

SBC – April 4, 2021
Selected Scriptures
“Resurrection Shock & Awe”

Prayer:

It is Resurrection Sunday and I want to consider with you how truly incredible is the truth of the resurrection.

Resurrection Truth is truly unique in relation to the Christian Faith. How rare is it in the annals of history that someone really comes back to life after they are certifiably dead?

There are a few examples in the OT and a few examples in the NT but it has always been rare.

Elijah and Elisha were both unique prophets in the OT and both were used of God to bring a child back to life after they had died (cf. 1 Kg. 17:22; 2 Kg. 4:32-35).

When Elisha died, they buried him. Sometime later as the Moabites were invading the land some Jews were burying a man when they suddenly spied a band of raiders. In hurried fashion they put the man into the tomb of Elisha. And in doing so the corpse of the man touched the bones of Elisha which brought him back to life.

Slide # 1

2 Kings 13:20–21 (NKJV)

20 Then Elisha died, and they buried him. And the raiding bands from Moab invaded the land in the spring of the year.

21 So it was, as they were burying a man, that suddenly they spied a band of raiders; and they put the man in the tomb of Elisha; and when the man was let down and **touched the bones of Elisha, he revived** and stood on his feet.

How is that for shock and awe? What an amazing thing. And I think it speaks to the fact that the body is sacred before God. Elisha was a special prophet of God and just touching his bones brought this man back to life. But that is a total exception to the rule.

Years ago, we had a man in our church who told me this true story. There was a man who hung around downtown years ago and he was a little bit slow but seemed to have a fascination with dead bodies.

He would often go into the mortuary and just spend time with dead bodies. So one day one of the people who worked at the mortuary rigged up a mechanism that when he pushed a button caused the corpse to start rising up. The man was so terrified that he literally fled from the building and never returned.

Everyone knows that death is permanent. Apart from supernatural activity nothing can be done about the condition of death.

In discussing the dead coming back to life again we need to make a clear distinction between what the Bible calls resurrection and what is merely a resuscitation.

Slide # 2

The **RESURRECTION** of Christ was **permanent and eternal** in contrast to **RESUCITATION** which is **temporary**. Those raised back to life in the Bible once again died a mortal death later on. But Jesus conquered death to the point it no longer has any dominion over Him (Rom. 6:9).

Slide # 3

There is a difference between resurrection and resuscitation. Resurrection refers to putting on a new, glorified body, while resuscitation means raising the person in the old, mortal body in which they died. – **Don Steward**

Note these points about the resurrection body of Jesus Christ.

- 1) The resurrection body of Christ was transformed in a supernatural way allowing Him to pass through locked doors thus showing He was not bound by the normal laws of nature (cf. Jn. 20:19; 1 Cor. 15:44).
- 2) The resurrection body of Christ was raised in an imperishable, glorious, powerful, and spiritual form (1 Cor. 15:42-44).
- 3) Jesus was the very first person to receive a glorified body in resurrection form.

Slide # 4

1 Corinthians 15:20 (NKJV)

20 But now Christ is risen from the dead, and **has become the firstfruits** of those who have fallen asleep.

1 Corinthians 15:23 (NKJV)

23 But each one in his own order: **Christ the firstfruits**, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming.

“Firstfruits” is a harvest term referring to the very FIRST of the harvest. But as the “firstfruits” it is promise that there is more to come. The “firstfruits” are just the beginning. Christ Himself is the resurrection FIRSTFRUITS.

So when we talk about the resurrection realize that no one before Christ had ever been RESURRECTED in a glorified body, and no one since Christ has ever been resurrected in a glorified body. There is more to come but it hasn't happened yet. As Paul says, “***afterward those who are Christ's at His coming.***” (1 Cor. 15:23).

It is at the coming of Christ – at the Rapture when the Church saints are going to share in resurrection reality. Christ Himself ALONE is the “firstfruits” of resurrection life; but then afterwards at His coming all the Church saints will also share in resurrection life.

Slide # 5**1 Corinthians 15:51–53 (NKJV)**

51 Behold, I tell you a **mystery**: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be **changed**—

52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the **dead will be raised incorruptible**, and **we shall be changed**.

53 For this **corruptible must put on incorruption**, and this **mortal must put on immortality**.

The OT saints knew about a future resurrection as seen in Job 19:25-26 and Dan. 12:2. But they knew nothing about the Church or the rapture of the Church which is in view here. This is the revelation of new Church truth previously unrevealed – hence it was a mystery now being revealed.

The word “moment” is the Greek word “*atomos*” from which we get the English word *atom*.

It literally means, “*that which cannot be cut,*” or “*that which cannot be divided*”. For centuries the atom was considered the smallest particle possible. It was thought to be indivisible. Nobody thought the atom could be split. So the idea here is “***in the smallest amount of time possible***” or as we might say, “*in a spit second*” or “*in a nanosecond*”. Technically, a nanosecond is one billionth of a second. But you get the point - “*in a moment*” signifies it will be exceedingly fast!

And to underscore how fast it will happen Paul adds “***in the twinkling of an eye***”. The Greek word translated ***twinkling*** (rhipe – hree-pay) literally means “***to hurl***” as one would hurl a javelin. It denotes suddenness or rapidity of movement. The eye is the fastest moving part of the body. Many scholars don’t think that a blinking of the eye is in view, but rather the mere gleam or the glance of an eye. The point is this will happen extremely fast and instantaneously.

There will be no time for anyone to change their mind. When it happens the saved will instantaneously and supernaturally be changed and gone in a flash! This will not be a drawn-out process – but rather it will happen “in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye”.

Both the living and the dead in Christ will receive the same type of glorified body but they will get it in two different ways. The dead – that is the departed souls gone to be with Christ will be returning with Him and will be rejoined to their bodies – and thus will be raised incorruptible – which is to say raised with a body that will no longer be subject to decay. Those still living at Christ’s coming will have their bodies instantly changed – which is to say have their body transformed into a glorified body. The difference is that the living will not have to die. But all the saints will get their body back - only in glorified form.

The phrase “**put on**” was commonly used of putting on clothing. Thus redeemed spirits will now be dressed in glorified bodies suited for the kingdom. Our bodies in effect are only the clothing to the real person. In the rapture the real person (our soul/spirit) will put on another suit – so to speak. This is what Paul meant by being “further clothed” in 2 Cor. 5:4.

Slide # 6

2 Corinthians 5:4 (NKJV)

For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be **unclothed**, [die and be without a body] but **further clothed**, [with a resurrection body] that mortality may be swallowed up by life.

One of the reasons resurrection truth means so much to us as believers is because one day we to are going to share in a resurrection body just exactly like Christ has.

Slide # 7

Romans 8:11 (NKJV)

11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also **give life to your mortal bodies** through His Spirit who dwells in you.

Slide # 8

Philippians 3:20–21 (NKJV)

20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

21 who will **transform our lowly body** that it may be **conformed to His glorious body**, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

Slide # 9

1 John 3:2 (NKJV)

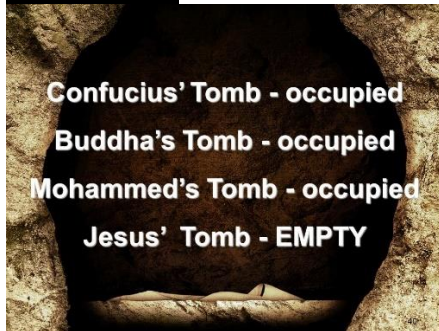
2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, **we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.**

But my point to you this morning in talking about resurrection shock and awe is that never before in the history of the world had anyone every seen a resurrection before the resurrection of Christ. Yes, there were a few cases of resuscitation but not of resurrection. No one saw this coming. It was totally unheard of and totally unique!

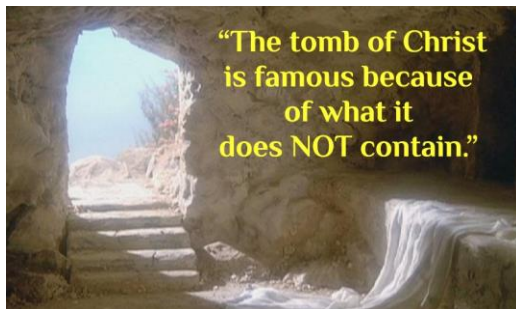
In fact, resurrection truth is totally unique to the Judeo/Christian faith among all the religions of the world! Never before the time of Christ do we find anything like it – nor do we find anything like it after the time of Christ.

There are a lot of famous tombs in the world but there is ONE thing that is unique about Christ's tomb.

Slide # 10



Slide # 11



But I want you to think about this for a moment. I want you to appreciate how absolutely NEW and UNHEARD of was the truth of the resurrection.

In the entire history of the world before the time of Christ there was no such thing as the idea of a future resurrection except for a few shadowy passages in the OT.

The Ancient Eastern religions never conceived of the idea of a future resurrection. The mystery religions never knew of any concept of a physical resurrection. Look among all the religions of history and in spite of all kinds of mystical thinking the idea of resurrection is foreign.

Islam didn't show up on the scene until 700 years into the Church Age. Today among the religions of the world only Islam, Judaism, and Christianity teach the reality of future resurrection.

But here is the essential point. NEVER in the history of the world is there any record anywhere of a glorified resurrection taking place in connection with historical data. That is UNTIL the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The resurrection of Jesus is not only prophetic, but also historic! It intersects with real history! There is real historical data! This is not just fanciful mysticism. This is HISTORY and history that fulfills prophecy!

There is absolutely nothing else like this anywhere in all the world – in the whole of history. This is what made the resurrection so totally SHOCKING!

For this reason, no one saw it coming. The Jewish religious leaders never saw it coming. Even Jesus' disciples didn't see it coming – even though He told them over and over that it was coming. Therefore, it took them all by total surprise. It shocked not only the world, but even the disciples!

Slide # 12

Matthew 28:1–4 (NKJV)

1 Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb.

2 And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it.

3 His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow.

4 And the **guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men.**

The guards experienced shock and awe and they didn't even see the risen Lord – just the angel of the Lord who rolled back the stone.

Slide # 13

Mark 16:8 (NKJV)

8 So they went out quickly and fled from the tomb, for they **trembled and were amazed.** And they said nothing to anyone, for they were **afraid.**

The interaction with the angel and the sight of the empty grave has shocking!

Slide # 14

Luke 24:36–39 (NKJV)

36 Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, “Peace to you.”

37 But they were **terrified and frightened**, and supposed they had seen a spirit.

38 And He said to them, “Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts?”

39 Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have.”

But note this critical point: Even though no one else saw it coming – God did see it coming as seen in the prophetic Scriptures.

Slide # 15

Psalm 16:10 (NKJV)

10 For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, **Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.**

1 Corinthians 15:3–4 (NKJV)

3 For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins **according to the Scriptures,**

4 and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day **according to the Scriptures,**

Jesus clearly saw it coming and predicted His coming resurrection repeatedly. Even the religious leaders knew Jesus had predicted His resurrection, but they didn't believe it.

Slide # 16

Matthew 27:62–64 (NKJV)

62 On the next day, which followed the Day of Preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered together to Pilate,

63 saying, “Sir, we remember, while He was still alive, how that **deceiver** said, ‘**After three days I will rise.**’

64 Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and **steal** Him away, and say to the people, ‘He has risen from the dead.’ So the last deception will be worse than the first.”

Thus, it was widely known that Jesus prophesied of His coming resurrection but no one ever seriously considered this as a real possibility.

Slide # 17**Matthew 16:21 (NKJV)**

21 From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and **be raised the third day.**

John 10:17–18 (NKJV)

17 “Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again.

18 No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. **I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.** This command I have received from My Father.”

But how do we REALLY know it is true? What is the proof? Well, the holy Scriptures themselves are sufficiently convincing. The Spirit is living, the Word is living, and He makes it come alive in our hearts. There is nothing more convincing or necessary than this.

Slide # 18**1 Corinthians 1:21 (NKJV)**

21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, **it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.**

1 Corinthians 2:4–5 (NKJV)

4 And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in **demonstration of the Spirit and of power,**
5 that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in **the power of God.**

But even so the OBJECTIVE EVIDENCE for the truth of the resurrection is so strong that even just HISTORICALLY it is incontrovertible if one is honest with the facts.

Professor Thomas Arnold (13 June 1795 – 12 June 1842), a world-renowned historian, once said that Christ’s resurrection from the dead is the ***“best-attested fact in human history”***.

It is worth pointing out that in establishing the historicity of the resurrection, we do not need to assume that the New Testament is inspired by God or even trustworthy. While I do believe these things, [there are] three truths that even critical scholars admit. In other words, these three truths are so strong that they are accepted by serious historians of all stripes. – **Matt Perman**

Slide # 19

Three objective historical facts:

- 1) Christ's tomb was found empty!
- 2) The historical record shows the disciples had real experiences with one they believed was the risen Lord.
- 3) The Christian Church was established on the basis of belief in Christ's resurrection.

These are historically documented objective facts! No serious scholar denies any of this.

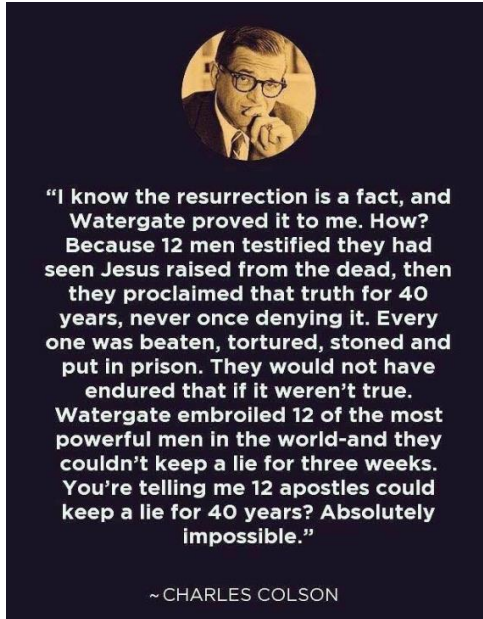
First, All the enemies of Christ had to do to stamp out the truth of His resurrection was to produce His dead body. But even the Jews did not deny the truth of the empty tomb, but rather said the body was "stolen". Now that takes a lot of faith to believe in view of the Roman Guard that set watch over the tomb.

"It is extremely difficult to object to the empty tomb on historical grounds; those who deny it do so on the basis of theological or philosophical assumptions." – **D.H. Van Daalen**

Second, the disciples are on historical record as clearly claiming to have seen and interacted with the risen Lord. It's a matter of historical record. The record is undeniable. Now you have three choices: They either hallucinated, they were flat out lying, or they really did see the risen Christ.

Hallucinations are not a group thing. People do not have the exact same hallucinations and stick with the same story for a whole life-time. If the disciples were lying then they willingly died for a lie. People will die for a lie if they think it is the truth, but they will not knowingly die for a lie – and certainly not the whole group.

Slide # 20



Because of their preaching the resurrection the disciples were beaten, persecuted, and killed. Would they have gone through all this for a deliberate lie? That is beyond irrational!

Years ago ABC did a documentary called *The Search for Jesus*. They interviewed a history scholar by the name of Paula Fredriksen who was not a Christian and she said this concerning the post-resurrection appearance of Christ.

I know in their own terms what they saw was the raised Jesus. That's what they say, and then all the historic evidence we have afterwards attest to their conviction that that's what they saw. ...I wasn't there. I don't know what they saw. But I do know that as a historian that they must have seen something.

The only reasonable explanation is that the disciples really did see the risen Lord and they knew it was true and therefore they willing laid down their lives for the truth of it.

Third, it is an undeniable fact of history that the Christian Church traces its beginning back to the 1st Century following the disciples claims to have seen the risen Lord.

Any one of these historical facts is convincing truth that Jesus is risen from the dead, but when you put them all together it makes for a POWERFULLY convincing package of evidence that is irrefutable.

And we haven't even added in the facts of fulfilled prophecy and all that details that involves.

This explains the early history of the Church as seen in the book of Acts. Acts is an inspired history book of the first 30 years of the Church. The dominant theme in the book is the message of the resurrected Christ. This message so gripped the disciples and the early believers in the Church Age that they spread it far and wide. They couldn't shut them up.

In fact, in the book of Acts alone there is at least 25 passages highlighting the glorious truth of the resurrection (Note: [Acts 2:22-36](#); [3:13-18](#); [4:10-12](#), [33](#); [5:29-32](#); [10:37-43](#); [13:27-37](#); [17:23](#), [30-32](#); [23:6](#); [24:14-16](#); [25:19](#); [26:68](#), [22-23](#); etc.).

Slide # 21

Acts 2:24 (NKJV)

24 whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it.

Acts 3:15 (NKJV)

15 and killed the Prince of life, **whom God raised from the dead**, of which we are witnesses.

Slide # 22

Acts 10:40–43 (NKJV)

40 Him God raised up on the third day, and showed Him openly, **41** not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before by God, even to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead.

42 And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God to be Judge of the living and the dead.

43 To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, **whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins.**"

As you think about Jesus - how do you see Him in your mind? In truth we have no idea how Christ actually looked. Was He tall or short? We know He had a beard, but that is about it. The Biblical record is silent as to His appearance. The early church history is completely silent as to His appearance concerning His earthly ministry. And so we leave it to the artists to paint a picture for us, but it is completely arbitrary.

Slide # 23

We have no idea what Christ actually looked like in His earthly ministry, but we do have a Biblical portrait of what He looks like in His resurrection glory and that is found in the book of Revelation. This is the picture the Bible paints for us.

Slide # 24**Revelation 1:13–16 (NKJV)**

13 and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a **garment down to the feet** and **girded about the chest with a golden band.**

14 His **head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow,** and His **eyes like a flame of fire;**

15 His **feet were like fine brass,** as if refined in a furnace, and His **voice as the sound of many waters;**

16 He had in His right hand seven stars, **out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword,** and **His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.**

There may be a combination of things seen here, but the predominate picture here is that of Jesus as JUDGE! The robe fits the part. His white hair portrays wisdom, purity, and eternity (cf. Ancient of Days in Dan. 7:9-13). His eyes as a flame of fire portrays His gaze as penetrating. His feet as brass may portray Him treading out judgment. His voice was deep and powerful with absolute authority. His right hand emphasizes the power of sovereign control; and the two-edged sword proceeding from His mouth portrays judicial authority. And finally, His countenance was overpoweringly awesome beyond comprehension.

This is Christ HIGH and lifted up. This is Christ in His exalted resurrection glory! And what was the response of John? Even in His resurrection appearances His full glory was not on display, but here it was.

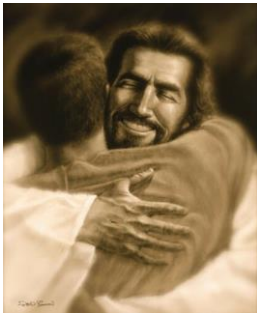
Slide # 25**Revelation 1:17–18 (NKJV)**

17 And when I saw Him, **I fell at His feet as dead**. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, “Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last.

18 I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.

This was pure shock and awe! The exalted risen Christ in His glory is overwhelmingly awesome – more than we can ever imagine!

We sometimes imagine heaven will be like this...

Slide # 26

But the Bible actually portrays it more like this...

Slide # 27

I have no doubt that it will be pure shock and awe! As someone has well said, ***“Heaven will at once be a great eye opener and a great mouth shutter!”***

But I want you to notice that while John is flat on his face as a dead man, Christ in love put His right hand on him saying ***“Do not be afraid.”***

There is a lot these days to make us afraid, but the One who is the **“First and the Last”** (that is the eternal God) says, to us **“Do not be afraid.”**

And the reason we don’t have to fear is because He is the One Who was dead but behold, He is now **“alive forevermore.”** And He has the keys of Hades (the spirit realm of death) and of death (referring to the grave).

Keys represent authority. The ultimate concern and fear of people is death. This is the ultimate problem. Only Jesus has the solution. Only He has the key to this realm. Only He can unlock the bondage of this reality. The destiny of every human being is under the authority of Jesus Christ (cf. Jn. 5:28-29).

As awesome as it will be for us as believers to see the risen Christ in all His glory, the world is in for a shock beyond measure.

Slide # 28

Isaiah 52:14–15 (NKJV)

[His First Coming]

14 Just as many were astonished at you, So His visage was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men;

[His Second Coming]

15 So shall He sprinkle-**[startle]** many nations. Kings shall shut their mouths at Him; For what had not been told them they shall see, And what they had not heard they shall consider.

Slide # 29

Philippians 2:8–11 (NKJV)

[First Coming]

8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

[Second Coming]

9 Therefore God also has **highly exalted Him** and given Him the name which is above every name,

10 that at the name of Jesus **every knee should bow**, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,

11 and that **every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord**, to the glory of God the Father.

Slide # 30**Revelation 1:7–8 (NKJV)**

7 Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And **all the tribes of the earth will mourn** because of Him. Even so, Amen.

8 “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,” says the Lord, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”

The resurrection of Christ means that all His claims to be God come in the flesh are true (cf. Rom. 1:4). It means that God has fully accepted His payment for sin on the cross (cf. Rom. 4:24-25).

Christianity is the only religion in the world in which God becomes a man – and thereafter is eternally the God-Man. ***“History is crowded with men who would be gods, but only one God who would be man.”***

Christianity is the only religion in the world whose leader has risen from the dead and whose tomb is unoccupied. And Hebrews 2 says that Christ tasted death for everyone with the goal of ***“bringing many sons to glory”*** (Heb. 2:9-10).

Let me ask you on this resurrection Sunday: Do you know Him?

Slide # 31

[Faith]

Romans 5:1 (NKJV)

1 Therefore, having been **justified by faith**, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

[Savior]

Romans 5:8–9 (NKJV)

8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, **Christ died for us**.

9 Much more then, having now been **justified by His blood**, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.

[Lord]

Romans 10:9–10 (NKJV)

9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that **God has raised Him from the dead**, you will be saved.

10 For with the **heart one believes** unto righteousness, and with the **mouth confession is made** unto salvation.

You see to really believe in **your heart** that God raised Jesus from the dead means to personally believe in Him for Who He as the risen Lord. As our Savior He died for all our sins; as Lord over He rose again. A true saving faith personally believes in Him as Savior and Lord and then the mouth tells on the heart! We believe it and we confess it! What say you? Who is Jesus to you?

Years ago a man by the name of **S.M. Lockridge** (Shadrach Meshach Lockridge, March 7, 1913 – April 4, 2000) preached a sermon titled: **“That’s My King! Do You Know Him?”** Here is an excerpt:

My King was born King. The Bible says He’s a Seven Way King. He’s the King of the Jews—that’s an Ethnic King. He’s the King of Israel—that’s a National King. He’s the King of righteousness. He’s the King of the ages. He’s the King of Heaven. He’s the King of glory. He’s the King of kings and He is the Lord of lords. Now that’s my King. Well, I wonder if you know Him. Do you know Him?

I’m coming to tell you this, that the heavens of heavens cannot contain Him, let alone some man explain Him. You can’t get Him out of your mind. You can’t get Him off of your hands. You can’t outlive Him and you can’t live without Him. The Pharisees couldn’t stand Him, but they found out they couldn’t stop Him. Pilate couldn’t find any fault in Him. The witnesses couldn’t get their testimonies to agree about Him. Herod couldn’t kill Him. Death couldn’t handle Him and the grave couldn’t hold Him. That’s my King.

Do you know Him?

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved” (Acts 16:31)