

TEXT: For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you...was not “Yes” and “No,” but in him it has always been “Yes.” For no matter how many promises God has made, they are “Yes” in Christ.

Dear Friends in Christ, our Resurrected Lord and Savior,

It was promising to be a very promising Friday evening. Jenna's friends were planning to meet at the mall to enjoy some pizza and then go to a movie. But all of that fun hinged on one big factor. Would Dad say “yes” when Jenna asked him for the use of the car after school. Everything depended on Dad's “yes.” If he said “yes” she would see her friends, enjoy a pizza with them and then a movie. If he didn't say “yes,” it would be a sad, lonely night at home.

This morning Paul reminds us that everything God has promised us in his Word, depends on God, our Heavenly Father's “Yes” in Christ. Simply stated what he meant was this. If Christ was not God's Son, if he was not the promised Messiah than Jesus would have stayed in the grave. He would not have risen from the dead. But if Christ was God's Son, the promised Messiah, if he accomplished the work his heavenly Father had sent him to do, if his Father approved of the sacrifice he gave for the sin of the world on the cross then the Father would reveal that by raising him from the dead. **Jesus' Resurrection was God the Father's “Yes” to all he promised us in his Word!**

On Easter Sunday, indeed, throughout the whole eight week period of the Easter season, yes, every Sunday when we commemorate Jesus's resurrection from the dead, we believers, God's adopted children, the elect rejoice to hear God's “Yes” echoing loudly from the empty tomb!

Yes, *death has been swallowed up in victory!* (1 Corinthians 15) When we go under the surgeon's knife in the surgery room we may be anxious about the surgery and wonder if we will survive, but we don't doubt what will happen to us if we should die. Jesus promised us, “*Because I live, you also will live!*” “*I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.*” (John 11:25,26) “*Nothing can separate us from the love of God.*” That's what death is, being separated from God eternally. Jesus' resurrection guarantees that we believers will never be separated from God for all eternity. It guarantees that we will live forever with him in heaven. Jesus' resurrection is our heavenly Father's “yes” to this promise.

Yes, *he was delivered over to death for our sins and raised to life for our justification!* (Romans 4) Jesus' resurrection is God's “yes” to Jesus' sacrifice for sins! He is telling us that our sins are forgiven! All of them! “*The blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.*” (1 John 1:7) Everyone's sins! “*Jesus is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours, but also for the sins of the whole world.*” (1 John 2:2) And because Jesus died for our justification, that is, the Heavenly Father has declared us “*not guilty*” of our sins because he laid them on Christ who was punished as our substitute, (Isaiah 53:6) we now have “*peace with God.*” (Romans 5:1) And “*there is now no condemnation*” (Romans 8:1) for those who believe in Christ Jesus as their Savior from all sin. As we contemplate the end of life, the end of this world and Judgment Day when God will make all mankind give an account of their life here on earth, the devil would try to make us worry about that day. He tries to make us doubt that we are forgiven, and that God will still punish us for our sins. But in Christ's resurrection we have our Heavenly Father's “**Yes**” to Christ's payment for sin! All that the Heavenly Father has

demanded has been paid. Another payment is not necessary! *“It is finished!”* Jesus cried from the cross. God the Father’s “Yes” in Christ’s resurrection guarantees this!

Yes, *the reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil’s work.* (1 John 3) The devil is still alive and walks this planet earth looking for someone to destroy! (1 Peter 5:8) But he is like a dog on a leash that we can resist when we stand firm in the faith. Jesus’ death has taken the devil’s power over us away from him. He can no longer accuse us of sin before God because God has forgiven us in Christ. Paul said, *“Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.”* (Romans 8:33, 34) In Jesus’ resurrection the Heavenly Father is guaranteeing that the devil’s power over us is destroyed and that Jesus is interceding for us as our defense lawyer in God’s court of law when the devil tries to prosecute us. God’s “not guilty” verdict has been announced in the resurrection of his Son!

Yes, Christ says to you and me, *“I go and prepare a place for you, and I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.”* (John 14) Our Heavenly Father’s “Yes” in Christ’s Resurrection reminds us that everything he told us is the truth! His words are truth! (John 14) Jesus told us that there is a heaven. He describes it for us in his Word as a place of eternal happiness and bliss. We can trust that someday we will live in the place Jesus has prepared for us in heaven, even though we have never seen heaven or been there, because Jesus told us about it. Through faith in Jesus it’s not wishful thinking on our part to say that we will go to heaven because we believe in Jesus. No, God promised this and guarantees to us that this is the truth through his Son’s resurrection.

Yes, *“Jesus Christ...by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.”* (Philippians 3). Jesus was raised from the dead with his body! The disciples saw him. They touched his body and the wounds from the cross. It was not a ghost they saw. However, Jesus’ body was a glorious body, a perfect body that was no longer subject to the natural laws of nature. Jesus could come into the room where the disciples were hiding even though the doors were locked. He could travel from one place to another in a moment. He could withhold his identity from his disciples as he did on the road to Emmaus with two of his disciples and he could just disappear in a moment. Jesus promised that we also would someday have such a glorious body. Paul wrote, *“Our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.”* (Philippians 3:21) Sin ravishes our bodies today as we deal with all sorts of viruses, cancers and diseases like diabetes, etc. That will all change someday. When Christ returns at the end of the world those still living will be changed and those already dead in the grave will be raised to life with a resurrected and glorious body to reunite with their loved ones in the skies and then be taken to heaven. Jesus’ glorious bodily resurrection is our Heavenly Father’s “yes,” that is, his guarantee of our own bodily resurrection and reunion with our loved ones in heaven.

Jenna’s father might say no to her request to use the car that Friday night, but in Jesus the Father never says *no* to the spiritual needs of his people. The promises in Christ are always “Yes!” and the empty tomb proves it! All depends on our Father’s “Yes.” Jesus’ bodily resurrection was his “Yes!” The proclamation of that “Yes” solidifies trust in our hearts, *“for the gospel is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes,”* and it empowers action. For *“we cannot help but speak what we have heard and seen.”* Please join with me in praying that each of us continue to be “yes men” and “yes women,” who trust in God’s promises through the resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord. May each of us go forth, grounded in the inspired and eternal promises of God. May we by the Spirit’s power confidently proclaim to those we serve, **“Yes, in Christ, your salvation is accomplished.”** Amen.