

“Easter: Resurrection and Reward”

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Scripture

1 Corinthians 15:3-19

“For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and

that (1) He appeared to Cephas, then (2) to the twelve. After that (3) He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep; then (4) He appeared to James, then (5) to all the apostles; and Last of all, as to one untimely born, (6) He appeared to me also.

9For I am the least of the apostles, and not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God, I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me. Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

12Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, **how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?** But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then **our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain.**

Moreover, **we are even found to be false witnesses of God**, because we testified against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised; and **if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins.** Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, **we are of all men most to be pitied.**”

He Is Risen! He is Risen, Indeed!

The Necessity of the Gospel

1 Corinthians 15:3-4

“For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures”

We were dead in our sins...

Ezekiel 18:20

“**The person who sins will die.** The son will not bear the punishment for the father’s iniquity, nor will the father bear the punishment for the son’s iniquity; the righteousness of the righteous will be upon himself, and **the wickedness of the wicked will be upon himself**”

Psalm 51:5

“Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and **in sin my mother conceived me.**”

How can a baby not be perfect?

Matthew 5:48 -> You must be perfect to get into Heaven!

Genesis 25 -> Jacob and Esau were **fighting for control inside Rachel’s womb**

We needed to be rescued from sin

Ephesians 2:3

“We, too, all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were **by nature children of wrath**, even as the rest.”

Romans 3:23

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...”

Romans 6:23

“For the wages of sin is death...”

The Necessity of the Son’s Coming

We needed someone to take our place

We needed a perfect, sinless sacrifice

Romans 8:1-3

“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, **God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin**”

1 Peter 2:22-24

“Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, **WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS ANY DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH**; and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously; and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin”

John 3:16

“For God so loved the world, He gave His only Son”

1 John 4:9

“This is how God’s love was revealed among us: **God sent His one and only Son into the world, so that we might live through Him.**”

Romans 5:8-10

“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that **while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us**. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. For if while 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**”

If God looks at you, and you’re not perfect, He sees sin -> your destination is Hell.

Ah, but if He looks at you and sees Jesus’s righteousness -> your destination is Heaven.

The Surety of the Resurrection

Sadducees did not believe in Resurrection

Resurrection Prophesied in the Old Testament

Psalm 16:8-11

“I have set the LORD continually before me; Because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore, my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will dwell securely. For **You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; Nor will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.** You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.”

Daniel 12:2

“Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt.”

The New Testament -> Example Resurrection (Lazarus)

John 11:38-44

“Jesus, again being deeply moved within, came to the tomb. Now it was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. Jesus said, “**Remove the stone.**” Martha, the sister of the deceased, said to Him, “Lord, by this time there will be a stench, for he has been dead four days.” Jesus said to her, “Did I not say to you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?” So, they removed the stone. Then Jesus raised His eyes, and said, “Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. “I knew that You always hear Me; but because of the people standing around I said it, so that they may believe that You sent Me.” When He had said these things, He cried out with a loud voice, “**Lazarus, come forth.**” The man who had died came forth, bound hand and foot with wrappings, and his face was wrapped around with a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Unbind him, and let him go.”

The Witnesses to the Resurrection

At least eight (8) recorded appearances in the Bible

1 Corinthians 15:5-8 (6 listed in this passage)

“That (1) He appeared to Cephas, then (2) to the twelve. After that (3) He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep; then (4) He appeared to James, then (5) to all the apostles; and Last of all, as to one untimely born, (6) He appeared to me also”

Others: The Road to Emmaus with two disciples (Luke 24); the Ascension (Acts 1)

The Necessity of the Resurrection

1 Corinthians 15:12-19

“Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, **how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?** But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then **our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain.**

Moreover, **we are even found to be false witnesses of God**, because we testified against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised; and **if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins**. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, **we are of all men most to be pitied.**"

Sadducees

Most of the priests were Sadducees including the High Priests Annas and Caiaphas.

Sadducees only believed in the Torah, the first five books of the Bible.

They rejected the supernatural including demons, angels, Heaven, and Hell.

They also did not believe in the Resurrection.

They believed in what they could see and touch in the here and now.

Not surprisingly then, some of the Sadducees had made it to Corinth and were influencing the teaching there which is why Paul wrote, "**how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?**"

The text is simple to understand here. Paul is being extremely logical in his argument.

If you don't believe in Resurrection -> How can you believe that Jesus was raised from the dead?

We're a bunch of liars if He hasn't been raised ("false witnesses")

Jesus is also a liar, if He hasn't been resurrected...

John 11:23-27 -> **Before Lazarus is Raised**

"Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus said to her, "**I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies**, and **everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die**. Do you believe this?" She said to Him, "Yes, Lord; I have believed that You are the Christ, the Son of God, even He who comes into the world."

If He hasn't been raised, then you're wasting your time in church because our preaching is in vain.

Not only is our preaching in vain, **but the Corinthian's faith is in vain.**

It's literally a waste of time to follow Christ with the expectation of Heaven.

Worse than that, however, Paul wrote that **"if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins."**

You have no Savior to pay the penalty of your sins.

Why? Because Jesus, the sinless sacrifice, was your only hope!

If He's not raised, then you have no hope of being acceptable to God and therefore Hell is your future home.

"Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished."

Those who have died already, and already living in Hell.

"If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied."

If we have sacrificed our lives to follow Christ, being persecuted, gone without, lived to ministering to others, what a waste of time! **We should be pitied because we fell for a ruse!** If you don't believe in Heaven or Hell, you can understand why some people don't understand why we believe what we believe, right?

The Response to the Resurrection

1 Corinthians 15:9-11

"For I am the least of the apostles, and not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God, I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me. Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed"

Paul shows humility – how can he forgive himself when he persecuted the church?

Paul labored more than every other Apostle...

2 Corinthians 11:23-28

"I more so; in far more labors, in far more imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death. Five times I received from the Jews **thirty-nine lashes. Three times I was **beaten with rods**, once I was **stoned**, three times I was **shipwrecked**, a night and a day I have spent in the deep. I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren; I have been **in labor and****

hardship, through **many sleepless nights**, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. Apart from such external things, there is the daily pressure on me of concern for all the churches.”

Persecution grows the church because the world sees endurance through difficulty. It HAS to be real if someone is going to give up their very life for the mission of Christ!

2 Timothy 1:8-12

“Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but **join with me in suffering for the gospel** according to the power of God, who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, but **now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel**, for which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher. For this reason, **I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed**; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day”

Paul was **SURE** that Jesus would guard him through the day of resurrection!

The Reward of Believing and Being in the Resurrection

A Mediator in Jesus

Romans 8:34

“Who is he who condemns? **It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen**, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us”

Steadfast Hope

1 Thessalonians 4:13

“But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow **as others who have no hope**”

Eternal Life -> John 11:25-26 -> “I am the Resurrection and the Life”

1 Thessalonians 4:14

“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so **God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus**”

New, Incorruptible Body

Philippians 3:20-21

“For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, **who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body**”

Prayer for Salvation

Benediction