The Reality of the Resurrection
1 Corinthians 15:12-19

I. Intro

- Anecdote

- The Body

  - It was April 20th - 2001 - when TriStar Pictures Released their controversial movie titled - the Body.

    - The Body is a fictional film that focuses on the crisis of faith that a Jesuit priest named Father Matt Gutierrez suffers…

      - …after being sent by the Vatican to investigate the archaeological discovery of Dr. Sharon Golban…

        - …who believes that she found the crucified body of the Lord Jesus Christ.

          - As they examined the evidence found in the tomb - which included artifacts that date to the year that Jesus died…

            - …Father Gutierrez began to question the reality of Christ's physical resurrection.

              - And by the end of the film - we find him maintaining his faith in Jesus - regardless of the evidence.

- Radio

  - I was hosting a live apologetic radio show on KIXL - when this movie was released.

    - And after watching that fictional film - I decided to present my audience with a question - based on the storyline of The Body.

- I did this by asking — IF we provably found the remains of Jesus' body - in a tomb there in Jerusalem…

- …would you still go to church on Sunday - and sing the praises of the Lord?

- To my surprise - the majority of the people who called the station - were quick to insist that they most certainly would.

- In other words - the physical resurrection of Jesus didn't seem to be of great importance…

- …to those who's faith would barely be affected by the discovery of His physical body.

- Confused

- I ended the show by assuring my audience that - IF we provably found the remains of Jesus' body - buried in a tomb…

- …THEN - I personally wouldn't bother going to church ever again - and the reason why is due to the fact that…

- …the crux of the Christian faith is the empty tomb - which was confirmed by the reality of Christ's physical resurrection.

- That being the case - the Christian who spends their time at church each and every Sunday - is actually wasting their time…

- …IF in fact - the body of Jesus is still buried in a rich man's tomb.

- And listen - those who reject the physical resurrection of Jesus - while still singing His praises…

- …are at best - confused about the reality of Christ's resurrection.

II. Outline

- Points

- Reality
  - Here in our text today - - we find Paul - challenging those at the church in Corinth...
    - ...who were rejecting the physical resurrection of Jesus.
      - And as we study the scriptures before us this morning - we'll begin to see that...

        1. …the reality of the Resurrection results in a True Faith
        2. …the reality of the Resurrection results in a True Testimony
        3. …the reality of the Resurrection results in a True Hope

        - With this as our outline - let's open our Bibles to 1st Corinthians chapter 15...
          - ...where we find Paul - addressing the Ramifications of Christ's resurrection.

III. Faith

- Set up
  - Context
    - As we make our way to the 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians - I wanna take a moment to put our text - back into it's context.
      - It was back in the beginning of this chapter - where Paul presented prophetic proof - for Jesus' death - burial - - and resurrection.
        - And after appealing to the Old Testament prophecies that point to the death - burial - and resurrection of Jesus…

- …Paul also reminded the Christians in Corinth - about those who were there to witness the resurrection of risen Redeemer.

- And now - here in our text today - we find Paul - advancing his point - by addressing those who were rejecting the resurrection.

- With this as our focus - let's pick up our study of 1st Corinthians chapter 15.

- Look with me - beginning there at verse 12 - where Paul declared…

- Text

1Co 15:12 Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?
1Co 15:13 But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen.
1Co 15:14 And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty.
1Co 15:15 Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up—if in fact the dead do not rise.
1Co 15:16 For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen.
1Co 15:17 And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!
1Co 15:18 Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.
1Co 15:19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.

- No

- Here in our text today - we find Paul addressing those who held the heresy that there is no resurrection of the physical body.

- The chances are - there were new believers at the church in Corinth - who had been raised to reject the resurrection.

- There were many Greek philosophers who believed that the physical body is evil - and therefore - a hindrance to the state of perfection.

- It's for this reason that many Greeks in the first century believed that the body disintegrates after death - while the soul lives on forever.
- And I have no doubt that there were new believers at the church in Corinth who were questioning the bodily resurrection of Jesus…

- …because - they were steeped in this Ancient Greek philosophy.

- Sadducees

- It's also possible that Paul was addressing Jewish believers - who were formerly sadducees.

- Just to be clear - the sadducees were Jewish religious leaders - many of whom were priests.

- They actually believed that there is no afterlife - no heaven and no hell - because - the body - and the soul die together.

- It's for this reason that they rejected the resurrection of the dead.

- And while I can't say for sure - it's possible that there were Christians at the church in Corinth who were former sadducees.

- If so - then it's possible that they were struggling with questions about the resurrection.

- How?

- With all of this in mind - let's take another look at the question Paul presented - there in verse 12 - where he asked…

1Co 15:12 Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?

- Now - remember - it was back in the beginning of this chapter - when Paul appealed to those who saw our resurrected Savior.

  - And being that there were more than 500 - who were there to witness the resurrection of our Redeemer…

    - …Paul was clearly baffled by those who were still insisting that there is no such thing as a physical resurrection from the dead.

      - And it's sad to say that there are still false teachers in the church today - who are trying to convince us that …

        - …the resurrection is spiritual - or - symbolic - rather than a literal transformation involving the physical body

- Presentation

  - You might not know this - but the pulpits of many progressive churches are occupied by pastors who reject the physical resurrection of Jesus Christ.

    - That being the case - we should take a moment to consider the Biblical basis for believing in the physical resurrection of our Redeemer.

      - With this as our focus - hold your place here in 1st Corinthians - and let's turn in our Bibles to the gospel of John.

        - We're gonna make our way to John chapter 20 - because - it's here in the 20th chapter of John's gospel account…

          - …where we find the Lord - inviting the apostle Thomas to inspect the wounds of His sacrifice.

            - And in this way - Christ Jesus demonstrated the physical nature of His resurrected body.

- Thomas

  - With this as our focus - let's consider the apostle John's account - found here in John chapter 20.

- Look with me beginning there at verse 24 - where John declared…

  Jhn 20:24 Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.
  Jhn 20:25 The other disciples therefore said to him, “We have seen the Lord.” So he said to them, “Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.”
  Jhn 20:26 And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, “Peace to you!”
  Jhn 20:27 Then He said to Thomas, “Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.”
  Jhn 20:28 And Thomas answered and said to Him, “My Lord and my God!”
  Jhn 20:29 Jesus said to him, “Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

  - Here in these verses - we find the Lord Jesus - inviting the apostle Thomas to examine His wounds.

    - Now - I have no doubt that the resurrected body of Jesus was visibly different - and one reason why was because…

      - …the disciples didn’t quickly recognize Him - after He rose up from the tomb.

        - At the same time - His resurrected body was still scarred with the wounds of His sacrifice.

          - That being the case - we can be certain that the resurrection from the dead - is not just spiritual - it’s physical.

- Proof

- Further proof of my point can be found in Luke's account of the day when our risen Redeemer - assured His disciples that His body was physical.

  - With this as our focus - keep holding your place there in 1st Corinthians - and let's turn in our Bibles - to the gospel of Luke.

    - Let's make our way to Luke chapter 24 - and as we make our way to the 24th chapter of Luke's gospel account…

      - …we should take a moment to consider the heretics who insist that Jesus rose up from the grave - spiritually - and not physically.

        - The main problem with this perspective is based on the fact that - it's not Biblical.

          - As a matter of fact - the Lord Jesus not only invited Thomas to inspect His wounds…

            - …but - He explicitly informed His disciples - that He was more than just a spirit.

- Flesh

  - Let's consider Luke's account of this conversation - which is found here in The 24th chapter of his gospel account.

    - Look with me - there in the middle of verse 36 - where we learn that…

      Luk 24:36b Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace to you."
      Luk 24:37 But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit.
      Luk 24:38 "Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts?
      Luk 24:39 "Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have."
      Luk 24:40 When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet.

Luk 24:41 But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, “Have you any food here?”
Luk 24:42 So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb.
Luk 24:43 And He took it and ate in their presence.

- Here in these verses - we find the Lord Jesus - addressing the concerns of those who thought that they were seeing a ghost.
  - This included the presentation of His physical attributes that included His hands and feet.
    - Not only that - but - He also doubled down on His point - by assuring them that…
      - …His physical flesh and bones was further proof that He wasn’t merely a spirit.
        - That being the case - those who insist that resurrection of Jesus was spiritual - are contradicting the teachings of Christ.

- If/Then
  - With all of this in mind - let’s turn back to 1st Corinthians chapter 15 - so that we can consider the point that Paul was making.
    - Look with me again - there at 1st Corinthians 15 - I wanna draw your attention to verse 13 - where he declared…

1Co 15:13 …if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen.
1Co 15:14 And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty.

- Here in these verses - we find Paul presenting the Christians in Corinth with a hypothetical syllogism…
  - …in order to help his audience understand that - IF there is no such thing as a physical resurrection from the dead…
    - …then - there is no way that the gospel message could be true.

- IF it's true that there is no resurrection from the dead - then it only stands to reason that Jesus did not rise up from the grave.

- And IF it's true that the body of Jesus remained in the grave - then - the gospel message is empty.

- Empty

- Just to be clear - that word - empty - found there at the end of verse 14 - was translated from a Greek word…

- …which was used in reference to a container that contains nothing.

- The same word was used of a belief that is devoid of truth.

- What this means is that the gospel message - which is centered on the physical resurrection of Jesus…

- …this is a message that is devoid of truth - IF the body of Jesus remained in the grave.

- And IF it's true that the body of Jesus remained in the grave - then it's also true that…

- …the faith of those who reject the physical resurrection of Jesus - is also devoid of truth.

- Application

- True

- Proof of my point can be found in the prophetic promise that Jesus presented to those who asked Him for a sign.

- Let's consider John's account of this conversation - found in John chapter 2 it's beginning at verse 18 - where we learn that…

Jhn 2:18 …the Jews answered and said to Him, “What sign do You show to us, since You do these things?”
Jhn 2:19 Jesus answered and said to them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”
Jhn 2:20 Then the Jews said, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?”
Jhn 2:21 But He was speaking of the temple of His body.
Jhn 2:22 Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said.

- Here in this conversation - we find the Lord Jesus - assuring His skeptics that He was going to prove that He is the Messiah…
  - …and He promised to do this - by raising His physical body up from the destruction of death - on the third day.
    - What this means is that - the physical resurrection of Jesus is the evidence that He is the promised Messiah.
      - What this also means is that - those who have placed their faith in the reality of Christ’s physical resurrection…
        - …have also embraced the True Faith by which sinners are saved.

- Transition

- Points
  - Now - this brings us to our second point - because listen…

1. …the reality of the Resurrection not only results in a True Faith…
2. …but - the reality of the Resurrection also results in a True Testimony.
   - With this as our focus - let’s continue to consider the point that Paul was making - here in 1st Corinthians chapter 15.

- Look with me again - beginning there at verse 15 - where he declared…

IV. Testimony

- Text

1Co 15:15 Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up—if in fact the dead do not rise.
1Co 15:16 For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen.
1Co 15:17 And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!

- Witnesses

- Here in these verses - we find Paul - continuing to present his hypothetical syllogism…

- …in order to help his audience to grasp the ramifications of rejecting the physical resurrection of Jesus.

- And it's there in verse 15 - where Paul put it plainly - by informing the Christians in Corinth that…

- …those who were preaching the resurrection of Jesus were actually false witnesses - IF IN FACT - the body of Jesus was still in the tomb.

- What this means is that - those who insist that the resurrection of Jesus was merely spiritual - or symbolical…

- …were effectively accusing the eyewitness of Christ's resurrection - as presenting a false testimony.

- List

- With this in mind - let's consider the list of eyewitnesses that Paul presented in the previous paragraph.

- Let's back up here in 1st Corinthians 15 - I wanna focus your attention beginning there at verse 3 - where Paul declared…

1Co 15:3 For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,
1Co 15:4 and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,
1Co 15:5 and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve.
1Co 15:6 After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep.
1Co 15:7 After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles.
1Co 15:8 Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time.

- Here in these verses - we're reminded of the fact that - there were more than 500 eyewitnesses - who witnessed the resurrection of Jesus.
- And according to Paul - this included the apostles - - who all testified to the truth of Christ's resurrection.

- Proof of my point can be found in the testimony that the apostle Peter presented…

- …on the day when the religious rulers challenged him about the message that he was preaching.

- And without hesitation - Peter testified to the fact of Jesus' physical resurrection.

- Message

- It's in Acts chapter 4 - beginning at verse 1 - where Luke tells us that…

Act 4:1 as they spoke to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them,
Act 4:2 being greatly disturbed that they taught the people and preached in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.
Act 4:3 And they laid hands on them, and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening.

- So - according to Luke - Peter and John were arrested - and the reason why was because…

  - …they were teaching the people about the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

    - It was on the next day - when they were brought before the religious rulers of Israel…

      - …that's when Peter spoke by the power of the Holy Spirit - as he testified about the facts of Jesus' resurrection from the dead.

        - And what this means is that the apostle Peter was lying - IF the body of Jesus was still in the tomb.

- Testify

  - Let's consider again how Paul put it - here in 1st Corinthians chapter 15 - look with me again - there at verse 15 - where he declared…

    1Co 15:15 Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up—if in fact the dead do not rise.

  - IF it's true that the body of Jesus remained in the tomb on the fourth day…

    - …then it's also true that those who testified to the truth of the resurrection - were nothing more than false witnesses.

      - And listen - IF those who claimed to've been eyewitnesses of our Savior's resurrection - were presenting a false testimony…

        - …then - the faith of every Christian is futile - and the reason why is because…

          - …we've placed our faith in a false message - which is unable to save us from the wrath of God.

- Futile

- Let's consider how Paul explained it here in our text today - look with me beginning there at verse 16 - where Paul declared…

  1Co 15:16 For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen.
  1Co 15:17 And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!

  - IF the body of Jesus is still in the tomb - then the faith of every Christian is futile.

    - That word - futile - was translated from a Greek word - which was used of that which is useless - fruitless - and worthless.

      - The same Greek word was used of that which is vain - being devoid of force - and therefore - unable to produce the right results.

        - What this means is that - IF Christ Jesus failed to rise up from the grave - then - our faith is futile - because - it cannot save.

- Our Testimony

  - And listen - IF it's true that our faith in Jesus is futile - then it's also true that our testimony is also false.

    - Think about it - - if Jesus failed to physically rise up from the dead - - then our faith is useless - fruitless - and worthless.

      - And if it's true that our faith is useless - fruitless - and worthless…

        - …then it's also true that our testimony about God's grace - is a false testimony that is devoid of power.

          - To sum it up with simplicity - - if the eyewitnesses that Paul listed here in this epistle - were presenting a false testimony…

            - …then - the testimony of our conversion to Christ is also false - and futile.

- Truth
  - Thankfully - we can rejoice in knowing that those who were there to witness the resurrection of our Redeemer…
    - …were telling the truth - when they testified to the fact of Christ's physical resurrection.
      - And as I pointed out in our study last week - the proof that they were telling the truth - was based on the fact that…
        - …the eyewitnesses who testified to the truth of Christ's resurrection - became martyrs for the message of our Messiah.
          - And knowing that people do not normally die for something they know to be a lie…
            - …then - we can be certain that the eyewitnesses who testified to the fact of Jesus' resurrection - were telling the truth.

- Application
  - Manifest
    - Let's consider how the apostle John put it - in his first epistle - it's 1st John chapter 1 - beginning at verse 1 - where he declared…

1Jo 1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life—
1Jo 1:2 the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us
1Jo 1:3 that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.
1Jo 1:4 And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.

- It was after the death - the burial - and the resurrection of Jesus Christ - when the apostle John assured his audience that…

  - …they heard Him teach - they saw Him with their eyes - and they handled the Word of life with their hand.

    - John also informed us that he was bearing witness to the fact that - the life of our Messiah was manifested before them.

      - And in this way - John was presenting his testimony about the reality of Christ's resurrection…

        - …so that every person might enter into the fellowship of this faith - by which we are saved.

- Transition

- Points

  - Now - this brings us to our third and final point - because listen…

1. …the reality of the Resurrection not only results in a True Faith…

2. …and the reality of the Resurrection not only results in a True Testimony…

3. …but - the reality of the Resurrection also results in a True Hope

    - With this as our focus - let's continue to consider the point that Paul was making - here in 1st Corinthians chapter 15.

      - Look with me again - beginning there at verse 18 - where he declared…

V. Hope

- Text

1Co 15:18 Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.

1Co 15:19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.

- Perished
  - Here in these verses - we find Paul - connecting the dots - between the resurrection of Jesus…
    - …and the resurrection of those who have placed their faith in Jesus.
      - He did this by helping them to understand that - the believers who had already passed away - were still in the grave…
        - …IF in fact - the body of the Lord Jesus was still stuck in the tomb of Joseph.
          - And what this also means is that - if it's true that Jesus failed to rise up from the grave…
            - …then - it's also true that there is no eternal benefit for those who live their life for the Lord.
- Pitiable
  - It's for this reason that Paul assured his audience - that Christians are the most pitiable of all people - if Christ Jesus is not risen.
    - That word - pitiable - found there in verse 19 - was translated from a Greek word - which could also be rendered - miserable.
      - In order to understand what Paul meant - - we should take a moment to consider the difficulties of being a disciple of Christ.
        - For example - Christians have been called to crucify our carnal desires according to the sanctification of the Holy Spirit.
          - Not only that - but - those who trust in Jesus Christ have been marginalized - from the first century until today.

- This includes many Christians who have been persecuted by the unbelievers - who reject our Redeemer.

- Persecution

  - Let's consider how the Lord Jesus explained it - in John chapter 15 - it's beginning at verse 18 - where He declared…

    Jhn 15:18 "If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you.
    Jhn 15:19 "If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.
    Jhn 15:20 "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also.

    - Much like Jesus - Who was persecuted by those who hated Him - the disciples of Christ will also suffer persecution.

      - And while it's true that Jesus promised eternal rewards - to those who suffer for His name's sake…

        - …this promise can only be fulfilled - if there is in fact - an afterlife.

          - If there is no resurrection from the dead - the Christians are the most miserable of all people…

            - …and the reason why is because - we receive the persecution - without the eternal rewards.

- Hope

  - Let's consider how Paul put it - here in 1st Corinthians chapter 15 - look with me again - there at verse 19 - where he declared…

    1Co 15:19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.

- In other words - IF the body of Jesus is still in the tomb - then those who trust in Him have no hope of eternal life.

- What this means is that - Christians are not only the most pitiable of all people…

- …but we are also the most hopeless of all people - IF in fact - Jesus is not risen.

- And with that being the case - i can't help but to wonder why so many church goers are willing to attend a progressive church…

- …where the pastor rejects the doctrine of Christ's physical resurrection.

- Stats

- While 99% of evangelical pastors believe in the bodily resurrection of the Lord Jesus…

- …only 65% of mainline Protestant pastors believe in the physical resurrection of our Redeemer.

- What this means is that - roughly 35% of mainline clergy either express doubt - OR complete rejection of the resurrection.

- And with that being the case - we shouldn't be surprised to learn that…

- …a quarter of those who claim to be Christian - don't believe in Jesus bodily resurrection.

- And instead - they believe that the Biblical account of Christ's resurrection is symbolic - or spiritual.

- Rigby

- For example - it was during an Easter message - when James Talarico's pastor - invited his congregation to question the resurrection.

- Reverend Jim Rigby from St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church here in Austin Texas - did this by declaring…

  "It's possible the disciples stole it to keep the Romans from getting a hold of it. It's possible the Romans took it because they're afraid of a resurrection on the third day,"

  - Rather than teaching the truth of God's word - Reverend Rigby led his church to question the resurrection of Jesus.

    - He drove his point home by declaring - and I quote: "Maybe Jesus rose from the dead, but maybe not…"

      - Wait - what? - why in the world would anyone waste their time - waking up early on Easter Sunday…

        - …in order to go to celebrate a Savior - Who MAY - or MAY NOT have risen from the dead?

          - Sadly - there are many churchgoers - - like James Talarico - who are willing to follow the hopeless faith of these false teachers.

- Present

  - Proof of my point can be found in the promise that Jesus presented in John chapter 11 - it's beginning at verse 25 - where he declared….

    Jhn 11:25 "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.
    Jhn 11:26 "And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

    - The Lord Jesus presented this promise to Martha - in response to the death of Lazarus.

      - And while her heart was filled with grief - as she mourned the death of her brother…

- …the Lord Jesus encouraged her to look forward to the future - with the hope of knowing that…

- …there's coming a day when those who trust in Jesus - will be reunited in the resurrection.

- And what this means is that - the resurrection of Jesus provides every believer with the hope of His return.

- Ascension

- In order to make my case - let's consider the promise that the angels made - on the day of our Savior's ascension.

- It's in Acts chapter 1 - beginning at verse 9 - where Luke writes…

Act 1:9 Now when (Jesus) had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.
Act 1:10 And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel,
Act 1:11 who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."

- Here in these verses - we learn about the day when the Lord Jesus physically ascended into heaven.
- Then - after He disappeared into the clouds - - the angels who stood nearby assured the disciples of Christ…

- …that the Lord would return - in the same manner in which He departed.

- What this means is that - the Lord Jesus will return - physically - from the clouds of heaven.

- And in this - those who trust in Him can look forward to the future - with hope.

- Application

- Comfort

  - Let's consider how Paul put it - in 1st Thessalonians chapter 4 - it's beginning at verse 13 - where he declared…

    1Th 4:13 I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.
    1Th 4:14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.
    1Th 4:15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.
    1Th 4:16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.
    1Th 4:17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.
    1Th 4:18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

    - According to Paul - those who reject the resurrection of Jesus have no hope - and the reason why is because - in their minds - death is the end.

      - What they fail to realize is that - death is not the end - - no - instead - death is a doorway to the afterlife.
        - And it's sad to say that those who reject the resurrection of Jesus - will arise to everlasting condemnation.

          - Conversely - those who trust in the resurrection of Jesus - will arise to everlasting life - as we receive our resurrected bodies.

            - And it's for this reason that Paul encouraged every Christian - to comfort one another with this everlasting hope.

VI. Conclusion

- Wrap up

- Points

  - Now - as we begin to wrap up this study - I want to assure you once again that…

    - …the resurrection of Jesus Christ has been confirmed to be the best attested event in ancient history.

      - With that being the case - we can rejoice in knowing that…

        1. …the reality of the Resurrection results in a True Faith.

        2. …the reality of the Resurrection results in a True Testimony.

        3. …the reality of the Resurrection results in a True Hope.

          - And while I realize that there are still many who are quick to question the reality of Christ's resurrection…

            - …we can rejoice in knowing that the Lord Jesus presented Himself with many infallible proofs - after He rose up from the grave.

              - And as we consider the eyewitness reports - presented by those who were there…

                - …we can take comfort in knowing that the evidence has confirmed the reality of Christ's resurrection.