

# ***Eleutheros Newsletter***

April 2019

## **News of Interest**

Work is underway for a fifth book from Eleutheros Books: 19<sup>th</sup> Century Influences on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Christianity.

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Soulwinning Seminar  
Eleutheros Books Global Fund  
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### ***Continuing Thoughts on Our Lord's Resurrection***

*For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised  
([1 Corinthians 15:16](#)).*

In last month's newsletter we began a series on the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Here are more comments from New Testament verses/passages on this all-important subject.

**[Acts 4:33](#)**. *And with great power gave the Apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.*

Amazing things were happening in Jerusalem. Three thousand people were saved at Pentecost; five thousand more were saved a few days later. The people prayed ([Acts 4:31](#)) and "the place was shaken where they were assembled together."

And now the other Apostles were preaching that powerful resurrection message, and "great grace was upon them all."

**[Acts 5:30-32](#)**. *The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, Whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are His witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Ghost, Whom God hath given to them that obey Him.*

A great revival was taking place. "By the hands of the Apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people" ([Acts 4:12](#)) and "believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women" ([Acts 4:14](#)).

The religious leaders thought their "problem" had been solved when Jesus left this earth, but now they realized there were twelve men who were diligently carrying on the work He had trained them to do!

They "laid their hands on the Apostles and put them in the common prison, But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors..." ([Acts 5:18-19a](#)).

The religious leaders were dismayed and angry. The officers of the prison “feared the people, lest they should have been stoned” ([Acts 5:26](#)).

Finally, the high priest found the Apostles busy serving the Lord and asked, “Did we not straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name?” ([Acts 4:28](#)).

Peter and the other Apostles replied, “We ought to obey God rather than men” ([Acts 5:29](#))!

Then Peter spoke the same message: Jesus had been crucified, He rose again, He offers forgiveness of sins, and the Holy Spirit confirms these facts.

The Apostles became stronger as they continued to present the resurrection message! They were not afraid of men. In fact, “they departed from the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ” ([Acts 5:41-42](#)).

That same message caused the Jewish council to take “council to slay them” ([Acts 5:33](#)).

The resurrection of Jesus Christ was the issue every person had to resolve. Many believed and were saved. Others became angry and wanted to kill anyone who dared to preach such amazing truth.

[Acts 10:40-41](#). *Him God raised up the third day, and shewed Him openly; Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before god, even to us, who did eat and drink with Him after He rose from the dead.*

[Acts 10](#) describes the conversion of “a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band” (verse 1). Up to this point the Gospel message had been delivered exclusively to Jews, but now God determined that the time had come for the Apostles to reach Gentiles as well.

This was astonishing to Peter and the other Apostles! After all, from the time of Abraham until the time of Jesus the Scriptures were written by Jews. The judges, priests, and prophets were all Jews. The Apostles were all Jews. Jesus was a Jew and ministered so tirelessly to the Jews in Israel!

God sent a vision to Cornelius ([Acts 10:3-6](#)). The message was clear: he was to seek out Peter. God also sent an unusual vision to Peter. He was confused but certainly desired to honor God’s will ([Acts 10:9-16](#)).

“Now while Peter doubted in himself what this vision which he had seen might mean, behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius had made enquiry for Simon’s house, and stood before the gate” ([Acts 10:17](#)).

Before long Peter traveled to Caesarea and met with Cornelius and others. “And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean” ([Acts 10:28](#)).

Peter continued, “Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons” ([Acts 10:34](#)). He recognized that Gentiles could be saved!

His message to Cornelius and the others was that Jesus had died, had risen, and had revealed Himself to the Apostles.

No doubt Peter quickly remembered that he and the other Apostles were to preach the Gospel to all nations ([Matthew 28:19](#)) even “unto the uttermost part of the earth” ([Acts 1:8](#)).

The heart of the message to Cornelius was the fact that Jesus had died for him and was raised up “the third day.” Peter delivered the same message to a Roman military official that he did to his Jewish brethren.

**[Acts 13:30-33](#)**. *But God raised Him from the dead; And He was seen many days of them which came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are His witnesses unto the people. And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that He hath raised up Jesus again; as it is written in the second psalm, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee.*

Now the Apostle Paul is on his first missionary journey, having been sent out by the church at Antioch ([Acts 13:1-3](#)).

After a short ministry on the island of Cyprus ([Acts 13:4-12](#)) he and Barnabas came to Galatia. His normal practice was to enter local synagogues and deliver an Old Testament based sermon.

After a brief survey of Jewish history Paul emphasized the resurrection of Jesus Christ: “But God raised Him from the dead” ([13:30](#)); “And as concerning that He raised Him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption” ([13:34](#)); “But He, Whom God raised again, saw no corruption” ([13:37](#)). David was buried and his body decayed, but Jesus never suffered corruption because He rose again ([Acts 13:36-37](#)).

The Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath” ([Acts 13:42](#)) and “many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God” ([Acts 13:43](#)).

The positive reaction to Paul’s bold preaching was “when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed” ([Acts 13:48](#)).

The negative reaction to Paul's bold preaching was that "the Jews stirred up the devout and honorable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts" ([Acts 13:50](#)).

Paul learned important lessons in Galatia that Peter and the other Apostles had learned earlier. There are always strong reactions to the resurrection message! Those who believe, Jews or Gentiles, will be saved; those who reject the message often become hostile to it.

Paul also had the same *boldness* that the other Apostles showed every time they had preached: "Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold" (Acts 13:46), and after being expelled from the city "they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium" ([Acts 13:51](#)).

Paul was so convinced of our Lord's resurrection and power to save lost souls that he kept preaching to all who would hear, whether they believed or not! By-the-way, in due time Paul returned to preach the Gospel to the people of that city again!

Paul's message was just as "resurrection-centered" as all the other Apostles.

We will continue this series in next month's newsletter.