



bits from bob....

Teach and Preach the Resurrection to “Raise the Dead”

April 13, 2020

Perhaps you will allow me another look back. Or perhaps this “bits” is more accurately a look ahead. If you read this weekend’s posts and blog, you will have to extend me a bit of forgiveness for some repetition.

Will the resurrection matter for the next 364 days?

We can give the right answers biblically – the validity of Christianity depends on the resurrection, the resurrection is the capstone of the gospel, Christianity is empty without resurrection, Jesus’ resurrection is first fruits and promise of our resurrection, on and on.

But whether we have a firm grasp on the importance of the resurrection as confirming evidence of the gospel will be demonstrated in our lives – by what we do, and also by what we say. The fundamental message preached by the early church was the gospel, a message of fulfillment, promise, and power that was communicated and confirmed by Old Testament prophecy and by the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit.

In 1867, Charles Spurgeon delivered his address, “How to Raise the Dead.” The essential point of the lesson is that teaching and preaching must raise the dead. When the preacher preaches or the teacher teaches, the goal is to raise to life those who are spiritually dead.

I could add that preachers are at times resuscitating some who in danger of dying. Preachers keep people alive. The point: preaching is a life and death matter spiritually.

The preaching of the early church reflects the life and death nature of the gospel—choosing between two options—resurrection or death. The sermons in the book of Acts were life and death sermons. I will not repeat here the long lists from yesterday’s post and blog.

Biblical preaching demands that people make life and death decisions. To be baptized into a new life with the death of the “old man” of sin—or not. To walk in newness of life—or not. To reflect and share Jesus’ resurrection in baptism, anticipating the final resurrection—or not.

Preaching must address these spiritual life and death matters. God’s Word is the key to finding life and following his will. God’s Word is the key to “raising the dead.”

One more time I say it: let us never tire of preaching and hearing the message of the gospel, the message of resurrection power. Preach and teach the resurrection. Preach the gospel; preach the resurrection. Preach Jesus; preach the resurrection. Without the resurrection, Christianity becomes only a competing system of morality among many religious systems. Resurrection! Only Jesus gives us power over death! Preaching Jesus always gives eternal hope—such preaching raises the dead!

My prayer is that this message will lead you to faith, obedience, newness, and hope. For those dead in sins, forgiveness is found only in Jesus. For those struggling spiritually, life is in Christ. If you want to talk, contact me. I would love to talk to you about life and death.