

The Passion Q & A
Why is the Resurrection Important?
1 Corinthians 15:12-20

April 16, 2017 am

HDBC

Four men wrote accounts of the life of Jesus and none of them ended the story with his death. They all recorded the miracle of His resurrection. **Jesus died. That is a fact. Jesus also lives. And that is a fact.**

His resurrection is not simply a postscript to the story. It is not a casual addendum. It is in fact the pinnacle of the story. Everything about His life ultimately led to the crucifixion and resurrection. Without the resurrection all that preceded it would have been meaningless. The resurrection is the linchpin of our faith.

The past three weeks we have answered some of the key questions surrounding ***the passion of Jesus***. The passion general points us to the last week of His life, culminating in his death, burial and resurrection. We answered the questions . . .

Why did Jesus die?

Who killed Jesus?

How much did He suffer?

If you missed any of those, I hope you will listen or read them from the app.

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John wrote narrative accounts of the resurrection. They described it as a real event, providing **descriptive details** that offer credibility to the **veracity of their accounts**. They established the fact of the resurrection.

Paul, in 1 Corinthians 15 also wrote of the resurrection. He offers additional evidence of the resurrection by pointing to eyewitnesses who saw, heard and touched the resurrected Jesus. But he took it a step further. He wrote of the resurrection from a theological perspective. He answers the question he knew would be asked . . .

Why is the resurrection important?

Some were claiming that there was no resurrection . . . of anyone . . . period. Paul dispels that error in our text and in doing so offers five positive results of the resurrection of Christ. Five things that are true . . . because Jesus was resurrected.

READ TEXT – 1 Corinthians 15:12-20

1. Empowers our Message (14)

Then our preaching is vain

Vain – Meaningless. Of no worth. What was it that they were preaching? What was their message and our message? The death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. The message is that Jesus, as the son of God, lived a sinless life, died in our place, paying our sin debt, was buried in a tomb, and was resurrected on the third day.

Our message would be meaningless without the resurrection of Jesus. If all we could say about Jesus is that he died and was buried, we have no good news at all. Jesus would be no different from all the others who offer some kind of hope for life beyond this life. **A dead savior has no power to save.**

**The heart and soul of our preaching is the Gospel (good news).
And the heart and soul of the Gospel is the resurrection of Jesus.**

We preach that Jesus is alive. If He is not alive our preaching would be vain because it would be untrue. Our preaching would be vain because it would offer not real distinction from all other claims of religious truth.

But He is alive and that **empowers our message**. What distinguishes our preaching from that which is heard in a Muslim mosque, a Jewish synagogue, or Buddhist or Hindu temple is the resurrection of Jesus. The fact that we are talking about a person who lived, died, & lives again makes all the difference in the world.

2. Justifies our Faith (14)

Without the resurrection of Jesus . . . Your faith also is vain

Without the resurrection our faith has **no power to change anything of consequence**. It might make us feel good for a season, but would have no power to give us assurance of eternal life. It is the resurrection of Jesus that extends our hope beyond this life to the next. Without the resurrection our faith is limited to hope for a better life here and now, but offers nothing beyond.

The resurrection of Jesus makes it clear that what we experience in this life is not all there is. His resurrection points to an existence which **transcends this one**. Faith in a dead man is worthless faith. If Christ is dead, then I have no reason to hope for anything beyond death. But He is not dead. He is alive. Therefore my faith is alive.

3. Assures our Forgiveness (17)

You are still in your sins.

Without the resurrection there would be no forgiveness of sins.

This is critical. If Jesus had not been resurrected, then we are still in our sins. That means it took more than the death of Christ to forgive our sins, it took the resurrection as well. Why is this so?

If Christ had not escaped the grave, it would signify that the process of paying for our sins had not been completed. It would indicate that He **was an imposter, for he** had made it clear that He would be resurrected. His resurrection validate his claim to be the son of God.

His resurrection also reveals that our sin debt was paid in full. His resurrection points to the completion of the mission. It was the father's pleasure to allow His son to die for our sins, but it was also the father's pleasure to bring him from the grave, fully alive. His resurrection stamps, ***Paid in Full*** on my record. If His body was still in the grave there could be no assurance that His death had been sufficient.

4. Secures our Future (18)

Then those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.

If Jesus has not been resurrected from the dead, then those who have already died have perished. They have no life, no future. Because He has been resurrected, they are alive with him. **I've always enjoyed walking through cemeteries.**

Chuck Swindoll relates the following grave stone messages:

Here lies Les Moore,
Shot four times with a forty-four.
No Les, No Moore.

In Ribbesford, England
Anna Wallace
The children of Israel wanted bread;
The Lord sent them manna.
Old Clerk Wallace wanted a wife;
The devil sent him Anna.

In a Silver City, NV cemetery

*Here lies Butch—we planted him raw,
He was quick on the trigger
But slow on the draw*

I saw one in cemetery in Princeton, NJ *She had fun!*

Some are funny. Others betray a hopelessness.
Consider this headstone found in a California cemetery.
You Can't Win!

The older we get the more we think about what is going to happen on the other side of the grave. All people die. **We expend energy, time, and large amounts of money to avoid it**, but death eventually wins the day. What then?

Were it not for the resurrection of **Jesus** we would simply perish. We would be lost forever. But because of the resurrection of Jesus, we have life forever.

5. **Validates our Hope** (19)

If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.

Have you ever been the **recipient of a practical joke**? Someone set you up to make you believe something and you bought it. But it was all a charade?

If all there is no resurrection, then we are to be pitied as fools. Without the resurrection, then it is all a mockery, a joke.

But it is not a charade. The resurrection of Christ is real. His resurrection validates the hope with which we live our lives. We are indeed not to be pitied because He is indeed alive.

Hear the words of pastor and author, John Ortberg.

Nobody ever wants a season of hard times to come, but when they do, they have a way of making you ... ask,

What am I really counting on? Am I building my life on a foundation that's solid enough that circumstances beyond my control cannot take it away?

*That's why I look forward to Easter ... [a time when] we gather to remember the **only hope capable of sustaining a human life through everything.***

People have not gathered for the past 2,000 years to say,

"The stock market has risen."

"The dollar has risen."

"The employment rate has risen."

"The gross domestic product has risen." Or,

"The value of your 401(k) has risen."

Here's the one hope that has held up human beings across every continent and culture for two millennia of difficult times of poverty, disease, pain, and death itself:

"Christ is risen. He is risen indeed."

That is what validates our hope.

I serve a risen Savior . . . He's in the world today

I know that He is risen . . . No matter what men may say.