselves. First of all, Jesus' resurrection ensures our own. 1 Peter 1:3, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." Because Christ came back from the dead, so we can believe that we too will come back from the dead if we have been redeemed. Jesus is the prototype of redemption. He is the firstfruits of what we can expect to experience. Jesus' resurrection body is a display of the redeemed body that believers in turn will receive. 1 Corinthians 6:14-15, "God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?" So the immortality, the glory, the power that we see described in 1 Corinthians 15 that talks about Jesus' body, that is displayed in Jesus' actions, is the same type of body that we too will receive after we have

believed once we have died, we will be resurrected in glory, in power, and in immortality. And so we should take great encouragement in that.

Also, we see that Christ's resurrection is in fact our encouragement in life. Colossians 3:1-4, "If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory." Jesus is the prototype of redemption, but we have to recognize that both his resurrection and his ascension encourage us. And when we look at his resurrection and ask what benefit, what practical benefit does it have for us, here are three key things. Because he's been raised, we will be raised. Like he's been raised, so we will be raised. We can be encouraged in our life because of the resurrection of Christ. These three things are very significant for those of us who follow Christ and have been redeemed by him.

Now, let's turn our attention from the resurrection to the ascension. A couple of things that I want us to see about the ascension. First, it's clear to us from Scriptures that Jesus actually ascended to heaven. Luke 24:50-51, "And [Jesus] led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them. While he blessed them, he parted from them and was carried up into heaven." So where is Jesus now? Jesus is in heaven. He talked about this on his earthly ministry that he was going to prepare a place for his followers. And so now we see that Jesus is in heaven. Now, this ascension of Jesus into heaven secured new glory for Jesus as the God-Man. Two particular things that we see are honor and glory. We look at Philippians 2:9 to understand the honor, and it says there that "God has highly exalted [Jesus] and bestowed on him the name that is above every name." It was this ascension into heaven that brings him that final piece of honor as well as that final piece of glory that are going to lift him up. And so glory, Hebrews 1:4 and Revelation 5:12. Hebrews 1:4 says that Jesus has "become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is also more excellent than theirs." So there is a great amount of glory that comes to him. Also, Revelation 5:12, "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!" What a list. Let me go back and say that a little bit slower. Jesus is worthy to receive power, wealth, wisdom, might, honor, glory, and blessing.

Because Jesus ascended to heaven, we also see that his work is finished. There are several places that we see a seated savior. And in Christology, the seated savior is very important. It reminds us that Christ has accomplished everything that needed to be accomplished in order to complete the tasks that the Father had given him. So we read in Hebrews 1:3, "[Jesus] is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high." He had to ascend in order to sit down. So we see that the ascension was the period on the sentence of his work, right? This was the final thing that Jesus needed to do. Ephesians 1:20-21, "He worked 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 above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come." Also in 1 Peter 3:22, we're told that through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, he has now "gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him."

So the seated savior is so important because we contrast that, the Book of Hebrews does, is we contrast the seated savior who has offered one singular sacrifice for the forgiveness of all sins and thus has completed his work and is seated at the right hand of the Father, contrasted against the earthly high priest who, while he was a mirror of what was coming, had to continually stand before... Let us consider the significance of Jesus' ascension as well. Jesus' ascension secured the blessing of the Holy Spirit for his followers. We'll talk later in this particular course about the work of the Holy Spirit. But for now, recognize that it was Christ's ascension that brings the Holy Spirit to us. We read this in Acts 1:8. "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." The Spirit was going to come when Jesus ascended. He had to go to the Father before the Spirit could come. Acts 2:33, "Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he thus poured out this that you are seeing and hearing." He's talking about one of the first messages given after the Holy Spirit has come upon the disciples. And so Jesus sat down. And once he sat down, the Spirit was given.

So Jesus' ascension secured the blessing of the Holy Spirit for his followers, but it also offers clarity concerning his return and our final restoration. Three passages here that I want us to take a quick look at as we close this section. "Therefore, those of us who are alive, who are left," and this is 1 Thessalonians 4:17, "will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord." So as Jesus ascended to heaven, so when he returned, we will join him in the air. John 14:3, "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also." Not only will we join Christ in the air, but we will go to heaven where Christ is in heaven. So we are promised to join him in the place that he is going. Ephesians 2:6, he has "raised us up and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

So the ascension becomes a microcosmic picture of encouragement, a clarity for us about how Christ will return and how we will relate to Christ when he returns. He ascended into heaven. He is in the air and in the clouds. We will join him there. We will join him in heaven. We will join him in a finished, seated position in heaven. There's a lot of beauty and power connected to Christ's ascension. So Jesus is the prototype of redemption. And we can understand much about Christ as we look at his resurrection and his ascension. His resurrection and ascension help us understand how we become like Christ, both in his new life and in the life to come, in this age and in the age to come. Jesus is the prototype of redemption.