

**"Why is the Resurrection so Important?"**

**1 Corinthians 15:1-58**

**Introduction:** The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the greatest event in the history of the world. It is the event that separates Christianity from all other religions. We worship a living Savior while all other religions worship dead people. Today I want to take you on a journey to help you to see just how important the resurrection is for our Christian lives. If I could use one word it would be, "HOPE." The resurrection is the basis for our eternal hope.

Today we are going to look at 1 Corinthians 15 which is often referred to as the Resurrection Chapter.

**I. Background**

There was a reason Paul wrote this chapter. This church that placed little value in the Truth of God's Word had allowed false teachers to lead them down a path of doctrinal error.

**Notice 1 Corinthians 15:12**

Something had been taught that had caused them to reject the Doctrine of the Resurrection. What was it? They had accepted what was known as Dualism. This was the teaching that everything physical was bad. Those who taught Dualism believed that sin was to blame on the body. If they sinned with their words, then it was the fault of the tongue. So they saw everything in the physical as being bad. So if everything physical is bad then they believed that there could not possibly be a resurrection of the body because the body was physical, and it was bad. So this church had adopted Dualism, and some had come to the place where they were denying the resurrection.

When Paul was at Athens he preached and ended his sermon by referencing the resurrection. Let us notice the response.

**Acts 17:22, 31-32**

<sup>22</sup> *Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious.*

<sup>31</sup> *Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.*

<sup>32</sup> *And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter.*

Here we see the response was to mock Paul because he spoke of the resurrection. These people were following Dualism.

So, the church at Corinth had allowed Dualism to creep in and some were denying the resurrection and there was another negative result.

### **1 Corinthians 4:8**

<sup>8</sup> *Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you.*

These people believed they were in the Kingdom. Therefore, they did not see the need for a future resurrected body.

Getting back to 1 Corinthians 15 then, Paul writes this chapter to show the problems with that kind of thinking.

## **II. Past Problems**

### **Notice 1 Corinthians 15:1-4**

To deny the resurrection is to shred the message of the Gospel. The Gospel is that Jesus died, was buried, and was resurrected. If you strip away the resurrection all we have is that He died and was buried.

I want you to also notice that Paul says it was according to the Scriptures. This was not a reference to the New Testament Scriptures because they were still being written. This is a reference to the Old Testament Scriptures.

### **Psalm 16:9-11**

<sup>9</sup> *Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope.*

<sup>10</sup> *For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.*

<sup>11</sup> *Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.*

These verses speak of Jesus Christ and His resurrection. To take away the resurrection is to cast great doubt on the accuracy of the Old Testament. Those of the Old Testament had hope in the resurrection.

Job 19:25-27

<sup>25</sup> *For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:*

<sup>26</sup> *And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:*

<sup>27</sup> *Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.*

Notice 1 Corinthians 15:5-8

Paul now points to the eye witnesses of the resurrection. For those who choose to deny the resurrection they could walk in town and ask some of these people.

### III. Present Problems

As Paul continues in this chapter, he will now give a list of major problems that arise when denying the resurrection.

If there is no resurrection:

1. Then Jesus is not God.

Notice 1 Corinthians 15:13

If Jesus was not resurrected, then death overpowered Him. If Jesus was not resurrected, then He was not God and if He was not God then we have no Savior. God is the only One who qualified to be the Savior of the world.

2. Then preaching is vain, and faith is vain.

Notice 1 Corinthians 15:13-14

If there is no resurrection, then Jesus is still in the grave, and all the preaching of the Apostles was empty, and the faith of the believers was also empty. In other words if there is no resurrection then we are wasting our time following Christianity and even gathering together this morning.

Living a life of self-denial is all for nothing without the resurrection. We would be better off going out and living for the world. We should just eat, drink and be merry because tomorrow we will perish.

3. Then the Bible is a book of lies.

Notice 1 Corinthians 15:15

If there is no resurrection, then the Apostles are all liars, and their writings are all false. Therefore we cannot trust in the Bible because the Apostles wrote much of it. The promises that we cling to for comfort are not to be trusted. If the resurrection is not true, then how do we know that we can believe any of the Bible?

**4. Then we are all lost.**

**Notice 1 Corinthians 15:16-17**

Paul reminds them here that if Jesus is in the grave, they are all still in their sins and so are we.

The resurrection is proof that God the Father accepted the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for our sins.

**1 John 2:1-2**

*My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:*

<sup>2</sup> *And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*

Jesus satisfied the righteous demands of the Father on our behalf and the resurrection is proof of this.

**5. Then there is no hope of seeing our loved ones who died in Christ.**

**Notice 1 Corinthians 15:18**

If Jesus is not resurrected, then we will never see our loved ones again. But because He lives, we can be sure we will again be united with them.

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

<sup>13</sup> *But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.*

<sup>14</sup> *For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.*

<sup>15</sup> *For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.*

<sup>16</sup> For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

<sup>17</sup> Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

<sup>18</sup> Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

#### IV. Future Problems

To deny the resurrection affects the past prophecies, and it affects the present hope. But there is more.

##### 1. Our resurrection is hinged upon Jesus' resurrection.

##### Notice 1 Corinthians 15:20-23

Jesus is the firstfruits of the resurrection. The firstfruits in the Old Testament were the beginning of the harvest. The firstfruits were proof there was a larger harvest coming. But there is more here.

##### Notice 1 Corinthians 15:23 again.

The word ORDER is very important. There are two major resurrections mentioned in the Bible.

##### Daniel 12:2

<sup>2</sup> And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

The First Resurrection is the saved and the Second Resurrection is the unsaved. Now the FIRST RESURRECTION has several parts.

- a. Jesus Christ.
- b. Church age saints at the rapture.
- c. Two witnesses middle of the tribulation.
- d. Old Testament saints and martyred tribulation saints at the end of the tribulation.

##### Revelation 20:6

<sup>6</sup> Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

##### 2. The final victory rests upon the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

**Notice 1 Corinthians 15:24-28**

Here is an interesting passage. The idea here is that Jesus Christ will reign in the Kingdom and at the end of the 1000-year Kingdom He will deliver the Kingdom to God the Father. This is when the eternal state will be ushered in.

**Revelation 21:1-6**

*And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.*

<sup>2</sup> *And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*

<sup>3</sup> *And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.*

<sup>4</sup> *And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; **and there shall be no more death,** neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.*

<sup>5</sup> *And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.*

<sup>6</sup> *And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.*

All of this is hinged upon the resurrection of Jesus Christ. If there is no resurrection, then we have none of these blessings to look forward to.

**Conclusion:**

Are you sure you are saved? Are you sure you have this hope?

**Romans 3:23**

<sup>23</sup> *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;*

You will be judged for every sin.

**Hebrews 9:27**

<sup>27</sup> *And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:*

**Romans 2:16**

<sup>16</sup> *In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.*

You cannot earn forgiveness.

**Isaiah 64:6**

<sup>6</sup> *But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.*

Jesus Christ died to pay your sin debt.

**1 Corinthians 15:3**

<sup>3</sup> *For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;*

You need to repent and accept Jesus Christ as your Savior.

**Ephesians 2:8-9**

<sup>8</sup> *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*

<sup>9</sup> *Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

**John 14:6**

<sup>6</sup> *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*