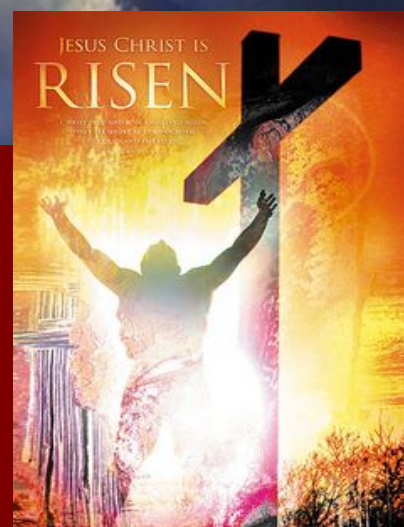


The Resurrection Of Jesus Christ



Written By Rev.
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Introduction

The definition of resurrection is...the action or fact of resurrecting or being resurrected. "the story of the resurrection of Christ" (in Christian belief) Christ's rising from the dead.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the cornerstone of the Christian faith. It proves that all that He was and all that He did was true. It validates His claims of being the Son of God and God Himself.

If there were no resurrection...

1. Our faith would be in vein.
2. Our hope for eternal life would be lost.
3. We would still be lost and dead in our sins.
4. We would be living a lie.

Post Resurrection Sightings

Paul said the resurrection was so important that a person could not be saved without believing in the resurrection. He told them when first addressing them that Jesus died for their sins and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures **1 Corinthians 15:3-4** For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the

scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: and that Jesus was seen by Cephas (Peter) and the other apostles as well as more than 500 others brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain to this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles.

He mentioned this large number of personal eyewitnesses to demonstrate that there was no possibility of fraud. These were all bona fide witnesses who knew they saw Jesus after His resurrection. Paul then reaffirmed that he himself had also seen the risen Christ, (**1 Corinthians 15:8**), and last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.

The Significance of His Ordeal

“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. *Much more* then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, *much more*, having been reconciled, *we shall be saved by His life.*” **Romans 5:8-10**

The Apostle Paul taught the believers at Rome that Jesus’ death was the sacrifice that paid the price for our redemption. His blood justified us but His life actually raised us from the dead. It was a perfect sinless life under the Law of Moses, fulfilling it. No longer did man look to the law for righteousness. Now we look to Jesus. In doing so, we are saved from death, hell and the grave. In doing so, we are assured of resurrection power to live out our lives here until we are with Him forever more.

Because Jesus Christ conquered death, we, too, have a chance to live again — and so do our friends and relatives who have already succumbed to the most certain thing in every life — death. That is why the most exhilarating message human ears have yet heard was the one announced to some devoted but astonished women outside a rock tomb in first-century Jerusalem: “Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen!” (**Luke 24:5-6**). (Grace Communion International)

Critics Speak Out

The New Testament accounts have come under intense scrutiny and attack. Scottish philosopher David Hume argued in the 1700s that miracles — including Christ's resurrection — violated all known workings of natural law. In our century, theologian Rudolph Bultmann concluded, "An historical fact which involves a resurrection from the dead is utterly inconceivable."

In light of such arguments from rationalists and critics, it is no wonder that theories have been devised for the events of crucifixion week:

1. **The Swoon Theory:** This is the idea that Jesus didn't really die but faked a death on the cross, then conned his disciples that he had conquered death only to live out his life elsewhere.
2. **The Theft Theory:** This is the idea that the disciples, other sympathizers, perhaps robbers or even Christ's enemies, stole the corpse. This is the oldest and most widespread argument against Christ's resurrection.
3. **The Spirit Only Theory:** *I will add this third one because it is still around today. This is the Gnostic view that says only Jesus' Spirit rose from the dead. They believe that the sins laid upon Him corrupted His natural body. This view is still considered heresy in the church. It's been over two centuries and still exists today.*

These are bold contentions, almost as bold as the resurrection claim itself. They are rhetorical daggers aimed at the very vitals of the Christian faith. Peter wrote, "*We did not follow cleverly invented stories...but we were eyewitnesses*" (2 Peter 1:16).

You cannot dispute more than 500 eye witnesses that saw Jesus in His resurrected body ascend into heaven. Those who do dispute the account do it from a vantage point of more than 1,000 years after the event. It is easier to say it never happened when all the eyewitnesses are gone and belief is called for in a written record.

It's like saying George Washington never existed. There is a detailed written record, drawings of his likeness, and testimonies of eyewitnesses but

hundreds of years after the fact, some will just not believe. So it was and so it is today with Jesus' resurrection from the dead. One has to choose to believe.

There will always be skeptics, unbelievers, and out right liars. However, they will face a resurrected Savior as judge and give an account of their deeds in this life. It will all come into the light of day and be exposed, to the shame of those who will not believe.

Let's keep in mind that the four Gospels are the primary documented evidence for Christ's death, burial and resurrection. We have good internal evidence for believing. These writings are emphatic that Jesus Christ's execution was a public and state-certified spectacle (**Mark 15:29**).

First-Century Propaganda

The oldest argument advanced against Christ's resurrection is the intriguing theory that Christ's body was stolen. This is a significant claim. The one crowning blow to disprove Christ's resurrection would have been a public display of his body. A display of the corpse would quickly end any "myth" that was allegedly developing about the resurrection of Jesus.

Public exhumings have happened more than once in history; why didn't the rulers of first-century Judea do that? There was a good reason: Christ had been bodily resurrected. The body was gone. The Gospel account makes the most sense.

Don't forget that the rulers of Jerusalem "gave the soldiers a large sum of money" to circulate the story that Jesus' disciples stole his body (**Matthew 28:11-15**). Yet the Theft Theory, too, is indefensible, no matter who some think the robbers were. In the **first** place, if the guards were sleeping, how did they know who had stolen the body? **Second**, the Jerusalem hierarchy had outsmarted themselves — they had posted a guard to prevent this very sort of thing from happening.

What court would listen to an argument that said the home owners were asleep and their neighbor broke in and stole their stuff? We don't know what goes on while we sleep. Testimony like this would be laughed out of any court."

Skeptics are often given more attention and creditability than a believer that has faith in the resurrection and lives accordingly.

Any explanation, to be credible, must fit all the facts. The Theft Theory doesn't. The case against it is devastating. Even the existence of the New Testament church is evidence that *something* happened in Jerusalem, something no adversary could explain.

A Question of Faith

Christianity is more than a series of clever arguments. It is more than a list of intellectual debating points that can be argued back and forth. This is why the validity of the Gospel testimony does not remain at the mercy of the latest “debunking” best-seller or archaeological find in the Middle East. In the end, Christianity rests on faith, faith based on a living and ongoing relationship with Jesus Christ, a living Savior! (Excerpts from Neil Earle's article from Grace Communion International.)

Full Public Scrutiny

More from Neil Earle

The apostles faced the test of informed public opinion, a jury of their contemporaries. Some in their audiences already had Jesus' blood on their hands. The execution of one or two more fishermen from Galilee wouldn't make much difference.

Yet the disciples had unconquerable confidence. Their words still pulsate with moral fervor and authority. The good news of the resurrection was big news on the streets of Jerusalem. It was hard-hitting. It was effective. It changed lives.

“Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know,” Peter trumpeted (**Acts 2:22**). “God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ” (**verse 36**).

This bold preaching threw the Jerusalem religious hierarchy completely on the defensive. “You have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are

determined to make us guilty of this man's blood," they protested (**Acts 5:28**).

If the disciples had been perpetrating fraud or deceit, their testimony could have been easily overthrown. It wasn't. The willingness to risk all for the truth of the resurrection was convincing testimony from fallible human beings—men who had earlier deserted Christ and fled (**Matthew 26:56**). That willingness, and the powerful miracles being done in Christ's name, made the gospel compelling. It rocked Jerusalem.

No wonder Christ's newly energized disciples were "highly regarded by the people" (**Acts 5:13**). Remember something else: Other popular movements had come and gone in first-century Judea. Sensational leaders had arisen before Jesus of Nazareth, people the world at large has forgotten (**verses 35-39**). One of them, Judas, was also a Galilean, who lived not far from where Jesus was reared.

Around A.D. 6, Judas gathered a following and set himself against the Roman power. His movement failed and he was killed. But no one in the first century claimed that this Judas of Galilee was raised from the dead or that he and his followers had many prolonged talks after a resurrection. Still less did anyone risk life and limb for the Judas movement years afterward. Yet ordinary human beings risked their all for Jesus of Nazareth.

Without belief in His resurrection, faith in Jesus Christ is meaningless: "And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty" (**1 Corinthians 15: 14**). It is only through the resurrection of Christ that the believer has a justified hope for eternal life, because the resurrection has made it possible to undo death and the resulting separation between mankind and God which was caused by Adam's fall into sin (**1 Corinthians 15: 21-22**).

Reasons To Rejoice In The Empty Tomb

Kurt Skelly, Sr. Pastor, Harvest Baptist Church

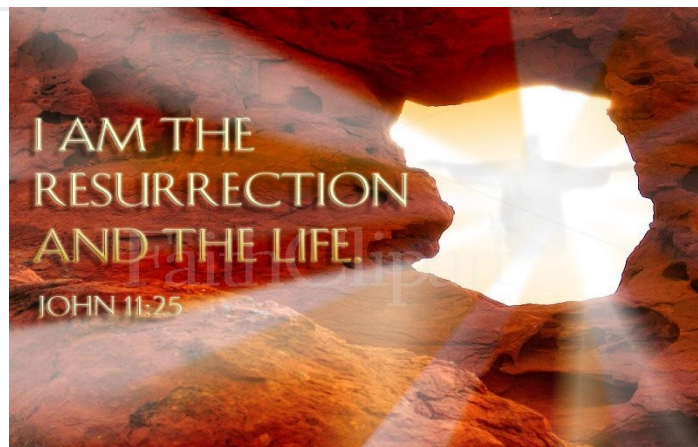
Proof of Salvation...The Resurrection validated the claims of Jesus and provided ultimate credibility to His person. Because the Resurrection offers such proof, we can believe His message; moreover, we

can belong to the Master (i.e. we can take Him at His simple word and be saved!).

Power over Sin...Paul lamented that a man, minus the power of God, has no hope of living in spiritual victory. Indeed, power over sin in our own strength is assuredly an exercise in futility. But the Resurrection power of Jesus Christ—the new life He provided to believers—enables us to live in victory over the enslaving power of sinful flesh as we reckon ourselves to be alive unto God through Jesus Christ. For the believer, power over sin is a bona fide possibility that is effectual by faith.

Purpose for Serving...Think about it—because of our resurrection life in Christ we are connected with the Lord. By His Spirit He indwells us. We are partakers of His divine nature! In the words of Alfred Ackley, “I serve a risen Saviour. He’s in the world today. I know that He is living whatever men may say. I see His hand of mercy. I hear His voice of cheer, and just the time I need Him, He’s always near!” The Resurrection means that Christ is with me and will never leave me. It means that I have a context for my life. It’s not about fifty or sixty or seventy years—it’s about eternity and living my life with that eternity in view.

Promise of Security...Based upon the fact that Jesus Christ rose from the dead, we who trust in Him will rise too! God assures us of this by His teaching on firstfruits. The earliest ripened fruit, vegetable, or grain serves as a harbinger of the main harvest to follow. Christ arose and provided the sure hope that—in Him—we can all have confident hope of a glorified body. (Sounds good to me! My body tends to ache a bit more with every passing year!) I don’t know much about what tomorrow holds, but I am profoundly grateful—whatever speed bumps lie in the way—that the truth about my future includes a perfection in Christ forever!



Present-Tense

Benefits of Jesus' Resurrection

Mike Shrever of *Chrisma Magazine*

1) Deliverance From Spiritual Death... “But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)” (**Eph. 2:4-5**). Read those two verses carefully again. When Jesus came out of the grave, believers were delivered from spiritual death right then.

We were “made alive together with Christ,” resurrected from the grips of sin. When we received the resurrected Savior in our hearts, He began the resurrection process. Just like Adam in his fallen state died spiritually and then began dying physically, so believers are resurrected first spiritually on their way to a complete physical resurrection at the coming of the Lord. God puts a “new spirit” within us (**Ezek. 36:26**).

2) Restoration of Spiritual Breath... After Jesus arose from the dead, He appeared in the upper room and “breathed” on His disciples, saying, “Receive the Holy Spirit” (**John 20:22**). This was a restoration of what Adam lost in the beginning. The Bible explains that “the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being (a living soul)” (**Gen. 2:7 NKJV/KJV**).

After the rebellion, Adam and Eve lost the breath of God. They may have retained breath naturally, but not spiritually. God does not breathe oxygen and other gaseous vapors; God “breathes” His own divine essence. The word inspiration means “to breathe into.”

When Adam sinned, he lost divine breath in his spirit, so he could no longer live an “inspired” life—full of divine wisdom, knowledge and love. Jesus came out of the grave with the passion to restore this breath of inspiration, to breathe into us the life-giving attributes of God’s character and image, and to make us “living souls” once again.

3) Justification And Righteousness... **Romans 4:25** reveals that Jesus was “delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.” To be “justified” means to be legally acquitted of all guilt and reckoned righteous, as if we never sinned. What an amazing truth!

“As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us” (**Ps. 103:12**). Because of what Jesus did, God has made us righteous in His sight, given us “the gift of righteousness” and even named us “the righteousness of God in Christ” (**Rom. 5:17; 2 Cor. 5:21**).

4) Hope... Peter launched his first epistle with the statement of praise, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” (**1 Pet. 1:3**). At one time, we had “no hope, without God in this world” (**Eph. 2:12**). Then “the God of hope” filled us “with all joy and peace in believing” (**Rom. 15:13**).

Hope is desire married to expectation. The most hopeless scenario in this world is death, but because Jesus conquered death and gave His people the gift of immortality, we have endless, boundless hope—in every situation.

5) Healing... **Malachi 4:2** prophesies of the resurrection with wonderful imagery: “But to you who fear My name the Son of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings.” He was a healer before the resurrection, before the complete price was paid for us.

How much more did He come out of the grave with a passion and power to heal us completely—body, mind, soul and spirit. He is Yahweh-Rapha (“the Lord our healer”), the Great Physician, who now presents to every human being the invitation, “Do you desire to be made whole?” (**John 5:6**).

6) Peace, Wholeness And Prosperity... After Jesus arose from the dead, He appeared to His disciples several times, greeting them with the word “Peace.” (Most likely, He actually spoke the Hebrew word “Shalom.”) Shalom is a rich spiritual term with multiple meanings, including peace, rest, welfare, health, wholeness, happiness and prosperity in every area of life. The “chastisement of our peace [Hebrew: shalom] was upon Him” (**Is. 53:5**).

In other words, He went through the mind-piercing pain of Calvary, crowned with thorns, so we could experience being crowned with life. Now “He is our peace” and we have received “peace with God,” “peace from God” and the “peace of God that passes understanding” (**Eph. 2:14; 2 Cor. 1:2; Phil. 4:7**).

7) Daily Renewal... Second Corinthians 4:16 encourages those who are troubled: “Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.” The cells in our physical bodies are constantly renewed by fresh blood removing death-dealing toxins and infusing every cell with life-giving oxygen from the lungs and nutrients from the digestive system. So it is with our spirits.

The blood of Jesus flows through us constantly, removing the toxin of the lower nature and infusing us with the resurrection life of the Word and the Spirit, constantly renewing our status of victory and righteousness. This is a “mini-resurrection” on a personal and spiritual level that takes place over and over again all day long, as we abide under Jesus’ lordship. No wonder, “No weapon formed against you shall prosper” (**Is. 54:17**).

8) Ultimate Victory and Total Dominion... Let’s end with the scripture passage we began with, yet adding the verse that follows: “But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and has raised us up together and made us sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus” (**Eph. 2:4-6**).

To be raised up to sit together with Christ is to be enthroned with Him in a position of power, authority, rest, victory and dominion. He has made our enemies our footstool. All things are under His feet, and now all things are under our feet as well. This is the restoration of the dominion Adam and Eve lost in the beginning, and this speaks of absolute victory over every negative we face in this world—not just historically and not just futuristically, but right here, right now. Yes, “this is the victory that overcomes the world—our faith” (**1 John 5:4**).

More Benefits of The Resurrection

David Roach, Chief National Correspondent
Baptist Press, Nashville, Tn.

Christ's resurrection frees His people from the fear of death... (Hebrews 2:15). This is a present benefit of the promise of future resurrection, allowing us to confess with Paul, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (**Philippians 1:21**).

The resurrection allows believers to experience Christ's personal presence.... After Jesus charged His followers to "make disciples of all nations," He promised, "And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (**Matthew 28:19-20**). There is a tangible friendship with Christ that only His followers know—a friendship not possible with a dead man. This personal fellowship is the subject of much Christian hymnody. For example, "And He walks with me, and He talks with me, and He tells me I am His own."

The resurrection enables believers to overcome the power of sin.... We were "dead in trespasses and sins," captives to our own selfish desires (**Ephesians 2:1-3**). But God "made us alive together with Christ" (**Ephesians 2:4**). As Paul writes elsewhere, we are "united with him in a resurrection like his ... so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin" (**Romans 6:5-6**). The resurrection displays the magnitude of power available to Christians in their struggle against sin (**Romans 8:11**).

The resurrection motivates us to turn away from sin (Colossians 3:1)... Because God regards Christians as united with Christ in His resurrection, we should act like people who are spiritually alive and "put to death therefore what is earthly in [us]: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness" (**Colossians 3:5**).

The resurrection inspires endurance in times of persecution... Revelation 7 pictures the risen Lord as a shepherd to those who have endured persecution for their faith. "He will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eye" (**Revelation 7:17**). This promise is for Christian martyrs in Iran and Nigeria as much as it is for the preacher in Indiana who is ridiculed for affirming traditional marriage and students at a secular university who is belittled for challenging Darwinism.

The resurrection lends credibility to the entire New Testament...In order to be regarded as New Testament Scripture, the early church required that a book be written or endorsed by an apostle. One criterion of an apostle was that he had personally seen Jesus following the resurrection. Had these men lied about seeing Jesus, all of their moral teachings would have been compromised. But because they had truly seen Christ, they could pronounce, "Thus saith the risen Lord."

The Tearing of The Temple Curtain

Rev. Perry A Hess

Christians throughout history have placed their faith, as well as the reason and foundation of that faith, in the crucifixion and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. At the end of his execution, when Jesus "gave up his spirit", Matthew tells us "...the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom...",(Mt.27:51).This tearing of the temple curtain, though often overlooked, plays an important part in the New Testament salvation of men and the development of the church.

The tearing of the curtain is a sign that God gave to the people showing just what was taking place on Calvary. The tearing of the curtain substantiated every claim Jesus ever made about Himself, as did every miracle he performed. But further, it substantiated every miracle Jesus ever worked. It substantiated every healing and every resurrection He ever commanded. In all, it proves Jesus was who he claimed to be, the very Son of God, the Creator. Notice the words of Matthew as he relates this to us in his gospel.

He says the curtain was torn "from top to bottom". Now the tearing of this curtain by a man would be a great feat. We have all seen people attempt to tear a telephone directory in half. It is practically impossible, for the book is much too thick. The tearing of this curtain would be roughly equivalent as it too was very thick. Note that not only was the curtain torn, but that it was torn "from top to bottom". This shows us who it was that did the tearing, God! Not only could this not have been done by mere human strength, but it was done as if the curtain tore itself, beginning at the top, out of man's reach, and ending at the bottom. The tear began at the top signifying God as the one who tore the curtain. God tore the curtain to show His utter displeasure and judgment on the Jewish people.

Now, there are serious repercussions to this act. The temple was considered to be the holy place in the mind of the Jew. Any judgment or destruction of the temple surely meant the final end of the world. The Jew could not fathom the idea of the temple's destruction, or of God's displeasure with them. The prevailing attitude of the Jew was "We are Israel, God's chosen people. Surely He would not deal harshly with us".

But God had ripped the un-rippable curtain to show He had indeed judged Israel and as a result had abandoned the temple forever. Jesus, in **Matthew 23:38** declared "Your house is left unto you *desolate*". Before this, Jesus had considered the temple as God's house, but no longer. The temple had become "*Your house*". God had forsaken the temple. He had indeed turned his back on the Jewish nation to focus on the Gentiles and the establishment of His church.

Finally, the tearing of the curtain is proof positive of Jesus statement "It is finished" (**John 19:30**). He was not speaking of his life here, nor of his ministry, but of the work of salvation. As Christ hung on the cross and died, Satan was bound, sin was put away and the debt of the sinner was paid in full. None of Christ's chosen throughout history would ever have to pay the death penalty for their sin.

DEATH!? Would a loving God really impose such a harsh penalty? Indeed He would, He must! Sin is a crime against all that God stands for, yea even the very nature of God. "***Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.***" **Ezekiel 18:4**

Man was created in the image of God and when we sinned that first time in the garden, that image of God in us was invaded and became deformed. Man died spiritually. God's image in man became polluted and corrupted with sin and colored with evil intentions. Sin so invaded the being of man so as to render him helpless and hopeless and unable to do or will in favor of God's will. This sin causes a debt to the holy God so large that it can *never* be paid by ourselves.

Hell lasts for eternity because the debt we owe is so great and it must be paid. Those in eternal punishment are paying this debt they owe. BUT, as we saw earlier, the work of salvation is finished. Jesus paid this debt for His

elect. He purchased salvation and gave it to those He loved. We have been redeemed! Our debt has been paid and canceled by Christ Jesus and we receive it as a gift of God's wonderful grace.

The story, however, does not end here. We cannot leave Christ on the cross, for a religion that does is a fruitless religion. Christ resurrected is our centerpiece. The One who rose is our strength, our power. The resurrection is that in which we glory!

Conclusion

“But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.” **Romans 8:11**

This is a great verse because it tells us about us. Here's what it says:

1. Our mortal bodies will be made alive.
2. The Holy Spirit will dwell in us.
3. We will also be raised from the dead.

All of this is predicated on the word, “If”. The Apostle Paul says **if** that same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead dwell in you. This means that all the benefits of His resurrection do not apply unless that same Spirit dwells in us.

I guess that will be my closing question to all who read this eBook. Does that same Spirit dwell in you that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead? If in fact He does dwell in you, He will also raise you from the dead and make you alive to the things of God.

Romans 8:16 tells us that, “The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.” If He has not borne witness with your spirit, you, my friend, are not saved. You may be a member of a church, a professional community leader or a very good person but you still do not have the Holy Spirit of God dwelling in you. You would know if you did.

My suggestion is to read **John 3:16** and that entire third chapter and follow Jesus' instructions. God loves you and has an open door for you to attain His eternal grace. It's up to you.