

Activating Our Position in Christ

1 Corinthians 15

The Importance of the Resurrection – Part 1

Paul concludes chapter 15 with his focus statement for writing the chapter...

1 Corinthians 15:58 (ESV) — Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

Steadfast - pertaining to being firmly established in one's position or opinions

Immovable - pertaining to not being readily shaken in one's opinions or beliefs

Abounding - to be or exist in abundance, with the implication of being considerably more than what would be expected

Vain - pertaining to being totally without purpose

NOTICE...

1 Corinthians 15:58 (ESV) — Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

ONE THING

A BIBLICAL understanding of the resurrection leads BELIEVERS to live FIRMLY and FAITHFULLY with HOPE-FILLED PURPOSE.

1. The UNRELENTING FALLACIES opposing the Resurrection

➤ **The Swoon Theory**

The swoon hypothesis is any of a number of ideas that aim to explain the resurrection of Jesus, proposing that Jesus did not die on the cross, but merely fell unconscious ("swooned"), and was later revived in the tomb in the same mortal body. This 200-year-old hypothesis is still the subject of debate in popular circles but the scholarly literature considers it uncontroversial that Jesus died during the process of crucifixion

➤ **The Stolen Body**

Matthew 28:11–15 (ESV) — While they were going, behold, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priests all that had taken place. And when they had assembled with the elders and taken counsel, they gave a sufficient sum of money to the soldiers and said, "Tell people, 'His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.' And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble." So they took the money and did as they were directed. And this story has been spread among the Jews to this day.

➤ **The Greek Immorality of the Soul**

Originally expressed by the great Greek philosopher, Plato, some 500 years earlier...

The body is the prison of the soul. At death, the captive soul is released to soar to the real world, of which everything on earth is but a shadow.

➤ **Skepticism**

Basic belief – “When you die it’s over”

Purported primarily by intellectuals ...

Sadducees...

Luke 20:27 (ESV) — There came to him some Sadducees, those who deny that there is a resurrection,

Many Roman intellectuals...

→ Paul before King Agrippa

Acts 26:8 (ESV) — Why is it thought incredible by any of you that God raises the dead?

➤ **The Prosperity/Triumphalism Gospel**

2 Thessalonians 2:1–3a (ESV) — 1 Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers, 2 not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken

word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. 3 Let no one deceive you in any way...

These kind of “deeper knowledge” ideas were creeping into Corinth...

1 Corinthians 4:8 (ESV) — Already you have all you want! Already you have become rich! Without us you have become kings! And would that you did reign, so that we might share the rule with you!

... A Gospel without suffering

... A Gospel of comfort and ease

“If you are not experiencing these things now it’s because of your lack of faith”

A Biblical understanding of the resurrection leads believers to live firmly and faithfully with hope-filled purpose.

1. The **UNRELENTING FALACIES** opposing the Resurrection

2. The **UNDENIABLE FACTS** of the Resurrection

1 Corinthians 15:1–2 (ESV) — Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you— unless you believed in vain.

NOTICE – “...in vain”. Same as in verse 58

1 Corinthians 15:3–11 (ESV) — For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But 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. Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

→ **Jesus Christ DIED for our sins... in accordance with the Scriptures...**

→ **That He was BURIED...**

→ **That He was RAISED on the third day... in accordance with the Scriptures**

→ **That He APPEARED...**

1 Corinthians 2:2 (ESV) — For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.

In saying this, Paul was NOT neglecting the resurrection, but was declaring the unseparatable reality of the Cross & the Resurrection!

We CANNOT have one without the other!

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1. The UNRELENTING FALACIES opposing the Resurrection

2. The UNDENIABLE FACTS of the Resurrection

3. The UNBEARABLE FUTILITY without the Resurrection

1 Corinthians 15:12 (ESV) — Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?

If there is no resurrection Paul lists SEVEN essentials that are stripped from the Gospel message...

➤ **Christ has not been raised**

1 Corinthians 15:13 (ESV) — But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised.

1 Corinthians 15:16 (ESV) — For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised.

Paul is pushing the logic of the heretic's arguments against them...

They may not have intended to say Jesus was not raised, but, in reality, that is what they are saying!

➤ **Our preaching is in vain**

1 Corinthians 15:14a (ESV) — And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain.

Again, the word, “VAIN” means without purpose or empty

The Gospel without the resurrection is useless!

➤ **Your faith is in vain**

1 Corinthians 15:14b (ESV) — And if Christ has not been raised, then ... your faith is in vain.

Take out the resurrection and HOPE is gone!

➤ **We are misrepresenting God**

1 Corinthians 15:15 (ESV) — We 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.

The very reputation of God is at stake when we remove the resurrection!

Galatians 1:11–12 (ESV) — For I would have you know, brothers, that the gospel that was preached by me is not man’s gospel. For I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

To say, or even imply by a worldly lifestyle, this life matters most, is to misrepresent God Himself!

➤ **You are still in your sins**

1 Corinthians 15:17 (ESV) — And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins.

The unanimous testimony of the Scriptures is summed up in this...

Romans 6:23 (ESV) — For the wages of sin is death ...

Death marks the end result of that separation from God...

Without the resurrection we are still in sin!

➤ **Believers who have died have perished**

1 Corinthians 15:18 (ESV) — Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.

To perish means to be destroyed ... to be no more...

➤ **Believers should be pitied most**

1 Corinthians 15:19 (ESV) — If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.

If life here on earth is all there is, it makes no sense to base our hope on the groundless promises of one who made empty assertions about eternity...

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2. The UNDENIABLE FACTS of the Resurrection

3. The UNBEARABLE FUTILITY without the Resurrection

4. The UNSTOPPABLE FUNCTION of the Resurrection

1 Corinthians 15:20–34 (ESV) — 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. 24 Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. 25 For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy to be destroyed is death. 27 For “God has put

all things in subjection under his feet.” But when it says, “all things are put in subjection,” it is plain that he is excepted who put all things in subjection under him. 28 When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all. 29 Otherwise, what do people mean by being baptized on behalf of the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptized on their behalf? 30 Why are we in danger every hour? 31 I protest, brothers, by my pride in you, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die every day! 32 What do I gain if, humanly speaking, I fought with beasts at Ephesus? If the dead are not raised, “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.” 33 Do not be deceived: “Bad company ruins good morals.” 34 Wake up from your drunken stupor, as is right, and do not go on sinning. For some have no knowledge of God. I say this to your shame.

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1. The UNRELENTING FALACIES opposing the Resurrection

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5. The UNPRECEDENTED FEATURES of the Resurrection

1 Corinthians 15:35–50 (ESV) — 35 But someone will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?” 36 You foolish person! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. 37 And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. 38 But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. 39 For not all flesh is the same, but there is one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish. 40 There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is of one kind, and the glory of the earthly is of another. 41 There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory. 42 So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. 43 It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. 44 It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. 45 Thus it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being”; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. 46 But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual. 47 The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. 48 As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. 49 Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven. 50 I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

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- 2. The UNDENIABLE FACTS of the Resurrection**
- 3. The UNBEARABLE FUTILITY without the Resurrection**
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- 5. The UNPRECEDENTED FEATURES of the Resurrection**
- 6. The UNIMAGINABLE FUTURE in the Resurrection**

1 Corinthians 15:51–57 (ESV) — 51 Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. 53 For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. 54 When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.” 55 “O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” 56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

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Crossgates, Wed Sermon

David Jett

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1 Corinthians 15
The Importance of the Resurrection**

A _____ understanding of the resurrection leads
_____ to live _____ and _____ with
_____.

**1. The _____
opposing the Resurrection**

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- _____

**2. The _____ of the
Resurrection**

**3. The _____ without
the Resurrection**

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