

## Resources:

Charles Ryrie. Basic Theology. Pg. 308-311

Lewis Sperry Chafer. Systematic Theology Vol. 5. Pg. 231-260

Mr. John Miles. Doctrine 2 Notes. Pg. 13. Frontier School of the Bible.

The resurrection of Christ is the hinge point which all the weight of Christianity rests upon. If the resurrection truly happened, then Christianity is absolutely true and every single person on the planet stands accountable to the God of the Bible in his or her response to the Person and work of Jesus. But if there was no resurrection of Christ, then Christianity is a completely false and hopeless religious system.

I'd like to study this topic by asking and answering some questions.

**Question #1** - What does the Bible mean by the term resurrection?

Resurrection, according to the Bible, is being raised back to life in a physical body that lasts for eternity, and that is exactly what is taught in the Bible regarding Jesus.

**Question #2** - What are some of the key Biblical texts that teach the resurrection of Christ?

#1 - Luke 24:5-7 - "and as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, 'why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise.'"

#2 - Acts 2:23-24 - "This Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it."

#3 - Romans 1:3-4 - "concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh, and was declared to be the Son of God in power according the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord,"

#4 - 1 Corinthians 15:20 - "But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep."

#5 - Revelation 1:17-18 - "When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, "Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades."

**Question #3** - What is the significance of Jesus' resurrection?

To answer this question, I will use Charles Ryrie's material. The resurrection of Christ was critically important in four significant ways.

#1 - Jesus' resurrection confirms His Person.

Not only did Jesus predict that He would rise again (Matt, 16:21; 17:23; 20:17-19; 26:12, 28, 31; Mark 9:30-32; 14:8, 24, 27; Luke 9:22, 44-45; 18:31-34; 22:20; John 2:19-21; 10:17-28; 12:7), but also the Old Testament predicted the Messiah would rise again. Both Paul (Acts 13:34-37) and Peter (Acts 2:24-31) referred to the resurrection of Christ in quoting Psalm 16:9-10, which says, "Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices; my flesh also dwells secure. For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption."

Had Jesus not raised back from the dead, He would be an untrustworthy, imperfect, sinful liar, and He would not be the Messiah. His resurrection however, does in fact prove the trustworthiness of His words, the sinlessness of His Person (Acts 2:24), and it proves His claim of being the Messiah and Son of God (Romans 1:4).

#2 - Jesus' resurrection confirms His finished work on the cross and allows for His continued work from heaven.

When Jesus hung on that cross He cried out, "It is finished!" In other words, Jesus had paid in full the entire price for the sin of the world on the cross. Now, how do we know that Jesus was right when He said that? The resurrection proves that the payment He made was accepted by the Father. If Jesus had not been raised from the dead, then His work on the cross accomplished nothing. So His work on earth had been accomplished and confirmed by His resurrection. Romans 4:25 states that Jesus was delivered up for transgression (He died for sin), and He was raised for our justification (He was raised so that God could declare sinners righteous by faith in His death for them on the cross). His resurrection proves that His payment is enough for God to justify sinners by faith. So His work on earth was confirmed to be completed by the resurrection.

Also, His resurrection is that which allows Him to continually be alive and working even now. The Bible declares Jesus to currently be ministering as our High Priest (Hebrews 4:14), Intercessor (Hebrews 7:25), Advocate (1 John 2:2), and head of the Church (Ephesians 1:22). Had Christ not been raised, He would not be alive right now to be any of that currently for believers.

#3 - Jesus' resurrection completes the gospel message.

Paul lines out the details of the good news, the gospel, in 1 Corinthians 15:1-6. In that text, he writes, "Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, and he was raised on the third day." That is the gospel. That is the news. Had Jesus not resurrected, there would be no good news. There would be no gospel message to share.

Paul went on to explain that like Christ being raised from the dead, those who believe in Him will be raised to resurrection life as well, but if Christ did not rise, then there is no hope of resurrection for anyone who believes in Him. His resurrection was critical for the entire message of the gospel.

#4 - Jesus' resurrection is the key to the believer's hope of future resurrection.

Now I just mentioned this, but it's worth noting again. The believer's hope rests entirely upon the fact of the resurrection of Jesus. If in fact Jesus was raised, just as Paul said in 1 Corinthians 15:20 where he wrote, "but in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep." The Bible declares the resurrection to be an absolute fact, and the Bible also declares absolute fact that Christ's resurrection was a first fruits of those who believe in Him. In other words, He is the prototype of what will come for us who believe in Him. Our resurrection to eternal life is only possible by faith in Him because He was raised from the dead. All hope of the believer rests upon the resurrection of Christ. Without the resurrection, there is no hope. Rather, we are to be pitied for thinking we could be raised to resurrection life like Him.

**Question #4** - What are the Biblical proofs of Jesus' resurrection?

There are 3 major Biblical proofs for the resurrection.

(Proof #1) Eye-witness testimony.

Christ appeared to many different people in a physical body after He had died and was buried. These appearances prove that He raised from the dead, and the eye-witness testimony of those who saw Him give proof for His resurrection.

The eye-witnesses were these people:

- Mary Magdalene and the other women (Matthew 28:8-10; Mark 16:9-10; John 20:11-18)
- Peter (Luke 23:34; 1 Corinthians 15:5)
- Two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Mark 16:12; Luke 24:13-32)
- The disciples minus Thomas (Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19-25)
- The disciples including Thomas (Mark 16:14; John 20:26-29)
- The apostles and more than 500 believers and James (1 Corinthians 15:6-7)
- The disciples who witnessed the ascension (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:19; Luke 24:44-53; Acts 1:3-12)
- The apostle Paul after the ascension (Acts 9:1-9; 1 Corinthians 15:9)

(Proof #2) The empty tomb.

There is much emphasis on the empty tomb in Scripture. Matthew emphasized the guard that had been placed at the tomb (Matthew 27:62-66), and yet, even with a guard set, the tomb was empty and the guards had no explanation for the empty tomb. They took a bribe to spread the story that the disciples stole the body, but had this story been true, they would never have been offered a bribe (Matthew 28:11-16). Instead, they would have lost their jobs as guards and potentially their lives (Acts 16:27).

(Proof #3) The miracles that accompanied the apostles as they preached Christ crucified and resurrected.

The book of Acts records the ministry work of Christ after His resurrection as He worked in and through the apostles. Acts records 30 years of ministry that followed the resurrection, and something interesting and unique to the book of Acts is that miraculous wonders from God accompanied the apostles as they preached that Jesus rose from the dead. These miracles gave evidence of the validity of the apostles' claims that Jesus is the Christ. He did die, and He did rise again.

In Acts chapter 4, Peter tells a crippled man to walk, and the man gets up and walks. Peter went on to say this in verses 15-16, "and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses. And his name - by faith in his name - has made this man strong whom you see and know, and the faith that is through Jesus has given the man this perfect health in the presence of you all."

Peter said that the man who was lame but now walking was walking because of faith in Jesus, who was killed and raised back to life. Peter went around preaching a resurrected Savior and along with that message, a man who was lame could now walk. Peter gave all the credit of the healing to Christ and faith in Him.

**Question #5** - What are the reasons for Jesus' resurrection?

Dr. Chafer pointed out 7 reasons for the resurrection.

1. Jesus arose because of what He is. Being the eternal Son, it is not possible for Him to be held by death. He is eternal and death cannot conquer the possessor of eternity. Acts 2:24
2. Jesus arose because of who He is. Being the Son of David, He must yet sit upon David's throne. 2 Samuel 7:16; Acts 2:25-31
3. Jesus arose to be Head over all things to the Church which is His body. He needed to be the head of the Church. He said, "I will build my church." Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 1:22-23
4. Jesus arose to be the giver of resurrection life. John 12:24
5. Jesus arose to impart His resurrection power. He arose to give believers power over sin. Matthew 28:18; Romans 6:4; Ephesians 1:19-20

6. Jesus arose that sinners might be justified. His resurrection proves that believers are justified before God. Romans 4:25
7. Jesus arose that He might appear in heaven as the pattern, or first fruits, of all who, being saved and conformed to Him, will yet appear with Him in glory. 1 Corinthians 15:20-23; Phil. 3:20-21

**Question #6** - What are the results of Jesus' resurrection?

Charles Ryrie notes 3 results of the resurrection of Christ which are:

#1 - A New, Prototype Body.

The Body that Christ has in His resurrection is the prototype body of what believers will have in our resurrection. We will one day have a body that is incorruptible like His and even a sinless nature like His. Colossians 1:18 and 1 Corinthians 15:35-42 speaks of the physical body, and Romans 8:29 and 1 John 3:2 speak of the sinless nature. Ryrie noted, "Believers in the eternal state will be like Him according to 1 John 3:2. What does this mean? John explained in the following verses. To be like Him means to be pure (v. 3), to be without sin (v. 5), and to be righteous (v. 7). Our entire beings, including our bodies, will be characterized these ways."

#2 - A proof of His claims.

Jesus proved that everything Jesus said and claimed about Himself was true. He is a truthful prophet who foretold His resurrection and pulled it off (Matthew 28:6). He is proven to be Lord, Messiah, Savior, and Son of God as a result of His resurrection.

#3 - A prerequisite to all His subsequent ministries.

Jesus' resurrection paved the way for Him to go on to minister in many ways even today. He is still at work today, because He is alive from the grave. We talked about His work of intercessor, advocate, and head of the church, and we will go into more details on those current ministries next week when we discuss His ascension and current ministries.

**ALL OF THE CLAIMS OF CHRISTIANITY STAND OR FALL ON THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST. HIS RESURRECTION IS THE CRITICAL INGREDIENT FOR ONE TO HAVE HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE, AND GOD HAS DESIGNED FAITH TO PLAY THE KEY PART IN ACCEPTANCE OR REJECTION OF THE FACT THAT CHRIST WAS RAISED FROM THE DEAD.**