

THE RESURRECTION of GRACE

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Jesus is alive! His resurrection is not merely a philosophical renaissance of His ideas and teachings--He was literally raised from the dead! The power of God exploded inside that tomb, reconnected Jesus' spirit with His dead body, flooded His corpse with life, and He rose from the dead! So much power was released behind the sealed entrance of His tomb that the earth itself reverberated and shuddered from the explosion. Then an angel rolled the stone from the entrance to the tomb, and Jesus physically walked through the door of that tomb, ALIVE!

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ is not a legend or fairly tale. *It is the FOUNDATION OF OUR FAITH!* The Resurrection is the SEAL on the work of Jesus Christ on the Cross. Without the Resurrection, the death of Christ on the Cross would have been in vain, meaningless and powerless—He would have died for nothing!

1 Corinthians 15:13-14; 16-19 NASB--But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised; ¹⁴and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain. . . ¹⁶For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised; ¹⁷and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins. ¹⁸Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. ¹⁹If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied."

The Resurrection is set in concrete because of the eyewitnesses surrounding the event—in other words, evidence and historical facts—not blind faith!

Acts 10:40-41—". . .but God raised Him from the dead on the third day and caused Him to be seen. ⁴¹He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen—by us who ate and drank with Him after He rose from the dead."

1 Corinthians 15:5-6--". . . And that He appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. ⁶After that, He appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep".

Paul tells us that Jesus appeared (after His resurrection) to Peter, then to the 12 and after that, He appeared to more than 500 people over a period of 40 days. Most of them still living and able to testify to this truth at the time of the Apostles Paul's writings.

Resurrection is not only a supernatural event imposed by a powerful supernatural God; it is a Person-- Christ Jesus. Jesus said, "I AM THE RESURRECTION!" (*John 11:25*).

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ catapulted us into a SPECIFIC SEASON. We are now in the dispensation of GRACE, which is the POWER-GIFT that comes out of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ that EMPOWERS us into ETERNAL LIFE – ZOE LIFE.

Romans 5:1-2--"Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our LORD Jesus Christ, ² through whom we have gained access by FAITH INTO THIS GRACE in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God."

Romans 5:6-11--"You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. ⁸ But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Since we have now been justified by His blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through Him! ¹⁰ For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to Him through the death of His Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through His life! ¹¹ Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our LORD Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation."

Romans 5:16b-18 (NLT)--"For Adam's sin led to condemnation, but God's free gift leads to our being made right with God, even though we are guilty of many sins. ¹⁷ For the sin of this one man, Adam, caused death to rule over many. **But even greater is God's wonderful grace and His gift of righteousness, for all who receive it will live in triumph over sin and death through this One Man, Jesus Christ.**

¹⁸ Yes, Adam's one sin brings condemnation for everyone, but Christ's one act of righteousness brings a right relationship with God and NEW LIFE for everyone."

Romans 5:17b (NASB)--". . . Those who RECEIVE the **abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness** will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ."

Romans 5:21 (NLT)--" But even greater is God's wonderful grace and His gift of righteousness, for all who receive it will live **IN TRIUMPH OVER SIN AND DEATH** through this One Man, Jesus Christ.

Romans 5:21 (NASB)--“ . . . As sin reigned in death, even so **GRACE WOULD REIGN THROUGH RIGHTEOUSNESS to eternal life through Jesus Christ our LORD.”**

Grace is not a good feeling; or God’s favor on us no matter what we think or do. **Grace is a power (empowerment)!**

While grace is God’s unmerited favor – this unmerited favor is directly linked to the fact that Jesus Christ died for the world; took on our sin – became our sin – without prejudice and made those who would believe in Him righteous through the gift of righteousness.

We did not deserve this, but because of God’s grace – His unmerited favor towards us – HE GAVE US HIS ONLY SON, JESUS, to bring us close again to Him.

“Grace” derives from the Greek, *charis*. In secular Greek, *charis* was related to *chairō*, “to rejoice.” Both refer to God *freely extending* Himself (*His favor, grace*), *reaching (inclining)* to people because He is *disposed* to bless (be near) them.

Grace is also the power of God to meet and overcome every evil tendency in our lives. It is the operational power of God. It is the power to accomplish. It is directly related to our victory. In other words, without grace we are condemned and in slavery--and have no power over sin, darkness and death.

Jesus Christ redeemed us from sin, death and Hell and gave us eternal life. It is only through Him that this grace comes. It is only through HIS death, burial and resurrection that grace is released to those who believe. IT IS THE POWER OF GRACE THAT CAUSED JESUS TO RISE FROM THE DEAD! THE RESURRECTION THEN SEALS US IN THE GRACE OF GOD!

Now, we are given Grace for a reason: Grace is to help us COME TO, MOVE INTO, AND THEN LIVE the RESURRECTION LIFE OF JESUS CHRIST! This is not a time to MISS THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST. This is a time to LIVE THE RESURRECTION in our lives through Jesus Christ. Paul said in Philippians 3:9--“I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of His resurrection . . .”

The 5 Graces of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ

1. THE GRACE OF SALVATION. The Bible says that all of mankind without Christ are spiritually and eternally lost. We are hopeless, without Christ and this is why God requires everyone to repent, be born-again (John 3) and receive His gift of Salvation.

When I say *Salvation*, I am referring to that concrete moment when a person repents by turning to Jesus Christ and confessing Him to be LORD and Savior and becomes “born-again” – his or her spirit is born-again or born anew!

Jesus said that we must be born-again to experience Him, to experience the Father and Holy Spirit, to experience Heaven, to experience the Resurrection life.

The Resurrection is not just ETERNAL LIFE, but a NEW WAY OF LIFE. It makes us NEW—A NEW CREATION—the old has gone and the new has come (2 Cor. 5:17) and imparts into us a NEW WAY OF LIFE—a NEW DIMENSION.

Romans 6:4—*“We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may LIVE A NEW LIFE.*

Ephesians 1:13, the Bible clearly states that at the moment of confession, the Holy Spirit enters into the heart of the Believer to permanently live in that person’s life.

And at that moment, we are taken out of the grips of sin; our past is eliminated, our slate is clean, our name is written in the Book of Life; we are released from the ownership of the devil; eternity in Hell is cancelled for us; and Heaven is guaranteed as a future home! At that very moment of repentance, when the Holy Spirit comes into the heart, we receive a new nature!

Everyone is born a sinner. Everyone!

Romans 5:18-19 NIV (emphasis added)--“Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. ¹⁹For just as through the

disobedience of the one man [Adam] the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.”

We are actually born into sin and therefore, born a sinner. We are born without a new nature. We are born with a sin nature because Adam’s sin was passed onto all mankind. Therefore, when we are born, we start going astray.

A fish is born with a nature to swim. In the same way, Adam’s sin is passed onto mankind and we naturally sin. People sinned because they are born with sin as part of their nature.

This is a serious problem because the Bible tells us that anyone in sin cannot have a relationship with God or go to Heaven. That only leaves one other place for us to go after death: Hell. Roman 6:23 gives us the penalty for living in sin: *eternal death*.

But God provided a solution because He is JUST and FAIR and He loves His creation. His solution TO ADAM’S FALL WAS HIS ONLY SON, JESUS CHRIST, Who came to give us SALVATION. He provided salvation as a gift – but it must be received.

However, many people when offered the gift of salvation refuse it. “Oh I don’t need that, I don’t want that, etc.” **He paid the penalty of sin for us and broke the power of sin for anyone who would receive salvation by faith.**

So when a person confesses Christ to be LORD and Savior, and when a person repents of sin, A MIRACLE HAPPENS in the heart –God’s Spirit enters into that person. When God’s Spirit comes into that person, God brings a new nature into that person. A NEW NATURE – IT IS THE NATURE OF GOD! It is a nature that does not want to sin. It is a SUPER NATURE, which carries the victory of God in it.

2 Corinthians 5:17 says, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!”

This is not a reformation – you cannot reform yourself! This is a transformation. IT IS A WORK OF GRACE. It is miraculous and only God can produce this in a person's life.

John 1:12 says it like this: "Yet to all who did receive Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God."

This miracle of salvation that I am describing happened to me in 1974. If you have never received God's salvation like I have just described, it is God's requirement and I'm certain that God is speaking to you. Receive Him today!

2. THE GRACE FOR THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Every Christian needs the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. This term describes the moment when a born-again believer receives the supernatural empowerment of the Holy Spirit accompanied with praying in tongues.

We find the first account of this happening to Believers in Acts 2:4. And it set the pattern for every time people would be baptized in the Holy Spirit in the book of Acts.

Every Christian needs supernatural power. We have to have supernatural power to live above sin, to live with authority over the devil, to walk in the power of forgiveness, and more. The power that I'm describing is the Baptism in the Holy Spirit – it gives that power to you.

I received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit in 1987 and since that time I have been experiencing the power of God in my life. And I pray in a supernatural prayer language, which is promised to every Believer that receives the Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

I'll tell you the truth, I believe we are in the place we are today because Rick and I received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit in 1987 and the Holy Spirit began to direct our lives to this place through the supernatural prayers I prayed even unbeknown to me. **It gave me faith to believe and grace to do what God was calling me to do – the power to obey God.**

3. THE GRACE FOR REDEDICATION. Sometimes Believers, for various reasons, wander from their passion for Christ. Maybe they become influenced by unbelievers or maybe they have just grown tired. But the end result is that they have lost the zeal that they once had.

They end up going through the motions of a relationship with Christ. They still go to church, but in their heart they have become hard-hearted and drifted from the LORD.

When this happens to a Christian, Christ commands them to come back – to return to Him.

An example of this is in Revelation 3 when Christ spoke to the Laodicean congregation. They were saved and had known the power of God, but they had grown lukewarm.

Christ said to them, “I know all the things you do, that you are neither hot nor cold. I wish that you were one or the other! ¹⁶ But since you are like lukewarm water, neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth!” (verse 15)

Then in verse 19, Christ strongly told them as He is telling many of us today: *“I correct and discipline everyone I love. So be diligent and turn from your indifference.”*

Think about it: That congregation had grown so cold in their walk with Christ that He was actually standing outside their lives. This is why in **Revelation 3:20**, Christ says to these Christians--He’s talking to Christians--He says, *“Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me.”* He was speaking to Christians who had backslidden in their relationship with God.

Now the truth is, rededication is something you can do in your chair, but very often it is helpful to come forward during a service and make a public confession – to ask someone to pray with you – to really nail down your commitment.

One of the greatest prayers of dedication in the whole Bible is in Psalm 51, where we have the rededication of David. He knew God, he had walked with God, but David had backslidden and he prays a prayer of rededication.

He says in verse 2: “Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.” **In verse 4 he says,** “Against You, You only, I have sinned and done what is evil in Your sight, . . .” **In verse 10 he says,** “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.” **In verse 12 he says,** “Restore to me the joy of Your salvation and sustain me with a willing spirit.”

Rick and I have done this many times in our lives. Rededication is supernatural and a work of grace.

4. THE GRACE OF EMPOWERMENT TO LIVE THE CHRISTIAN LIFE BY RECEIVING THE FULLNESS OF SALVATION.

The very word, Salvation, comes from the Greek word, *sozo*, which means *saved, healed and delivered*. Therefore, our Salvation must include all these things or it is a partial salvation. You may get to Heaven, but your life on earth will not be full because healing and deliverance is missing.

One can make being saved, healed and delivered purely spiritual; but if they were to do an adequate study of the Bible, they would find out very quickly that Salvation is to flow over into and affect our entire lives.

Healing, therefore, means spiritual, physical and emotional healing and wholeness. Jesus did not give us half of a salvation – He gave us a full salvation that would affect our whole life, which is eternal life.

Being healed is talking about healing in our soul and body. Salvation takes place in our spirit. Our spirit is made new, not healed, our soul and body is healed. **Deliverance is specifically freedom from demonic oppressions.**

Often our soul (mind, will and emotions) needs healing and deliverance from sin we have been involved in, from past hurts, from a wrong mindset or belief system, and the like. Our spirit can be saved and given a new nature, but our soul can still be conflicted and tormented.

Jesus offers us healing in our soul. He also offers us deliverance--freedom from demonic/demon oppression.

Speaking of Jesus Christ, Isaiah 61:1--“The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, . . .”

Jesus proclaims this about Himself in Luke 4:18-19.

Isaiah prophesying of the work of Christ on the cross said: *“But He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on Him, and by His **wounds we are healed**”* (53:5).

Later, the apostle Peter confirmed through the Holy Spirit that prophecy was fulfilled through the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ: *“He himself bore our sins”* in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; *“ . . . By His wounds you have been healed.”*

This is why Jesus’ very ministry on Earth was accompanied by healing and deliverance. Matthew 4:24--“News about Him spread all over Syria, and people brought to Him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed; and He healed them.”

This is why James 5:14 says, “Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and **anoint** them with **oil** in the name of the Lord.”

Peter, after the Resurrection of Jesus stated in his discourse to those in Jerusalem: *“Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through Him, as you yourselves know.”* (Acts 2:22)

John 8:36--“So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”

Luke 10:19--“I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you.

Then the LORD gives us His own command to uphold the power of Grace in the Resurrection by healing and deliverance: Mark 16:14-20 (NIV emphasis)-- *“Later Jesus appeared to the Eleven as they were eating; he rebuked them for their lack of faith and their stubborn refusal to believe those who had seen him after he had risen. ¹⁵ He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. ¹⁶ Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. ¹⁷ **And these signs will accompany those who believe:** In My name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; ¹⁸ they will pick up snakes [serpents--the works of the devil] with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.”*

¹⁹ After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, He was taken up into heaven and He sat at the right hand of God.

²⁰ Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it.”

For this grace to be active in our life, we must realize that it is God’s will that we are saved, healed and delivered. Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection gave us the fullness of salvation.

We cannot be saved, healed and delivered in our own strength. IT IS THROUGH GOD’S GRACE.

5. THE GRACE OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP.

Church membership is an act of God’s grace! Every Christian needs to be an official member of a church. Being spiritually connected to a church is supernatural! It is when God’s Spirit supernaturally forms a connection between you and a church and a pastor, and you know that you are supposed to be a part of that church family. When this occurs and a person inwardly knows that he/she is supposed to be a part of that church, it is so supernatural in creating this divine connection, it is an act of grace!

It is so important that you become a member of a church. Here at NBCF--we believe wholeheartedly in church membership.

The Bible says in Act 4:23 (NASB), that the disciples, once they were released from being persecuted, says: "When they had been released, they went to their own *companions* and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them."

They returned to their own COMPANY. They had their own companions.

Do you have your own COMPANY and companions this morning? Do you have a church to which you belong?

In Acts 12 when Peter was released from prison, He knew exactly where to go because he knew where the local church would be meeting. If you were in trouble, would you know where to go? Who would be your church if you needed help?

In Acts 13, it speaks about the local church in the city of Antioch and the Apostle Paul was a member of the Antioch Church. He was so divinely connected to that church that if he was not traveling, he returned to Antioch.

It was there he was disciplined, trained, and it was there that he gave accountability for his ministry. Though he was an apostle and started other churches, he was personally a member of the church of Antioch.

Are you a member of a church or are you just a member by tradition? OR, did the grace of God connect you or is connecting you right at this moment?

The local church is a body of Believers where we are taught the Word of God, it's where we serve, where the gifts of the Holy Spirit are in operation, where we are submitted to a 5-Fold ministry leader in authority, and it puts you under spiritual protection.

When a person officially joins a church, it is a special work of grace. It is like a marriage when the Holy Spirit seals the relationship between the person and the church.

If you are a member of NBCF--we appreciate your church membership because it's supernatural. It is when God divinely connected us.

If you are not a member of any church, it is something that you need to do. Maybe God is calling you to our church; maybe He is calling you to another church. There are many good churches in our area.

Saying that to say this, when you connect to any church, you need to make sure that it is a church that teaches and stands on the Word of God; that there is balance in their teachings; that the anointing is there to bring you into the Presence of God; it needs to be place where you fit and can use your God-given gifts and talents; and it needs to be a place where you can give financially with confidence.

It doesn't matter where it is if it meets these requirements; God wants you to be supernaturally connected to a church and to the spiritual oversight of that church.

If while reading this blog, you are feeling the nudge of the Holy Spirit to act upon one of these graces – Salvation, Baptism of the Holy Spirit, Rededication, Fullness of Salvation, or Church Membership – you are welcome to contact us. We would be happy to pray with you. There is no time like the present. And there is no God like our God! administrator@inbcf.com