

The Resurrection: Real News for Real Life

Easter Sunday, April 1, 2018 – Brad Bailey

Intro

I have to admit...a part of me is a bit of a news junkie. I like catching the news for a bit each day. Not so much just for the information...but like reflecting on how our culture thinks about things. So I check in across all the networks. If you tend to watch much news...

Has anyone else noticed that in the past year...particularly on CNN...there is **nearly always** the banner **“Breaking News.”** [1]

I find that it draws a moment of attention...BUT...then I realize...that wasn't really THAT important. When my day ends...it really reflect something that changed my world that much. Just this week television interview host Larry King, who left mainstream news station a few years ago... challenged his former news station and said, *"Everything is breaking news. Do you notice that? Wheneverything is breaking news, what's breaking news?"*

When everything declares that it's really important...we've lost our sense for what is really significant... for what news is really big news...for what matters.

I believe this is breaking news: Jesus of Nazareth, the One who declared he was bringing the Kingdom of God to re-take our created world...and demonstrated it by healing sickness and taking authority over evil....and said he would die as a sacrifice to atone for our sins and separation from God... and give the gift of eternal life...and was then crucified on a Friday by the religious leaders and Roman Empire... has risen from the dead and is alive.

That is arguably real news... worthy stopping for. That may not fit in the ticker tape...but regardless of what you understand about it... it has the potential to change everything.

This is real news. By “real” I am not referring to the comical bantering over “fake news”...but rather I want to **consider the nature of significance and substance. It changes everything.**

On that first morning...it didn't come as an image of the television or internet. It came in real life. As it was described in the account we heard earlier (from John's Gospel)... they arose early in the morning **while it was still dark.**

That darkness represented more than just the physical darkness. They hiked along those paths outside of town in the darkness with a sense of the darkness of this world proving to define everything. They had been awakened by the profound hope in seeing One who was greater than the powers of this world. But they had defeated him. And they did so with such cruelty and injustice... that the only way to go honor his tomb was to go when it was still dark... so they wouldn't be seen by others. One could only be left wanting to hide their association with him in the darkness.

And it was ultimately a darkness that was hanging over their whole world.

But when they arrived at the tomb...what they discovered... seemed impossible to take in.

It was too good to be true. They doubted...they wondered... and finally grasped...it was real.

Jesus was alive.

It was real news... crazy... wow..."What?"...news.

One morning something happened that changed EVERYTHING.

The darkness of their world **broke open with the dawn** of new life to their souls.

The darkness that permeated the world was pierced with the light of new life.

And that is how it began and unfolded. There was no footage being shown across the globe like we experienced on 9/11 when we all sat and watched and wondered...is this real...if it is.. what is it really about...and this changes our world. God was actually working in the world... no longer bound by one physical bodily life. He was not bound after all. Nor was their world bound by the powers of this world.

That was real news...and it spread. Though only initially able to spread among the local connections...it created a community that was bold and unwavering despite what threat of the religious establishment. So one of those religious leaders ...a man originally by the name of Saul...was taking initiative to stop this threat about the Messiah which they thought was over. He was on his way to carry out further persecution and even execution when God even furthered his own plan. Saul was confronted. He hears these words: "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

Imagine being confronted by the life you had been trying to silence.

The One you thought was RUINING your world.... was the One who RULED the world.

Imagine those you hated had been those who were actually telling the truth.

Now bearing the name Paul ... he became the Apostle Paul...one spreading the word...and he wrote these words that are now a part of the Scriptures:

1 Corinthians 15:3-8 (NLT)

I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me. Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. ⁴ He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said. ⁵ He was seen by Peter and then by the Twelve. ⁶ After that, he was seen by more than 500 of his followers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. ⁷ Then he was seen by James and later by all the apostles. ⁸ Last of all, as though I had been born at the wrong time, I also saw him.

He begins, "I passed on to you what was **most important**"... or more literally it's of "**first importance.**"

1. The Resurrection of Christ is of Real Importance ("First Importance")

Many things in life may seem important...but there is that which is of first importance.

In the comic strip, Calvin and Hobbes, Calvin is at school, and his teacher is attempting to teach the class. She begins, "If there are no questions, we will move on to the next chapter. I have a question.

Certainly Calvin, what is it?

What's the point of human existence?

I meant any questions about the subject at hand.

Oh, said Calvin frankly, I'd like to have the issue resolved before I expend any more energy on this." [2]

While I get a laugh out of Calvin's motive a part of me can also appreciate his question. Deep down, we long to settle the question: "What's the point of our human existence?" It is the ultimate questions that give meaning to each moment of life.

Paul says THIS NEWS is GOD'S ULTIMATE ANSWER TO OUR LIFE.

The very point of first importance is what **Jesus spoke so powerfully into.**

> **If you seek God first...everything else will come.**

C.S. Lewis

"Put first things first and we get second things thrown in; put second things first and we lose both first and second things." [3]

If we know what is at the center of our existence...the source the value it gives us...everything else is enjoyed for what it is. If we don't grasp that which is first...everything that is secondary will try to be primary...and we will actually lose the ability to enjoy what it could be.

It's so important to understand that...**The resurrection is the culminating demonstration to the power and proof of something larger.**

It's clear that Paul is focused on the resurrection but what is of first importance is the whole of a Messiah... Christ...Savior who dies and was buried and rose again...and all "according to the Scriptures"...which means...as part of what the Creator of the Universe had revealed.

When we hear that there was a resurrection...I can understand that sounds fascinating...but by itself...perhaps not directly life-changing.

When we hear “He is risen”... I wonder if we primarily hear the **emphasis on “RISEN”**...and while a fairly exciting thing to hear....we don’t hear the real news. **“HE is risen.”**

The real news is that HE is risen... he who God said would come sent from outside time and space... would bring liberation...would take upon himself all the weight of human separation from God... and then the death that it has led to...but then defeat it.

THAT is who has risen.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ confirmed His identity—every claim He made for Himself, every promise He gave His followers, and every judgment He delivered to the enemy.

Because this is the **culminating power and proof**... Paul says something **bold**: He says, in verse 17...

“if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless”

If it’s not true... then everything you are believing is foolish... in vain...it’s useless.

That’s a bold statement. He is saying: It’s **important to know that this is true.**

I hope you can **hear something vital** in that statement.

It matters whether it is true.

This is NOT about a sentimental... metaphorical “isn’t Springtime special”.. idea.

Next week... going to launch a series entitled: “How Can I Believe?”

In a culture in which many question the reasons for believing in God... or various related beliefs... I think that there is a need to challenge both the FEAR of such questions...and the FORCE of such questions.

I think a part of us fears the hard questions... we think we have to silence out doubts rather than engage them.

I think sometimes we think we shouldn’t have questions. We may think that it is offensive to God to wonder how something can be true? We may think others will be hurt if we wonder openly.

Jesus ...to his disciples. Thomas... look and touch

To others he said: let me help you connect the dots ... the Scriptures have spoken of what had to happen...let me help you see it.

I believe a part of believing involves honest questions.

I don't believe that we as finite creatures can ever fully understand what is infinite. I think every open hearted person accepts there is that which is not known fully by human reason alone...but I do believe that what we believe has **reasonable roots**.

I know that **some are here** for whom **this has become so true** as to **find yourself beyond question**.

But I know that **there are some here** who **wonder if this news is real**.

You may find any claim of a supernatural event a little hard to trust.

You may wonder...Couldn't this have been wishful thinking?

Couldn't this have just developed as a religious myth over a long period of time?

The second truth is that...

2. The Resurrection of Christ is rooted in real facts.

Paul says...if it's not true then all belief in vain

Why so daring?

The resurrection of Christ is rooted in real facts.

Today... we **can't fully explore all the questions**...but **let me quickly offer a few reasons** to consider the resurrection of Christ **to be true...to be real news**. [4]

Paul notes that every **one of these main truths** about Christ are "**just as the Scriptures said**"...or "**according to the Scriptures**."

What is he saying by that?

FIRST. The Resurrection of Christ is...

Rooted in recorded PREDICTION

This is not some random event.

God had spoken through the prophets and writers...of the Messiah who would come.

Throughout the Hebrew Scriptures, the promise of a Messiah is clearly given. These **messianic prophecies** were made **hundreds, sometimes thousands of years before Jesus Christ was born**, and **clearly Jesus Christ is the only person** who has **ever walked this earth to fulfill them**. [5]

Every aspect of the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus the Messiah had been prophesied in the Hebrew Scriptures long before the events ever unfolded in the timeline of human history.

It may be reasonable to question whether some random claim about a random life is really true...but this is no random event. This bears the marks of a living God first speaking into human history...and then acting in that history according to what had been foretold.

SECOND. The Resurrection of Christ is...

Rooted in historical WITNESSES

Paul is explicit here... this is **real news**...with **real witnesses**.

Notice he goes through the various list saying, **“he was seen.”**

All the accounts of the resurrection **focused on not what they felt...but what they saw.**

And elsewhere he describes how most of those lives who saw him were **still alive** even when he wrote this. **They can verify it.** Jesus was crucified in 30AD...and this letter is circulating in 54AD... so there were plenty of witnesses still alive...and plenty alive who could discredit claims of an empty tomb if it wasn't true. [6]

But there is more...

THIRD. The Resurrection of Christ is...

Rooted in historical TIME

Notice what Paul says: “I passed on to you what had also been passed on to me.”

Common rabbinic phrase...that refers to an oral creed that was being shared.

In ancient days... far less was recorded in written form due to what was involved with the creation of parchment. It would be passed along orally...and then summarized in short creeds and hymns.

Most believe that the very words we read here are one such creed.

- Mnemonic structure with parallelism
- Less than 50 words
- An early creed to help root those with something they could remember

When would Paul have received it?

During his time in Jerusalem between in 37 or 38 AD.... as early as 7 to 8 years after the resurrection. Which means what?

It means that it was **already a fact set into a creed** being received within the very first few years of the death and resurrection itself. [7]

So the idea that this is simply a myth that developed generations later...is simply not true. Those coming to believe are spreading throughout the land from the start...and Paul wrote just 25 years later...and included what was believed and accepted from the start.

If Jesus' tomb was not empty, the early Christian community could not have possibly preached the resurrection in Jerusalem where Jesus was buried.

> We have no record at all of any corrections or challenges to the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ from anyone: Roman, Jew, or other Christians.

FOURTH. The Resurrection of Christ is...

Rooted in no compelling alternative MOTIVES

What am I referring to?

One reason to doubt the testimony of all these lives would be to identify a compelling motive for why they may have made it up.

There is no reasonable motive that really makes sense. [8]

There is no compelling self-serving motive. There is **no doubt what they would face**...utter rejection by nearly all...and ultimately death.

That's not speculation... it's fact. No one can argue that **the religious and social culture of their day would be hostile**... and that the **same religious leaders and Roman government** that crucified Jesus would find **word of his being alive an even greater threat**.

Those who declare the reality of the resurrection choose the same worst fate of tortuous death that both their religious community and the Roman Empire would bring.

FIFTH and FINALLY. The Resurrection of Christ is...

Rooted in it's unprecedented IMPACT

What happened as a result of the resurrection is unprecedented in human history.

In the span of a few hundred years, a small band of seemingly insignificant believers declared a **truth that overcame the power of the Roman Empire to stop.**

And consider that the disciples are described as afraid to even be associated with him as their religious leaders turned to silence him. Now they become unstoppably bold. Most of the disciples were **martyred for their faith**. But **none of them recanted** their affirmation in order

to save their lives. Someone surely would have done so if they had even a doubt that the Resurrection was not true. [9]

The teachings of Jesus stand out as profound beyond earthly minds ... not that which can really be explained as having developed as the deceptive work of his few followers who were uneducated and socially powerless.

A transition to **gathering on Sundays emerges**... commemorating the day of the resurrection ...rather than on the Saturday, the Sabbath Day, which is a radical change from a tradition that would have been nearly impossible to change. [10]

Whatever one may not yet be clear about... but there is something that stands certain... “something happened.” Something happened that changed the lives of the disciples... “around which they had to reconstruct their lives and in relation to which they had to redirect their energies.” (NT Wright) Something happened that changed the course of history.

“If the resurrection of Christ rips a hole so wide in human history... and unleashes a force so unstoppable ... the response is generally that of alternative explanations that prove neither sound nor substantial enough to explain what happened ... or the materialist predetermination which claims to know that reality is purely material and therefore nothing of a spiritual reality can be accepted... or that of a profound discovery of a larger reality in which one enters and gives themselves to.”

This is the impact that flows from both reason and a relationship that reached out to us.

Paul goes on to describe this larger reality...

3. The Resurrection of Christ brings real change.

1 Corinthians 15: 20, 42, 44, 53-55 (NLT)

²⁰ But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead. He is the first of a great harvest of all who have died.

⁴² ... Our earthly bodies are planted in the ground when we die, but they will be raised to live forever. ...⁴⁴ They are buried as natural human bodies, but they will be raised as spiritual bodies. For just as there are natural bodies, there are also spiritual bodies.

...⁵³ For our dying bodies must be transformed into bodies that will never die; our mortal bodies must be transformed into immortal bodies. ⁵⁴ Then, when our dying bodies have been transformed into bodies that will never die, this Scripture will be fulfilled: “Death is swallowed up in victory. ⁵⁵ O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?”

This is real news of real change.

It is the power of **transformation**.

It ultimately includes a **transformation of our outer form...but it begins with a spiritual transformation**.

The Bible's declares that the **material world is not an illusion...** or inherently inferior reality...but rather that the eternal plan is that which unites matter and spirit.

The problem is SEPARATION...which is the ultimate form of death.

Back when Paul stated that if this is not true then we are left in our sin....some may think...that's not so bad...I'm OK with some sin...and those who believe don't seem so morally perfect. But Paul didn't mean that one is left with immorality...to be "left in sin" means left in the state of separation. Complete alienation from God...from all of who we were meant to be and become.

Jesus said he came to give us new life.

If **First he reconciles us**.

Then he lives within us by the Spirit...the same Spirit which created the world and originally made human life spiritual in nature.

Paul said:

Romans 8:11 (MSG)

It stands to reason, doesn't it, that if the alive-and-present God who raised Jesus from the dead moves into your life, he'll do the same thing in you that he did in Jesus, bringing you alive to himself? When God lives and breathes in you (and he does, as surely as he did in Jesus), you are delivered from that dead life. With his Spirit living in you, your body will be as alive as Christ's!

New life...and it begins with his life at work in us.

What does this transformation look like? Well, it brings an end to the death and bring the source of something new. It is the same nature...but personal. I want to invite Aaron to come share how this change has been very real in his own life.

(Share live was the following testimony)

I used to think being a Christian meant respecting Christ. I was wrong.

In the fall of 2016 I was done with life. And after many years and decades of my very

best efforts my life had become unlivable. After trying many progressive and profound ways of life, my life had become unlivable. And even though I had many blessings and reasons to live all around me, my life had become unlivable.

I looked at the list. The ways, the gurus, the methods, the promises of relief. I had tried them all. And they all had worked - for about six weeks. I could not go back to any of these, and there were no new ones that interested me. I found only one consideration that had appeal; take my boat out to sea, lock myself in the cabin below, and sink it to the bottom of the sea.

I was sitting on my boat, considering the ramifications, I looked to the East, and a crazy thought struck me; as an alternative to death at sea, maybe I'd try Jesus.

I started reading the Bible. In 2017 I read the New Testament through, from Matthew to Revelations, every month. There was power in the word and it started having affects immediately. Then I realized I needed more. I looked to the Bible to see what more I needed. The Bible said I needed prayer. I began praying, fervently and often. There was power in prayer. Still I needed more. Again I looked to the Bible to see what more I needed. The Bible said I needed fellowship. I needed the church. I needed ministry.

I started church hopping and it wasn't going well. Then I was reading about a hero of mine; he had received his much talked about Christian conversion at the Vineyard church. I remembered seeing the sign at Venice and Centinela so one Sunday morning I went. The pastor gave a sermon that included some ministry that I related to. He preached about being in bondage to an enemy. I realized that I really needed a God, because I unequivocally knew I had an enemy. I knew I had an enemy and I knew I was in bondage to him.

Soon after something happened. There is no other way to put it. My old life, the only life I knew, the life of insurmountable problems, vanished. A new life started taking its place. I can't explain it. I can't understand it. I can't defend it. I don't want to. I can only testify it happened. Just this last month a miracle happened. I was born again. I became a new man, with new interests, new strengths, new desires, new loves.

Being a Christian does not mean respecting Christ. I respect Bob Dylan. I worship Jesus Christ. Jesus is my savior, my Lord, my master, my king.

"I am the true vine", Jesus said. "Abide in me".

What a miracle, a privilege and a blessing to be here on Easter Sunday, being baptized in

the same waters I once wanted to sink into and never rise again. In Jesus I now live, for I know he lives in me.

Thank you.

Thank you Aaron. What a powerful example of real change.

So let me conclude with this central point. Each of us have likely come with some sense that Easter is a special day... some sense that it represents something inspiring perhaps.

But amidst a world that tells us that everything is important...we need to allow our souls to grasp that this is real news to the soul... That the resurrection of Christ is of real importance... rooted in real facts...and brings real change. It changes everything.

Closing Prayer of Invitation.

Notes:

1. Noting the rise of "Breaking News"

Larry King Rips Cable News Networks: There Is No News Anymore, "It's All Trump"; Calls CNN Liberal - Posted On Date March 26, 2018

https://www.realclearpolitics.com/video/2018/03/26/larry_king_rips_cable_news_networks_there_is_no_news_anymore_its_all_trump_cnn_liberal.html

"Everything is breaking news. Do you notice that?" King asked. "Yes," the Carolla crew answered in unison. "When you get flooded with things and everything is breaking news, what's breaking news?" King asked.

Television Journalism By Stephen Cushion

<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1464884908100598>

Dr Stephen Cushion is a Reader at Cardiff University School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies, and Director of Postgraduate Research Studies.

Has section on television news both with data on increase...from 2004 to 2007 on Sky News and BBC...and the type of news included.

From 20% soft news (celebrity, sports, etc) to 37%.

BBC – From 3% to 11%

2. From Calvin and Hobbes, March 3, 92.

3. From Letters of C.S. Lewis, p. 228 / The Collected Letters of C.S. Lewis, Vol. III, Narnia, p. 111.

4. Professor. Thomas Arnold, for fourteen years the headmaster of Rugby school, author of the three-volume History of Rome, and holder of the chair of modern history at Oxford, was well acquainted with the value of evidence in determining historical facts. This great scholar said,

“I have been used for many years to study the histories of other times, and to examine and weigh the evidence of those who have written about them, and I know of no one fact in the history of mankind which is proved by better and fuller evidence of every sort, to the understanding of a fair inquirer, than the great sign which God hath given us that Christ died and rose again from the dead.” Thomas Arnold, *Christian Life, Its Hopes, Its Fears, and Its Close*, 6th ed. (London: T. Fellowes, 1859), pp. 15-16.

For other sources exploring the evidence of the resurrection:

The Resurrection of Jesus (The Historical Evidence) by Inspiring Philosophy Published on Jan 22, 2016 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A0iDNLxmWVM>

5. Isaiah 52 and 53, the classic messianic prophecy known as the “Suffering Servant” prophecy, also details the death of Messiah for the sins of His people. More than 700 years before Jesus was even born, Isaiah provides details of His life and death.

Isaiah 52:13-15 (NIV)

¹³ See, my servant will act wisely; he will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted. ¹⁴ Just as there were many who were appalled at him-- his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man and his form marred beyond human likeness-- ¹⁵ so will he sprinkle many nations, and kings will shut their mouths because of him. For what they were not told, they will see, and what they have not heard, they will understand.

Isaiah 53:4-12 (NIV)

⁴ Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. ⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. ⁶ We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

⁷ He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.

⁸ By oppression and judgment he was taken away. And who can speak of his descendants? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was stricken.

⁹ He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth. ¹⁰ Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause

him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand.

¹¹ After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light [of life] and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities. ¹² Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

For centuries it was hard to imagine a figure who would fulfill bearing the sins of the world ...such suffering for the sake of others...and then rise on the other side.

Nearly every little phrase has some unique aspect which was profoundly fulfilled in Christ.

God had foretold of the One who would come save the world... which is distinctly fulfilled in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus:

- He was rejected
- He was considered abandoned...stricken by God
- He was pierced
- He was actually bearing the weight of our sins
- He was silent in front of His accusers
- He was joined with criminals in His death
- He was buried with a rich man in his death
- He was raised and lifted up and highly exalted
- He was able to see his offspring and prolong his days
- He was One for whom the will of the LORD prospered in his hand.

After prophesying that the Suffering Servant of God would suffer for the sins of His people, the prophet says He would then be “cut off out of the land of the living.” But Isaiah then states that He (Messiah) “will see His offspring” and that God the Father will “prolong His days” (Isaiah 53:5, 8, 10).

Isaiah proceeds to reaffirm the promise of the resurrection in different words: “As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see light and be satisfied” (Isaiah 53:11).

6. Jesus’ resurrection was as much a shock to the disciples as His death had been.

Thomas, known forever as the doubter, was merely voicing what most of them felt when he declared he would not believe in the risen Lord until he had done his own thorough investigation (see John 20). Everyone doubted it at first. Everyone. Matthew 28:17 says, “And when they saw Him, they worshiped Him. But some were doubtful.” Only one devoted to the whole truth would include such an incriminating statement in his narrative.

7. A good article on this text is “Analysis of the Pre-Pauline Creed in 1 Corinthians 15:1-11” by Ryan Turner

8. In addition, no one questions that these were not philosophically sophisticated lives who come create some brilliant story. They admit to having the same expectations as the religious culture of their day... which is that any Messiah would be more a political leader... who would overthrow the earthly rulers.

9. “Perhaps the transformation of the disciples of Jesus is the greatest evidence of all for the resurrection. At the time of His death they were very much afraid. Peter went to the extent of vehemently denying that he knew Christ. But in a few days this same Peter fearlessly proclaimed the Gospel in the same city. Listen to his audacity: “The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His servant Jesus. You handed Him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate, though He had decided to let him go. You disowned the Holy and righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you” (Acts 3:13-14). There had to have been a sufficient reason for such a transformation.”

Reference: Taken from Basic Christianity by John Stott. Copyright(c) 1958. Used by permission of InterVarsity Press, PO Box 1400, Downers Grove, IL 60515, p. 58. www.ivpress.com.

<http://www.ivpress.com/cgi-ivpress/book.pl/code=3413>.

The gospel narratives themselves are too counterproductive to be made up... as they testify that women were the first eyewitnesses...and women’s low social status was so low that their testimony was not admissible evidence. There was no possible advantage to the church to recount that all the first witnesses were women. It could only have undermined the credibility of the testimony. The only possible explanation for why women were depicted as meeting Jesus first is if they really had” (Keller, Reason for God, 205).

10. The early church gathered on the first day of the week in celebration and remembrance of the resurrection. This is evident throughout the book of Acts (cf. also 1 Cor. 16:2 and Acts 20:7).

Acts 20:7 is the clearest verse in the New Testament which indicates that Sunday was the normal meeting day of the apostolic church. Paul stayed in Troas for seven days (v. 6) and the church met on the first day of the week. For an extended study of how the day of worship changed, See The Origins of Sunday Worship in the Early Church by Thomas C. Hanson Sr at

<https://www.gci.org/law/sabbath/hanson>

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....¹⁷ And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless and you are still guilty of your sins...²⁰ But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead. He is the first of a great harvest of all who have died.

⁴² ... Our earthly bodies are planted in the ground when we die, but they will be raised to live forever. ...⁴⁴ They are buried as natural human bodies, but they will be raised as spiritual bodies. For just as there are natural bodies, there are also spiritual bodies. ...⁵³ For our dying bodies must be transformed into bodies that will never die; our mortal bodies must be transformed into immortal bodies.⁵⁴ Then, when our dying bodies have been transformed into bodies that will never die, this Scripture will be fulfilled: "Death is swallowed up in victory."⁵⁵ O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?"

1. The Resurrection of Christ is of Real Importance ("First Importance")

2. The Resurrection of Christ is rooted in Real Facts.

- Rooted in recorded _____
- Rooted in historical _____
- Rooted in historical _____
- Rooted in no compelling alternative _____
- Rooted in it's unprecedented _____

3. The Resurrection of Christ brings Real Change.

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Easter Sunday, April 1, 2018 – Brad Bailey

1 Corinthians 15:3-8, 17, 20, 42, 44, 53-55 (NLT)

I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me. Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said.⁴ He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said.⁵ He was seen by Peter and then by the Twelve.⁶ After that, he was seen by more than 500 of his followers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died.⁷ Then he was seen by James and later by all the apostles.⁸ Last of all, as though I had been born at the wrong time, I also saw him.

....¹⁷ And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless and you are still guilty of your sins...²⁰ But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead. He is the first of a great harvest of all who have died.

⁴² ... Our earthly bodies are planted in the ground when we die, but they will be raised to live forever. ...⁴⁴ They are buried as natural human bodies, but they will be raised as spiritual bodies. For just as there are natural bodies, there are also spiritual bodies. ...⁵³ For our dying bodies must be transformed into bodies that will never die; our mortal bodies must be transformed into immortal bodies.⁵⁴ Then, when our dying bodies have been transformed into bodies that will never die, this Scripture will be fulfilled: "Death is swallowed up in victory."⁵⁵ O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?"

1. The Resurrection of Christ is of Real Importance ("First Importance")

2. The Resurrection of Christ is rooted in Real Facts.

- Rooted in recorded _____
- Rooted in historical _____
- Rooted in historical _____
- Rooted in no compelling alternative _____
- Rooted in it's unprecedented _____

3. The Resurrection of Christ brings Real Change.