

CALVARY CHAPEL RED WING

Scripture: 1 CORINTHIANS 15:12-19

What If There Is No Resurrection?

INTRODUCTION

In 1 Corinthians 15, the Apostle Paul addresses a critical doctrinal error within the Corinthian church. While the Corinthians did not doubt that Christ Himself had risen, some were being swayed by the prevailing Greek culture to reject the future bodily resurrection of believers. In ancient Greek philosophy, heavily influenced by thinkers like Plato, the physical body was viewed as a corrupt prison, and death was celebrated as the ultimate release of the spiritual soul. Consequently, many Greeks found the idea of a resurrected physical body meaningless or even offensive.

Paul methodically dismantles this error by showing that Christian doctrine is an inseparable whole. To reject human bodily resurrection is to reject Christ's own resurrection. If Christ did not rise bodily, our faith is entirely empty, and we remain dead in our sins. This study challenges us to prioritize sound doctrine, guard against cultural corruptions, and anchor our faith in the historical, physical reality of the empty tomb.

Icebreaker Question:

"What was a childhood belief or ambition you sincerely held that turned out to be completely wrong? How did you find out the truth, and what were the consequences of acting on that belief?" (Think of pastor Adam's childhood belief that he was an electrician, which led to cutting his grandmother's lamp cord with steel scissors!)

THESIS:

Since Christianity stands or falls on the doctrine of the resurrection, we must hold fast to this essential truth.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Q1. Read 1 Corinthians 15:12. Paul asks how some in the church can say there is no resurrection of the dead. The Greek culture of Plato's day viewed the physical body as an inferior prison for the soul. How does modern cultural philosophy subtly creep into the church today, leading believers away from the plain truth of scripture? What are some practical ways we can prioritize direct exposure to the Word of God rather than settling for "baby bird food" (opinions, books, social media digests about the Bible or the fruit of someone else's labor in the scriptures)?

Q2. Read 1 Corinthians 15:13. Paul argues that if human bodies cannot resurrect, then Christ is not risen. This hinges on the orthodox doctrine of the hypostatic union—that Jesus is fully

God and fully man. Why is precise doctrine so critical for the church? Why can we not downplay "theological nuts and bolts" in the name of unity, and what is the danger of a sincere but wrong belief (like the pastor's "young electrician" lamp-cord story)?

Q3. Read 1 Corinthians 15:14-19. Paul lists six devastating consequences if Christ did not rise from the dead: empty preaching, useless faith, being false witnesses of God, remaining in sins, dead believers perishing, and being the most pitiable of all men. Which of these consequences strikes you as the most terrifying? Why does human philosophy fail to carry any weight or offer comfort when visiting a dying person in hospice or conducting a funeral?

Q4. Read 1 Corinthians 15:17 and Romans 4:25. If Christ did not rise, you are "still in your sins." How does the physical resurrection of Christ prove that his sacrifice on the cross was accepted by the Father? How does the Walmart debit-card illustration (a receipt showing 'Approved' versus 'Declined') help you visualize the resurrection as the absolute proof of your justification and forgiveness?

PRAISE AND PRAYER

1. Praise God for the physical resurrection of Jesus Christ! Thank Him that the tomb is empty, proving that the Father has fully accepted Christ's payment for our sins on the cross.
2. Pray for biblical discernment and precision. Ask the Holy Spirit to guard our church, families, and individual minds against cultural ideas and philosophies that subtly distort the plain truth of scripture.
3. Pray for comfort and peace for those who are facing physical suffering, sickness, decay, or bereavement. Pray that we would be anchored in the certain hope of eternity and our future resurrection bodies.

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR

Discipleship:

Create margin in your week to intentionally love a neighbor where you live, work, study, play, or worship.

How have you loved your neighbors inside the group this week?

How have you loved your neighbors outside of your group this week?