

### Why #3 - Why The Resurrection?

1 Corinthians 15:1-8, 14-15, 17-18, 20-23

#### Introduction:

A few decades after the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, the Apostle Paul posed a sobering proposition -

- *“If Christ be not risen...”* 15:14
- *“If Christ be not raised...”* 15:17

#### What a terrifying thought!

**One of the best ways to acknowledge value of pretty much anything is to imagine life without it. That’s exactly what Paul did.**

In the first few verses, Paul...

- Explained the **substance** of the gospel and then provided a **record of verifiable, supporting eye witness testimonies.**
- Listed the witnesses, **many who were still alive and could corroborate their testimony; some who had died for their witness.**

Then, he addresses the question the world still asks today...

#### **Why does it matter?**

That is the question we ask, and God answers, this morning.

Paul was writing to address **CONFLICT** concerning the resurrection.

#### **I. The Conflict.**

**The resurrection is the most furiously attacked aspect of the gospel:**

- Most will accept that **there was a historical Jesus**
- Most will accept many of the **things He taught**
- Most will even agree that **He was crucified...**

**But: That’s where the battle really begins.**

The totality of **the gospel- the power of God unto Salvation** – is **the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus!**

***Kill Him and put Him in a tomb*** – no problem.

But Satan knows, and even they knew, that if Jesus did rise again and is alive –

- Everything changes.
- Nothing else matters.
- No other person, program or pursuit is relevant
- If it is true, Jesus is everything He claimed. Jesus is, God.  
Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life – and there is no other!

## **II. The Case For The Resurrection.**

**A. God's Plan:** Just as **the cross, the Lamb slain for the sins of the world**, had been God's plan before the foundation of the world – **The resurrection was also just as much a part!**

### **B. Prophecies told of the resurrection!**

Numerous Old Testament passages prophesy that **Jesus would not stay dead**, that He would rise again. Let me share two -

Job: 19:

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

26. And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:

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

David: Psalm 16:10 (Re: by Peter on Pentecost!)- ***“For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.***

### **C. Proclamations in the New Testament!**

#### **1. In the Incarnation, the angel told Mary – Luke 1-**

31. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.

32. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and **the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:**

**33. And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.**

#### **2. Jesus shared two metaphors they all understood -**

**Jonah: Matthew 12**

**40. For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.**

**The Temple:**

John 2

19. Jesus answered and said unto them, **Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.**

21. But he spake of the temple of his body.

**Those words stuck – The people remembered and repeated His words, mocking Him as He hung on the cross: Matthew 27**

39. And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads,

40. And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.

**The Jews who had Him crucified remembered and were concerned about His promise of resurrection: Matthew 27**

63. Saying, Sir, **we remember** (The disciples didn't even remember but they did!) that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again.

**3. Jesus gave them specifics details on at least three separate occasions - Matthew 16:21, 17:22-23, and 20:18-19.**

**Matthew 20**

18. Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be **betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death,**

19. And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and **the third day he shall rise again.**

**D. Then – there was a problem. A huge Problem.**

**Jesus died - exactly as God planned and Scriptures said He would.**

**Brutally, before their eyes, and for all the world to see.**

- What they saw gripped them. Was for the moment more real than what Jesus had said.
- He was buried, and with Him their hopes.

**Death. Doubt. Fear. Ruled their hearts.**

**That Sunday morning – no one was there waiting!**

**No one believed. It was beyond their ability.**

The only thing **real to them** was **the death and darkness** which gripped their souls.

**The problem was real, but didn't change the promises and couldn't stop the process God put in motion!**

#### **E. The Process.**

\*\*\*For me, it is one of the most incredible aspects of the whole story!

**Sunday came. Just as He said!**

- **It wasn't their belief that made it happen; It happened and gave them something to believe!**

**Let's join the process that unfolded that Sunday...**

- The angel proclaimed before an empty tomb - "**He is not here; He is risen!**"
- Even then, **they found it hard to believe.**
- **Slowly, they moved beyond the words of others to experience the wonder themselves!**
  - The women.
  - Mary.
  - The Disciples.
  - The encounter on the road to Emmaus.
  - That First Sunday Night Worship.
  - Breakfast on the beach of Galilee.

**Jesus...**

Came to them. Spoke to them. Offered for them to touch the scars –  
**whatever they needed to believe.**

He taught them. Ate with them.

Then ascended before their eyes.

**They never got over it. In fact, they became witnesses.**

Not scholars or theologians. **Living witnesses that told the world Jesus lives – and they had experienced Him!**

Perhaps what the world needs now is not more theologians or doctrinal gurus, but just people who have met and experienced Jesus. People who can testify to the world that He lives and demonstrate the excitement and change in their lives.

**So - Why The Resurrection? Why is it so important?**

### **III. The Conclusion**

#### **#1 . The Resurrection's Proof.**

Romans 1:4 - *And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:*

**1. Scripture had told them He would rise again – *It was either wrong and therefore untrustworthy, or absolute!***

***Every promise, every word - worthy of our faith!***

**2. Jesus told them that He would rise again!**

He was either a lunatic, a liar, **Or God.**

**Everything He claimed to be, everything He promised, hinged upon His resurrection.**

- *That morning... no one was there.*
- *No one believed. It was just more than they could grasp.*

- *Even that day, as reports came in, they thought people were a little crazy... Suffering delusions...*

**Jesus – risen, alive – is the ultimate answer to every question and every doubt!**

## **#2. The Provision of Eternal Salvation!**

Jesus:

- *“If I be lifted up I will draw all men unto me”*
- *“whosoever believeth on him shall not perish but have eternal life”*

Paul to the Corinthians – *“If Jesus be not risen...”* – Nothing! NO HOPE!!

Paul- To The Romans –

- *“I am not ashamed of the gospel... it is the power of God unto salvation”* 1:16
- *“... the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord”* 6:23

**Anyone can claim to be the Savior.**

**Only one walked out of His grave to prove it.**

## **3. The Power Of The Resurrected Christ**

**Jesus is not just alive forever. The One who walked out of that grave works in the lives of everyone who knows Him!**

Paul wrote to the new believers of Colosse of– **“Christ in you... the hope of glory!”** 1:27

**“Christ in you” - His presence brings us the power to think right... live right... experience the “glorious” in every aspect of our lives!**

**“It is God which worketh in you both to will and do of His good pleasure”**  
**Phil. 2:13**

We’re out of time. Are there others answers to – “Why the resurrection?” Of course. But let’s end with one final answer...

#### **#4. The prospect:**

- Beyond the cross, beyond the grave was a **tomb that was empty!**
- Jesus said, **“Because I live, you shall live also!”**
- **Beyond the grave of every believer, there is life that will never end!**  
Later, in this chapter, as Paul finalizes his resurrection comments,
  - He observes – Death – swallowed up of life! Death was defeated!
  - He taunts – “Death – Where is thy sting? Grave – where is thy victory!”

**Jesus not only said He would rise again, but that He would come back again!**

**Crazy? Impossible?**

Sure... **but not any crazier –**

- Than God being born in a manger in Bethlehem
- Than God dying on a cross
- Than Jesus walking out of the tomb alive forever!

***Is He Alive? Yes!***

***Really? Is that just words... information – or...***

***Is the living Christ simply a doctrine you believe...  
or a Savior you walk with every day?***

***Have we, like them, moved from just words that we’ve heard to wonder that captures us?***

***“I serve a risen Savior, 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!  
He Lives! He Lives! Christ Jesus lives today...  
You ask me how I know He lives. He lives within my heart!”***