

1Peter3:18-22 For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; 19 in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison, 20 who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water. 21 And corresponding to that, baptism now saves you—not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22 who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.

We always take a little break at Easter and consider what our Saviour and Lord accomplished for us by His death and resurrection.

So I wanted to share something with you that is just fresh in my mind in the last couple of weeks.

I think it was about 2 weeks ago that Karmin asked me what I thought about Andy Stanley. Atlanta mega church preacher whose dad, Charles Stanley was an important figure in the 1970's through the '90's Battle for the Bible era. Much beloved.

But Andy has been drawing attention to himself by the wierd things he's been saying in the last few years. He's a gifted speaker and people enjoy listening to him, but he's saying things that are teetering on the edge of the cliff of heresy. Maybe already falling in.

We may talk more about that another time, perhaps, but the reason I bring it up this morning is because while studying Andy and what he's teaching, I connected a couple of interesting dots.

Within a week period I've heard two guys, Andy Stanley, and another fellow who is greek Orthodox both stating that the bottomline foremost

issue in christianity is the resurrection. The resurrection of Jesus is the main thing.

Now it's my turn to dig myself an Andy Stanley hole and see if you will listen to me explain myself on resurrection morning. Are you ready? The resurrection does not save anybody. I'll say it again, the resurrection, believing that it's true, doesn't accomplish salvation.

Now, you cannot be saved without it! But the truth of the resurrection alone is not salvific. Let me explain why, and again, it's amazing to me what the Devil tries to get away with.

He'll confuse his victims with a whole bunch of solid correct doctrine that sounds great and stop short of salvation. Mormons believe Jesus rose from the dead.

The greek orthodox guy said no blood was needed. Salvation didn't occur on the cross, it occurred on the 3rd day when He rose from the dead.

Andy Stanley wants to talk about Jesus being the Messiah and the resurrection proves it. All true, but still short of my sin being dealt with. You can believe all of that and stop short of salvation.

The resurrection is the apologetic that proves once and for all time that God the Father was satisfied with what Jesus accomplished for our redemption when He died on the cross.

Without the resurrection He's just another good teacher, another great prophet, someone we should emulate, blah blah blah. The resurrection proves He accomplished redemption for sin. His sacrifice for my sins was enough. Proof.

So then, I want to spend just a few moments talking about what the

resurrection proves if I may. No better place to begin than with 1 Corinthians 15:

I Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, 2 by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. 3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures

The resurrection is the proof for those 5 words in vs. 3 that make all the difference whether I stand before God condemned, or forgiven. **Christ died for our sins.** Al Mohler says; *The fact that Jesus Christ is risen is the only enduring hope for **sinful** humanity. Christ died for our sins.*

Those words are very offensive to our modern world. The fact that I believe in a God who is Holy and who will hold every created being in judgement to His holy standards is breath takingly offensive.

The resulting fact is that by His standard of holiness, every one of us is violently in rebellion against that God, who created everything and owns everything and who will judge everything according to His good pleasure . . .

That makes our current world, well for lack of a better word, deranged with hate and anger. Psalms 2:1 *Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? 2 The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together, against the LORD and against His Anointed One:...*

The nations, the heathens, words that encompass all of mankind, rage against a God who is holy and who says all people will be judged who are not holy. Jesus said; *Therefore, you must be perfect, as your*

heavenly Father is perfect. That's the standard. God will judge any who do not meet that standard of holiness.

What then? Why is the resurrection of Jesus important and what does it prove.

The resurrection from the dead of Jesus Christ is God's stamp of approval on the sacrifice of Jesus for the sins of all who will believe and ask for the forgiveness, in Christ, that is available.

The resurrection is only of value . . . if you recognize your rebellion against a Holy God, and the resulting position of imminent judgement because of your sin, and believe that Jesus death was sufficient to rescue you out of that sad and helpless state.

People are always looking for contradictions in the Bible. When you talk to people outside these walls you hear that claim over and over. I don't believe because the bible is full of contradictions. And when you ask them to show you just one . . . well, that's not playing fair, we just know they're there.

Here's a seeming contradiction for the folks who want one to throw around;

Exodus 33:19 And He said, "I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you, and will proclaim the name of the LORD before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show compassion on whom I will show compassion."

34:6 Then the LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; 7 who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished"

That's a contradiction God. You can't have it both ways. You forgive iniquity for those you chose to forgive iniquity and then you immediately state you will by no means leave the guilty unpunished?? How can you have it both ways God??

I'll circle you back to Paul's words in his paragraph that he identifies as the "Good News" *Christ died for our sins*

The only way those statements of God to Moses are not a contradiction is if someone else takes the punishment that God promises He will require for sin.

When W.C. Fields, the humorist and atheist, was dying in a sanitarium, a nurse was surprised to find him reading the Bible. When she asked him what he was doing, Fields wisecracked, "Looking for a loophole."

The only way both of the things that God so clearly stated to Moses can be true at the same time . . . is if there is a loophole.

Let me introduce you to the Loophole. The Way through. And that takes us full circle back to Peter's words that we read together this morning. Peter is not only showing us a loophole, he has a marvelous illustration of people who are a type, a picture of this loophole, this way through God's truths of judgement due sin that He stated to Moses.

Andy Stanley says we need to unhitch from the old testament. Well, I've got both Moses and Noah working for me in the same sermon. BTW, quick quiz; how many of each type of animal did moses take into the arc? Anybody? ??

OK, we're not afraid of the scary old testament because we've got a loophole.

For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order

that He might bring us to God, 1Peter3:18

The loophole that makes it so God can have it both ways, He can by no means let the guilty go unpunished and He can also have mercy on whom He chooses to have mercy and forgive iniquity is Jesus the Messiah.

Christ died for our sins. God's justice is satisfied in the death of His Son in our place.

It says *the just for the unjust the just for the unjust* and that is how justice is satisfied. Once for all. God takes my sin, my account, the books of vile sin that have all been written down righteously, against me, and He inflicts the punishment I was due on His righteous and sinless Son, Jesus.

Likewise, He takes the perfect righteousness of Jesus, the white robes, crisp and clean, and covers me with the righteousness of Jesus. I have a righteousness . . . not my own. God assigns to my account, my book, perfect righteousness that Jesus lived. We trade places. I am righteous, He is guilty. He pays the debt for my sin. I am made righteous. Perfect, just like the requirement Jesus stated.

That's what's missing in all of these modern guys that want to skip right over the scandal of sin, the debt of sin against a Holy God, and only talk about resurrection.

But there's more for us in Peter's account. Peter gets right down to the mechanics, the nitty gritty of how the loophole works.

*For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, **having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit;***

Jesus the human, the God - Man was physically dead on that cross. Paul is careful at this point in his gospel account to the Corinthians to tell us he was buried.

He died. Jesus died. They buried Him in the ground. Placed Him in a tomb and rolled a giant rock over the doorway and sealed it shut. He died and was buried.

But Peter says, He may have been physically dead, but His Spirit was made alive and He was busy elsewhere while His physical body was in a tomb for three days.

19 in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison, 20 who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water.

What's that??!! Peter is setting us up for a type. Noah goes into the ark with 7 others and God shuts the door. God seals the door to that boat shut, and 8 people are safe inside while God brings swift judgement on every other sinful person on earth. The flood.

If you're curious about the spirits now in prison and all of that stuff, we preached on this passage on October 1, 2017 It was titled;

Our Safe Passage Through Judgement, In Christ 1 Peter 3:18 - 22 and I do get into some detail about this obscure teaching of Peter's and what it means. That manuscript is available to you at our web site, tonopahchurch.org

But for this morning, I only want to direct your attention to the typology. The ark that Noah and 7 others entered and passed through judgement to safety is a picture for us. A parallel. A type. Peter says; *the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water.*

And then he's going to say something that's equally troubling to weak christians because it has been so un-necessarily mis-construed. Mis-translated.

21 And corresponding to that, baptism now saves you

Baptism now saves you. Oh dear. This is works salvation! Salvation by sacrament. The reformers were wrong. It isn't Sola Fide afterall. Peter blows faith alone up. Salvation is by sacrament. Baptism now saves you.

But, we have to rightly divide the word of truth, right? Paul says that. And Peter says —*not the removal of dirt from the flesh*, not the physical act of taking a bath. That's what baptism means. Being enveloped in something else. Completely covered. This isn't about water. Not *that* baptism.

Noah and the 7 others were baptised into an ark. The storm raged outside, they were safely enclosed. Immersed inside a boat. That's the picture for us, not getting wet with water.

not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

We appeal to God. We ask for the forgiveness that is available in the death of Jesus in our place. Proven through the resurrection. We are weighted down with a debt of sin. Standing in line for imminent judgement. And we appeal to God, we ask Him for the forgiveness. The only way to have a good conscience is for the sin to be lifted. The burden removed. Taken away. We ask God for that. Because of the resurrection of Jesus that proves it's available.

Peter says, Noah and 7 others rode out the judgement of God baptized

into an ark and came out the other end to safety, and we, likewise are baptized into Christ. He carries us through the judgement, pays our debt, clothes us in His righteousness, and delivers us to His Father. Safety, in Jesus. Baptized into Jesus.

It's all over the Bible just that way. In Christ. In Christ. In Christ. That's the description of a christian.

We'll not do better than the apostle Paul's definition of being In Christ in Romans 6:1 *What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace might increase?*

The question he poses is about evidence of a changed life. When we ask God for a clean conscience, forgiveness of sin, believing in the efficacious finished work of Christ on the cross, does anything change. Are we different from how we were before. Or do we just continue in the old ways, the old sins.

You're living with someone you're not married to. You become a christian. Does anything change? Or do you just keep right on as before, and grace will make it all OK?

Does being "In Christ" change us? Or do we just continue in our old life of sin? That's Paul's question when he says; *What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace might increase?* Paul answers his own question;

2 May it never be! The greek here is the strongest possible negative. *me genoito* The old translators used to say God Forbid! No no no! This is impossible! And here is why; *How shall we who died to sin still live in it?*

When we become christians we enter into a new life. A new reality. We come out from under the control of Satan because of sin. He no longer

owns us. And we are transferred into the control and authority of a new Master, the Lord Jesus.

2Cor. 5:17 Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away. Behold, the new has come! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?

When you become a christian, you pray to receive Jesus and ask that your sins be removed from you, two kingdoms that oppose each other come into direct confrontation. Christ purchases you, by His blood, out of Satan's kingdom and you become a citizen of the kingdom of God.

When that happens we expect to see newness of life. We leave the old life of sin behind. We want to live like the citizens of heaven that we are.

*Ro. 6:3 Or do you not know that all of us who have been **baptized into Christ Jesus** have been baptized into His death?*

Here is the language of baptism. This is why I've brought you to this passage. We are baptized into Christ. Just like Noah went into the ark and God sealed the door shut in order to be safely passed through the judgement, we are baptized INTO Christ.

To the Colossians Paul writes; *2 Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. 3 **For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.*** Col. 3

Just like Noah and his wife and their sons and their wives were hidden inside an ark, sealed inside that ark, riding out the judgement, christians are hidden in Christ.

God is going to judge this rebellious world, and it's frightening to even think about His wrath that has been stored away, waiting for the day of

judgement. Horrific judgement.

But the redeemed are hidden in Christ, just like Noah and his family were in the Ark. Judgement for the whole earth, but we are safe in Him.

Judgement is unpopular to speak about in our culture. Our world sits in the place of God and judges God. He's too angry. Too harsh. We don't like Him. We'll invent a less awful, less angry god for ourselves. A toothless nice old grandfatherly god who likes us just how we are.

But the truth is that God warned Noah's world for 120 years. Noah preached about judgement for the 120 years that he was working on the ark. No one listened. Deaf ears. And then one day a tidal wave struck the entire surface of the earth. Just about that fast.

We are warning people this morning just like Noah warned the people at that time. Come to safety. Come inside the ark. Judgement is imminent. That's what Noah would have said.

We say the same thing. Come to Christ. Ask Him to forgive your sins and to be your Lord. Come to safety in Christ.

How do we know for certain that these things are true? A man lived a sinless life, was hated by this world, died on a cross to forgive my sins, was buried in a tomb for 3 days, and rose up again from the dead.

Rock solid witnesses attested to this truth. He appeared risen to more than 500 people. All solid witnesses. He ascended back into heaven and sits at the right hand of God, waiting for His enemies to be made a footstool for His feet. He has promised to return to this world in judgement and glory.

You don't want to be counted with the enemies of Christ. Submit to His authority, ask for forgiveness of sins, give your life to Him, and He will

come and dwell inside your heart. That is the safe place, in Him. In Christ.

That is the message of Easter. He is Risen!