

**Week 5 / “What Happens When You Remove Christ’s Resurrection?”**

**I. INTRODUCTION (1<sup>ST</sup> CORINTHIANS 15:12-19)**

- A. The Christian life is mysterious, not because it’s so complicated, but because it’s so simple. Our challenge, especially as Charismatics is that we assume baptism in water and the Spirit is the start of our relationship with God, not it’s end!
- B. As Ben Meyers, in his book “The Apostles Creed” rightly said, “*To move beyond baptism, is not to progress, but to regress.*” In baptism, you receive your faith in full, not in part! In baptism, you don’t get a portion of the Holy Spirit, or a portion of Jesus, or a portion of your gifts, or a portion of your inheritance in Christ: you actually receive it all in fullness!
- C. Beloved, everything that’s in Christ is in us through baptism into Christ. We are like children who’ve received a vast estate, and now it’s our joy to discover what we’ve been given. We have to search out the documents, walk the land, visit the locations we’ve received.
- D. But there can also be a concern among God’s family that if we received something that’s been handed down to us, or it’s a tradition, it’s old fashioned, it’s old school, it’s outdated. But beloved, there’s NOTHING NEW ABOUT OUR CHRISTIAN FAITH! It’s not just old, it’s ancient, it’s eternal. And the old nature of our faith, is actually it’s strength. If we lose orthodoxy (*orthos-right doxy-belief*), if we lose the historical nature/components of our faith, we lose our faith entirely.
- E. But our challenge today, was the same challenge the Corinthians faced; is the ancient Gospel that Paul delivered to us sufficient, or do we need to change its contents to fit our modern era? You might think, resurrection of the dead? These spiritually minded middle eastern folks were all about this stuff. NOT SO.
  - 1. The prevailing ideology influencing the Corinthian Church was Greco-Roman thought, which didn’t ‘struggle’ with the idea that the resurrection had happened, they outright rejected any type of resurrection. WHY? In Greco-Roman thought, after death, the soul continues to live, but the body is done and gone. The physical body was despised, while the soul was celebrated.
  - 2. A common epitaph that accompanied the dead read, “*I was not. I was. I am not. I am free from wishes.*” This basically became their R.I.P.
- F. But as a faithful preacher, Paul is not going to placate the Corinthian culture, he’s simply going to help this Church follow the logic of what happens to both Christ, and the Church if they remove the resurrection of the dead.

**II. LET’S FOLLOW THE LOGIC (1<sup>ST</sup> CORINTHIANS 15:12-18)**

- 1. **1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 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?”
- B. Paul’s saying to them, “*Now, how is it, in light of what we’ve preached to you (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:1-10), both during our 18 months with you, and now 4 years later through this letter, saying the same thing we’ve already said, that you don’t believe it?*”

- C. It seems clear from his statement, “...*SOME among you say...*” that it’s not the entire Corinthian Church that’s bought into this heresy, but most likely some of the influential leaders that have a place of prominence both inside and outside the Church. But because of their position, they have to be confronted.
1. **1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:13-14**      *“But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty, and your faith is also empty.”*
- D. Paul’s now going to help them consider the logic of their false thinking, bringing out of the ethereal, and put it into the everyday experience, saying, “*Guys, if you reject this, the resurrection of the dead, then you’re rejecting the Gospel. Guys, you can’t have a Gospel that doesn’t include a resurrection. WHY? Because your life in Christ is bound to Christ Himself, meaning, what’s happened to Christ, will also happen to you.*”
- E. If they remove this foundational block of the Gospel, they will radically undercut the truth of what’s been preached to them. This word used here for preach, doesn’t refer to the PREACHING EVENT, but the CONTENTS OF THEIR PREACHING!
1. Meaning what’s said in preaching, related to doctrine (*teaching*), isn’t just important, but literally lifesaving. It doesn’t just matter that SOMETHING is being said, but it matters WHAT’S BEING said.
  2. **1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 4:13-16**      *“Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophesy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.”*
- F. If I had a nickel for every time I’ve heard a charismatic say to me, or to others, “*we don’t need all that doctrine and theology, we just need the holy Ghost and fire,*” I’d be rich! As a young card-carrying credentialed minister with the Pentecostal Church of God, they would often take anyone who could preach, and just give them a bible and a road map, and bless them to go out and conquer the world...or a Church stay of about 6months to 2 years.
- G. The resurrection isn’t a foundational block that you can get rid of. It’s something that has to be fought for, established, and even death would be sufficient to uphold this historical doctrine. Paul’s personally enduring great physical suffering, and it’s motivated in large part, if not exclusively by the resurrection of the dead, a future hope that’s given through Christ’s resurrection.
1. **1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:16-18**      *“For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile, you are still in your sins! Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.”*
- H. Well, Paul continues to help them follow out the logic of their denial of a bodily resurrection, which no longer just impacts their lives, but also all those they love, who have died in Christ.

- I. This word for perish doesn’t just speak of dead, or gone, but it’s condemned death, under God’s just judgement. And this is Paul’s point! *“If Christ hasn’t been raised, you aren’t being raised either, and neither are your loved ones who’ve died in Christ. In fact, they are still in their sins, because according to you, Christ wasn’t bodily raised up, and therefore His death wasn’t strong enough to conquer death, hell and the grave.”*
- J. It’s quite possible that the Corinthian’s had in mind some type of life after death, but here, Paul helps implode this false thinking. They can’t have their cake and eat it too! Either there’s a resurrection, or there’s no resurrection.
- K. And when taken altogether, here’s where the logic of rejecting Christ’s resurrection takes them;
  - 1. *If there’s no resurrection, then Christ hasn’t risen.*
  - 2. *If Christ isn’t risen, then we are false witnesses, because we’ve said that Christ did rise from the dead.*
  - 3. *And if Christ isn’t risen from death, then your faith is futile (worthless, in vain, meaningless).*
  - 4. *If Christ hasn’t been raised from death, then all those people who died in Christ are still in the grave, and their life is meaningless.*
  - 5. *Without the resurrection, without the historical, apostolic doctrine of the resurrection, there’s no hope for the future.*
- L. Beloved, HISTORICAL, OLD SCHOOL, OLD FASHIONED doctrine has massive implications for our lives now, and after death!

### III. WITHOUT A RESURRECTION, LIFE ON EARTH IS ALL YOU GET (1<sup>ST</sup> CORINTHAINS 15:19)

- 1. **1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:19**     *“If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most pitiable.”*
- B. These ones among the Corinthian Church who were denying a resurrection, created a fatalistic way of viewing the afterlife. This denial caused folks to want to live life to the fullest, or as one preacher has said, *“To live your best life now.”* Living out a denial of the resurrection creates a people who are more concerned about this life, to the exclusion of the life which is yet to come.
- C. Beloved, without orthodoxy, without having truth nailed down in our hearts, and having the screws put into it, we end up taking significant pieces out, assuming that we’ll be fine.
  - 1. Yes, we can receive a heavenly language in this age     Yes, we can see the power of God demonstrated through our lives and ministries     Yes, we can experience promotions in our careers, advances in our desires     Yes, we can preach with the anointing of the Holy Spirit Yes, we can see souls saved for Christ     Yes, we can see cities in large part transformed
  - 2. But none of these things fulfill all things perfectly. No matter how gooder it gets here on earth, it’s still not good enough to be considered heaven! It’s still life without Christ ruling and reigning, not just in the spiritual, but in the natural., not just in the heavens, but on earth. It’s still life without the devil imprisoned and sentenced to the lake of fire. It’s still life which is subject to death and decay. It’s still life with sickness, sin, temptation, and demonic forces in the atmosphere.

- D. Beloved, this is why we must live in hope of a future resurrection. This is why we are looking for something better. And if we don’t have that hope, if we aren’t living in light of this coming event, we end up settling for our best life now, to the exclusion of a future hope. This is Paul’s so adamant admit about them not losing this piece.
- E. The resurrection of the dead, keeps us outta the weeds of political conspiracies, Jericho marches around Washington DC, QAnon pollical propaganda, rumors of insurrection, concerns of a civil war, putting on a mask, fears of a democratic run sex trafficking ring that’s been sold through Wayfair furniture online, and whether or not Bill Gates is trying to program us through some sort of microchip.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

- A. Look, we are living in a time, THAT’S NOT UNIQUE to human history, it’s the reason why we have historical creeds! These moments in time, like this moment for the Corinthian’s allow us the opportunity to rightly divide the Word of Truth, and to assert publicly, first among the Church, and secondly among the nations what God’s Word actually says!
- B. This is what I believe the future revival is about; the double portion isn’t just more, it’s a mixture of the WORD and SPIRIT!
  - 1. **1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 6:20-21**     *“O Timothy! Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge—by professing it some have strayed concerning the faith...”*
  - 2. **Jude 3**     *“Beloved, while I was very diligent to write you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once and for all delivered to the saints.”*