

RAISING THE DEAD

15/4/20

God has identified himself as much more than the powerful creator of the universe and the life in it. He has expressed an attitude towards the human race, that is common to humans themselves. He demonstrates love and care, concern and assistance; like any caring father or mother would do. His interest and regard for us is much more than that of any parent, because his capacity is far greater than ours. We cannot care for ourselves with the same certainty and authority that God offers. If the worst comes to the worst, God is capable of raising the dead. That is something we cannot do for our families. Yet, God now offers us the power to raise the dead.

He has a specific and reassuring message for the whole human race. EZE 33:11 Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have **no pleasure** in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and **live** (this is what gives the Lord pleasure): turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel? Without a mutual relationship with God... physical death will lead to certain spiritual death. God offers a replacement for the physical body.

God gives us power over life and death. 2PET 1:3 According as his divine **power** hath given unto us all things that **pertain unto life** and godliness, **through the knowledge of him** that hath called us to glory and virtue: God has given us everything we need to overcome death, to raise the dead and to see things from his perspective. God's primary focus is on spiritual death as distinct from physical death. Knowledge of God's word is the key. Identifying the gospel message is the beginning of salvation knowledge... the balance is revealed through learning processes. Salvation includes a new body with the return of Jesus Christ [**1COR 15:44** It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body].

Every person needs to be raised from their spiritually dead status... this is done through the anointing of the Spirit. EPH 2:4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, God's love is greater than anything we might imagine. He loves us even though we acted as enemies and traitors to his creation plans. **5** Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) **6** And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: This is a great promise and part of the duty of all Christians. In effect, all humans who are lost in the ignorance of sin can be raised from the dead... this remains a wonderful opportunity and a very special victory.

However, there is another example of raising the dead which is much more significant to God and us... a far greater victory. Many of those that are born again will fall away and end up in a worse position than what they were in before they were saved [**2PET 2:20** For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is **worse** with them than the beginning. **God makes provision to raise those who are dead for the second time.** The whole of Luke chapter 15 details this surprising revelation. Luke 15 relates to fallen saints... not the unsaved. **LUK 15: 7** I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance. This is a huge revelation of the mind and purpose of Christ. We might normally be angry, or call for punishment by such failings, but God doesn't. His sole interest is in raising the dead. The celebration of one returned from such a fallen state is astonishingly favourable to some. However, for those who understand parental love, it is confirmation of God's values.

Why such a fuss for someone who has been so foolish? LUK 15:32 It was **meet** that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found. When we love as God loves, then we understand the values being revealed here. The size of this victory is best understood by seeing it in its true perspective. Let's imagine a family where a child has died and is buried. The family can never replace such a person, but they can go on and give birth to another. So it is with the church; new souls will always be born into it, but the greatest of all victories is raising the spiritually dead. Thus, the greater celebration. How much more does he care for those who maintain their faith and keep following the Lord?

God directs and nurtures his children... particularly those who shepherd. ISA 40:11 He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall **gently** lead those that are with young. & **MIC 7:18** Who is a God like unto thee, that **pardoneth** iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he **delighteth in mercy**. **19** He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will **subdue** (restrain) our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.