

RESURRECTION

1 CORINTHIANS 15:1-20

The Resurrection of Christ

1Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, 2and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.

3For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, 4that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, 5and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. 6Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. 7Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. 8Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. 9For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. 11Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

The Resurrection of the Dead

12Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. 14And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. 15We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. 16For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. 17And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. 18Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. 19If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.

20But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. [ESV]

04/03/16

Introduction

The epistle to the church at Corinth, written by the Apostle Paul, addresses many of the church's failures to become more "Christ like." He opens the 15th chapter addressing their misunderstanding concerning the resurrection of Christ. Later in this chapter he speaks of the bodily resurrection of all believers, both asleep or alive.

Last week we celebrated Easter with all the pageantry we could muster. The cantata spoke of the glorious resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. The church was filled with members and guests, so much so that it was almost standing room only.

Two quotes concerning the Resurrection

The tomb of Christ is famous because of what it DOES NOT CONTAIN.” - Sam Morris

“I know the resurrection is a fact, and Watergate proved it to me. How? Because 12 men testified they had seen Jesus raised from the dead, then they proclaimed that truth for 40 years, never once denying it. Everyone was beaten, tortured, stoned and put in prison. They would not have endured that if it weren’t true. Watergate embroiled 12 of the most powerful men in the world-and they couldn’t keep a lie for three weeks. You’re telling me 12 apostles could keep a lie for 40 years? Absolutely impossible.” - Charles Colson¹

We celebrated the resurrection of Jesus, but I wonder if we really understand its importance. Today I want to share four reasons why I believe the resurrection is important to every Christian.

First, the Resurrection is Important Because It Fulfills Prophecy

1 Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, 2 and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.

3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,

Apostle Paul declares that he has taught them the gospel and their salvation is a result of their belief and acceptance of the Gospel. For the word “gospel” Paul uses the classical Greek *euangelion* which confers “the reward given for good tidings.” The euangelion can be either the content of the good tidings or the act of proclaiming the good tidings.

The Apostle Paul uses *euangelion* as the message was that Christ died for sins, was buried, and arose on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures (1 Corinthians 15:1–4).

The Jews in Jesus day were looking for the Messiah. How did they miss Jesus? The Old Testament speaks of the Messiah in many passages.

- When the fullness of time has come, the Messiah will emerge as a prophet from among them (Deuteronomy 18:15).
- He will rule over the world in righteousness for eternity (Isaiah 9:5-7).
- He will be born of the tribe of David and rule on his throne, and will have wisdom and understanding to judge with meekness and righteousness. He will bring peace (Isaiah 11:1-9)
- He will bring salvation with him (Zechariah 9:9)
- His enemies will be those of his own house (Micah 7:6).
- He will gather the Jews from all over the world to the land of promise and they will worship in the fear of the Lord (Ezekiel 34:11-31; Hosea 3:4-5)
- He will carry the sorrows and burdens of the people and will be healed (Isaiah 53:1-12)
- Resurrection of the dead will arise, awake and sing (Isaiah 26:19)

¹ <http://www.whatchristianswanttoknow.com/quotes-about-the-resurrection-23-good-sayings/#ixzz44Ive1IrZ>

The resurrection is clearly taught in Isaiah 53 and Psalm 22

On the Institute of Creation Research's web site they have an article by Henry M. Morris, Ph.D. titled "Prophecies of the Resurrection." I will quote from it.

For example, consider the remarkable prophetic picture of the substitutionary death of the coming Savior in Isaiah 53. After describing His sufferings, the record says that "He was cut off out of the land of the living. . . . And He made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death" (Isaiah 53:8,9). But then it promises that "when thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin . . . He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand" (Isaiah 53:10). This prophecy can only be understood in terms of the resurrection.

Similarly, in the graphic portrayal of Christ's unspeakable sufferings by crucifixion in Psalm 22, the Scripture prophesies that He will cry in His heart that "I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. . . . thou hast brought me into the dust of death" (Psalm 22:14,15). But that is not the end, for He later testifies that: "My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation: . . . your heart shall live for ever. All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee" (Psalm 22:25-27). Again this clearly requires interpretation in terms of His resurrection after death.

A prophecy that was used by the apostles when they first began proclaiming Christ's resurrection is found in Psalm 16 (note Acts 2:25-28; 13:35-37). The first eight verses of this fascinating psalm are best understood as coming from the lips of Christ as He prayed in the garden of Gethsemane just before His arrest and crucifixion. But then He prays: "My flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Psalm 16:9-11). These verses speak poetically first of His burial, then His descent in the spirit into Hades, followed by His return into His body resting in the tomb before decay could begin, then His resurrection and ascension into heaven to be seated at the Father's right hand. This verse, incidentally, contains the first of 21 references in the Bible to His present position at the right hand of God the Father.²

The Apostle Paul encourages the believers at Corinth to consider the resurrection of the dead as part of the Gospel, the *euangelion*. For many believed that the proof that the Messiah had come would be in the fulfillment of the resurrection of the dead.

Second, the Resurrection is Important Because It Provides Salvation

12Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. 14And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. 15We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. 16For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. 17And if Christ has not been raised, your faith

² Morris, Henry M., *Institute for Creation Research*, <http://www.icr.org/article/prophecies-resurrection/>

is futile and you are still in your sins. 18Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. 19If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.

Salvation means so many different things to so many different people. For the Jewish mind in the time of Christ, it meant that the Romans would be overthrown and the Jewish kingdom would rule the world with the Messiah sitting on the throne of David.

For the Christian, salvation is not being thrown into the Lake of Fire, but instead living in heaven with God.

So the question could be asked, “Does our salvation require the death of Jesus or the resurrection of Jesus? Or could it be both? Would salvation exist if Jesus had died, and not been raised?”

In this passage, Paul makes it very clear that there is no atonement and therefore no salvation without the resurrection. If Jesus was resurrected, then the Christian can also have hope for their future resurrection.

Without the resurrection of Jesus the prophecies would not have been fulfilled in Jesus as the Christ. Jesus would simply be added to a long list of false messiah’s. Hope would be lost as we would still be in our sins. Jesus is just a false messiah.

The truth is simple; our salvation was not provided by Jesus’ cross. Our salvation required Jesus’ resurrection. Simply put, as horrible a death that Jesus had to endure, was not enough for salvation to be enjoyed. Christ took upon himself the sins of the world as the “sweet smelling offering” that would assuage God’s wrath. But the ultimate enemy He had to overcome and defeat was death itself.

Thirdly, the Resurrection is Important Because It Guarantees Our Resurrection

20 But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. 21 For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. 23 But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ.

The resurrection of Jesus, the firstfruits, serves as the deposit and guarantee of the Christians resurrection. Without the resurrection of the Christ, there can be no resurrection of the believer. However, because Jesus, the Messiah, rose from the dead, the Christian is guaranteed to also be raised from the dead.

Fourth, the Resurrection is Important Because It Defeats Death

From the time we are born, death is lurking. It is always the enemy. Death of the body is guaranteed.

Hebrews 9:27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

Death is a result of sin entering God’s creation. It is the curse that God placed upon mankind for disobedience. From the point sin entered the earth, everything begins to decay and death is immanent.

Hallelujah, Jesus defeated death with His resurrection. Death could not hold or keep him. And for those that are believers in Christ, death has no hold on you either. Oh, we will all go through the first death, the death of the body. But Christians will not have to go through the second death, the punishment for the rejection of Christ will be carried out by God and those that do not believe, will be cast into hell.

Conclusion

The Resurrection is Important Because It Fulfills Prophecy

The Resurrection is Important Because It Provides Salvation

The Resurrection is Important Because It Guarantees Our Resurrection

The Resurrection is Important Because It Defeats Death

He is Risen! Maranatha!

03/27/16 He's Alive Matthew 27-28:1-10