

# SOWING SEEDS for the *Kingdom*

MARK 16:15-20



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### “BECAUSE HE LIVES!”

***1 Corinthians 15:12-14 (KJV)***

***12 Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?***

***13 But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen:***

***14 And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.***

As we look around today, we can see signs of spring everywhere, the trees are beginning to bud, the flowers beginning to bloom...all showing us in nature's most wondrous fashion that winter is coming to an end and NEW LIFE is beginning to spring forth.

I'm sure that you are just like the rest of us, because of what has taken place the past couple of years you're looking forward with an expectancy of better things to come.

As I have been waiting upon the Lord to impress upon me what to share with you this month, a song was brought to mind entitled: "Because He Lives," which I believe was written by Bill Gaither several years ago.

The song itself is amazing, but what "exploded" in me was the chorus which I want to share with you:

*Because He lives, I can face tomorrow,  
Because He lives, all fear is gone;  
Because I know He holds the future;*

*And life is worth the living,  
Just because He lives!*

Yes, because JESUS LIVES, we can face tomorrow, because JESUS LIVES, all fear is gone, because JESUS LIVES, He holds our future, and because JESUS LIVES, life is worth living BECAUSE JESUS LIVES!

As the Apostle Paul wrote to the Church at Corinth, without the resurrection our preaching and faith is in vain. But, I BELIEVE IN THE RESURRECTION! Let me tell you some of the reasons why.

First of all, the resurrection of Jesus Christ has been called the central teaching of the Christian faith, the heart of the Gospel, the cornerstone of our theology, and the basis of our hope as believers. Perhaps that explains why the truth of the bodily resurrection of Christ has been under attack since the very day the tomb was discovered to be empty (Matthew 28:11-15).

Over the years, many have followed in the path of those first chief priests and elders who tried to explain away the resurrected Christ. The ancient Gnostics taught that Jesus switched places with a bystander before the crucifixion and later came out of hiding to appear to His followers. Docetists proposed the idea that Jesus only *seemed* to have a physical body. Enlightenment thinkers imagined that Jesus swooned at the cross and later woke up in the tomb, pushed away the stone and appeared to His disciples. Present day Jesus Seminar scholars marginalize the resurrection, teaching that it was only metaphor and not an actual event. But the Apostle Paul said, “And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins” (1 Corinthians 15:17 ESV). We need to have a clear understanding—just why DO we believe in the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ?

**Both Jesus and the Old Testament prophets predicted** the resurrection. When the Jews asked for a sign of Jesus’ authority, He said, “Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up” (John 2:19-22). Other instances include Matthew 20:19, Mark 14:28, and Luke 9:22. Old Testament prophecies include Job 19:25-27 and Psalm 16:10.

**The detailed accounts of the resurrection** found in Matthew 28:1-8, Mark 16:1-11, Luke 24:1-12, and John 20:1-18 are eyewitness records of the event. Though each author chose to include slightly different details, the four narratives stand as legitimate historical documentation. Few events in history have as precise detail from multiple witnesses as do the accounts of the resurrection found in the Gospels.

**The Roman guard** that stood watching the tomb (Matthew 27:64-66) knew that falling asleep on their watch meant certain execution. It is preposterous to believe that the same timid disciples who fled the crucifixion would so soon be willing to face the danger of the guard, move the heavy stone from in front of the tomb, steal the body, and were able to accomplish all without waking the soldiers, who were conveniently asleep on duty.

**The empty tomb and the uninhabited grave clothes** were enough to convince John of the resurrection (John 20:8), along with the women's account of angelic testimony (Matthew 28:5-7).

**Many of the details in the Gospel accounts are unlikely** from the perspective of the authors, and must have been bewildering to them. For example, the fact that Jesus appeared first to Mary Magdalene instead of a man like John or Peter would have been confusing in the male-dominated culture of the day. The disciples had seen Lazarus and others raised from the dead, but never resurrection to a glorified body like Jesus experienced—thus His ability to vanish (Luke 24:31) and to appear suddenly in a locked room (John 20:19). Including these unheard of events in the narrative shows that the authors were recording history as it occurred, not inventing fiction.

**The wounds in Jesus' hands and sides** are evidence that it was indeed He who suffered on the cross, not a stand-in as the Gnostics taught. The scars verified by Thomas (John 20:27-28) and the meal shared with the disciples in Jerusalem (Luke 24:41-43) proves that the resurrection was physical, not a spiritual or solely metaphoric event. You can't touch a spirit; metaphors do not eat.

**Jesus appeared to many people** after His resurrection, including those who knew Him well, like Mary Magdalene (John 20:15-17) and the disciples. He also appeared to over 500 people at one time (1 Corinthians 15:6). Nearly all would have been

present when Peter preached about the resurrected Jesus in Acts 2:32. We have no record of any of Christ's contemporaries objecting to Peter's mention of the resurrection in this sermon, preached before the very people who had crucified Jesus. Many of these same witnesses would have been alive to confirm the testimony of the Gospels when they were written.

**Since the beginning, Jesus' followers have suffered.** The first-century church was brutally persecuted. Thousands of followers, strengthened by the Holy Spirit, withstood poverty, imprisonment, beatings, torture, and death for their belief. Tradition tells us that all but one of the Apostles died a martyr's death. If they were not completely convinced of Christ's deity and resurrection, they would not have suffered and died for those beliefs.

**Finally, the entire New Testament confirms** the centrality of the resurrection. Belief in the resurrection is a requirement for salvation (Romans 10:9). Resurrection is pictured in baptism (Romans 6:4, Col. 2:12). It is the basis of hope for our own resurrection (Romans 8:11) and the resurrection of other believers who have died (1 Thessalonians 4:14). It is the demonstration of God's great power (Eph. 1:19). It is why we are able to hope in God (1 Peter 1:21) and the means by which we are born again (1 Peter 3:23).

**BECAUSE HE LIVES you can face tomorrow;**

**BECAUSE HE LIVES all fear is gone;**

**BECAUSE HE LIVES you can face the future;**

**BECAUSE HE LIVES life is worth living...JUST BECAUSE HE LIVES!**

*Point to Rom  
ACT. 6:33 Agape,  
Stuart Kelly*

Remember above all that *You* are **Loved**, *You* are **Welcome** and *You* **Belong!**

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# GOD BLESS THE U.S.A.

From "American Minute" by William J. Federer

## Sanctity of Life

**"The greatest destroyer of peace today is abortion"-Mother Teresa;**

**"Pro-Life is Pro Science"-Gary Bauer.**

The founder of Planned Parenthood, **Margaret Sanger** stated: "The purpose of the **American Baby Code** shall be to provide for a better distribution of babies...and to **protect society against the propagation and increase of the unfit.**" **"Feeble minded persons...and others found biologically unfit by authorities...should be sterilized or, in cases of doubt, should be so isolated as to prevent the perpetuation of their afflictions by breeding."** Knowledge of **birth control** is essentially moral. Its general, though prudent, practice must **lead to a higher individuality and ultimately to a cleaner race.** ("Morality and Birth Control", February-March, 1918, pp. 11, 14.)

**Sanger** was quoted in "Apostle of Birth control Sees Cause Gaining Here" (the New York Times, April 8, 1923, p. XII): **"Birth control is ...cultivation of the better racial elements in our society, and the gradual suppression, elimination and eventual extirpation of defective stocks—those human weeds which threaten the blooming of the finest flowers of American civilization."**

In 1926, **Margaret Sanger** spoke to a KKK group, as cited in her *Autobiography*, (1938): "Always to me any aroused group was a good group and therefore I **accepted an invitation to talk to the women's branch of the Ku Klux Klan** at Silver Lake, New Jersey, one of the weirdest experiences I had in lecturing."

She stated in a radio interview on WFAB Syracuse, February 2, 1924 ("The Meaning of Radio Birth Control," April 1924, p. 111): "Just think for a moment of the meaning of the word kindergarten—a **garden of children...in this matter we should not do less than follow the example of the professional gardener.**

Every expert gardener knows that the individual plant must be **properly spaced, rooted in a rich nourishing soil, and provided with sufficient air and sunlight.** He knows that no plant would have a fair chance of life if it were overcrowded or **choked by weeds...if plants, and live stock as well, require space and air, sunlight and love, children need them even more...**

A farmer would rather produce a thousand thoroughbreds than a million runts. How are we to **breed a race of human thoroughbreds** unless we follow the same plan? We must make this country into a garden of children **instead of a disorderly back lot** overrun with **human weeds.**"

**Margaret Sanger's** address to the New History Society, New York City, January 1, 1932, was summarized in "A Plan for Peace," April 1932, pp. 107-108. "Keep the doors of immigration closed to the entrance of certain **aliens** whose condition is known to be **detrimental** to the stamina of the **race**, such as **feeble-minded, idiots, morons, insane, syphilitic, epileptic...**and others in this class barred by the immigration laws of 1924...Apply a stern and **rigid policy of sterilization** whose **progeny is tainted**, or whose **inheritance** is such that **objectionable traits** may be transmitted to **offspring**...Insure the country against future burdens of maintenance for numerous **offspring** as may be born of **feeble-minded parents**, by pensioning all persons with transmissible disease who voluntarily consent to **sterilization**...Give certain **dysgenic groups** in our population their choice of **segregation or sterilization.**"

NOTE: I would present to you, that most individuals do not have a clue to how "deep" the foundational precepts of Planned Parenthood really go! Hosea 4:6 states that God's people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge!

(To be continued next month)

**2 Chronicles 7:14 (KJV)**

**<sup>14</sup> If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.**

**IT IS TIME FOR CHRISTIANS TO AWAKEN AND ACT!**

**MAY GOD BLESS THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA!**