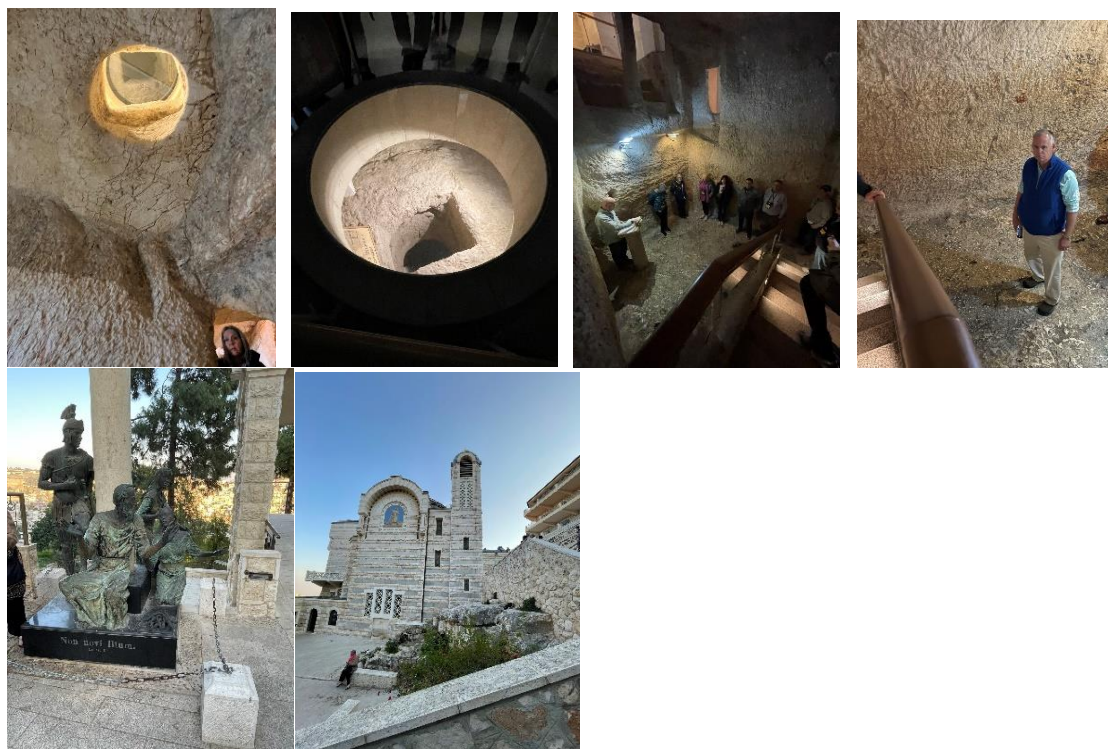


**No Option**  
**Resurrection Sunday**  
**1 Corinthians 15**  
**March 31, 2024**

What an incredible day God has given us today! To celebrate Resurrection Day with the baptism of \_\_\_\_\_ people is really a privilege! I am so grateful that these people are being obedient in baptism, not as an act of legalism, but obedience.

Most of the Christian life is about daily choices as to whether or not to obey God, but there are some things that are not optional. Faith in Christ alone for salvation is not optional, it is required. Faith in the Scripture is vital, on and on we could go, but what about the resurrection of Christ? Our faith in the resurrection of Christ is vital to a true relationship to Christ. If you can't believe the resurrection of Christ, you can't be saved. It is not an option. The title of the message today is: NO OPTION.

Can you recall the resurrection story? Jesus was arrested and mistreated on false charges. He was held for a short time at the house of Caiaphas – a place we visited last year. The place they held him was in a hole. It was at the house of Caiaphas where Peter followed at a distance.



The crowd had a choice whether to release Jesus or one of the most notorious criminals of the day. They chose Barabbas.

Jesus was beaten beyond what we can imagine. He endured the nails, the crown of thorns, but worst of all the disconnect from God.

3 days after His burial, the woman went to the tomb. The stone was rolled away, Jesus had risen... just as He said He would. Over 500 witnesses encountered Jesus before His ascension.

Sounds unbelievable, doesn't it? Like most other things in the Christian life, it requires faith, but God gives the faith to accept the resurrection as FACT. (In my Bible, the heading for 1 Cor. 15 says: "THE FACT OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION.")

Let's see what God has to say to us from the pen of Paul as we realize that for the Christian there is NO OPTION for not believing the resurrection.

## **Read 1 Corinthians 15.12-15**

3 things from this text. First, is the...

### **I. FAILURE**

1. Look again at **verse 12:**

**1 Cor. 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?**

2. Remember our messages from 1 Cor? (We will return!) Remember what we have learned about the church at Corinth? They were in trouble. That's why Paul wrote at least 3 letters to them.
3. Why were they in trouble? They had gotten off track. They were teaching and doing things contrary to sound doctrine. They

started well but FAILED to follow the spiritual principles they had been taught.

**Paul wants them to get back on track. Christians can get confused and wander off, and God has a way of dealing with true believers to restore them.**

## **WANDERING OFF**

**Dr. Andrew Bonar told me how, in the Highlands of Scotland, a sheep would often wander off into the rocks and get into places that they couldn't get out of. The grass on these mountains is very sweet and the sheep like it, and they will jump down ten or twelve feet, and then they can't jump back again, and the shepherd hears them bleating in distress. They may be there for days, until they have eaten all the grass. The shepherd will wait until they are so faint they cannot stand,**

**and then they will put a rope around him, and he will go over and pull that sheep up out of the jaws of death.**

**"Why don't they go down there when the sheep first gets there?" I asked.**

**"Ah!" He said, "they are so very foolish they would dash right over the precipice and be killed if they did!"**

**And that is the way with men; they won't go back to God till they have no friends and have lost everything. If you are a wanderer I tell you that the Good Shepherd will bring you back the moment you have given up trying to save yourself and are willing to let Him save you His own way.**

SOURCE: Moody's Anecdotes, pp. 70-71 [www.sermoncentral.com](http://www.sermoncentral.com)

4. As you look at the end of verse 12 can you sense that Paul is finding it hard to understand how they had gotten so far away.

**“...some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead.”**

**(paraphrase)**

5. Paul says **“How could this happen? How did this happen? You were taught the truth, but some of you do not believe it.”**
6. It seems that the contextual issue was the resurrection of Christians after they die. That had always been a topic of argument – especially between those who were Christians and those who were not.
7. Paul’s point was that if they could not believe the resurrection of believers, then that would mean that even Christ had not been raised from the dead.
8. Apart from the resurrection of Christ, the whole Christian story and life is one big hoax. Look at it again...

**1 Cor. 15.14 ...and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain.**

9. Apart from faith in the resurrection, you are not saved!
10. Some of you are thinking “**wait, I thought we are saved by grace through faith?**”

**Ephesians 2.8-9 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.**

11. That is true. The question is “**faith in what?**” That Jesus is who He says He is, who the Scripture says He is, that He did what He said He would do – and will do what He said He would do.



**Romans 10.9-10 That if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; 10 for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.**

12. If Jesus, the Saviour, has not been raised, then the Bible is not true, Christians are not saved.
13. If the resurrection is not true, verse 15 says we are “**false witnesses.**”

**NLT: “We are lying about God.”**

14. Faith in the resurrection is a much bigger deal than any of us can imagine!
15. Another thinking about the resurrection concerns,.. the...

## **II. FUTURE**

1. What comes to mind when you think about the FUTURE? Finances? Health? Retirement?
2. Finances come and go – and usually goes a lot easier than when those finances come. Health comes, and health goes. Retirement comes and goes. I'm told it often doesn't work out exactly as planned.

**The future can be scary.**

### **1525 Map**

**An interesting map is on display in the British Museum in London. It's an old mariner's chart, drawn in 1525, outlining the North American coastline and adjacent waters. The cartographer made some intriguing**

**notations on areas of the map that represented regions not yet explored. He wrote: "Here be giants," "Here be fiery scorpions," and "Here be dragons." Eventually, the map came into the possession of Sir John Franklin, a British explorer in the early 1800s. Scratching out the fearful inscriptions, he wrote these words across the map: "Here is God."**

Sermonillustrations.com

3. When you think about the FUTURE, you can think of the near term, long term, or eternal.
4. I can't control a lot of what happens to me in the near- and long-term FUTURE, but I am totally confident of my eternal FUTURE. Take the truth of the resurrection away and your hope of a good eternal FUTURE goes down the tubes!

**[Read 1 Cor. 15.17-19](#)**

5. If Christ has not been raised, you have no eternal FUTURE.
6. If Christ has not been raised, then nobody is raised, nobody is in heaven because it didn't ever exist!
7. Look at verse 19 again...

**1 Cor. 15.19 If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.**

If you are wrong about the resurrection, you are to be pitied!

8. BUT WE ARE NOT WRONG! That leads us to consider finally... the...

**III.FACT**

1. Let's read that section in my Bible where the heading says:

## **“The Fact of Christ’s Resurrection”**

**Some people don't even believe facts anymore...**

### **FACT OR FICTION?**

**The London Daily Mail reports that one in four Britons don't believe Prime Minister Winston Churchill actually existed. They suspect he is a mythical character rather than a historical one. Likewise, they think historical figures such as Florence Nightingale, Sir Walter Raleigh, Mahatma Gandhi and Cleopatra were also fictional personalities created for literature or films. Yet, they believe Sherlock Holmes was a real person. How might Americans fare on this**

**kind of survey? Surveys like this suggest Western Civilization is in real trouble.**

(Source: WorldNet Daily, 2/11/08)

**Read 1 Cor. 15.1-2**

2. Do you understand what this is saying? Notice, specifically verse 2: We are saved by what? Faith in what? Faith in Christ in response to the gospel message.
3. What does it mean “**to believe in vain?**” It means to either have faith in the wrong thing, or an incomplete faith, which includes faith in the resurrection.
4. Where is our faith supposed to be? Look at the FACTS:

**Read 1 Cor. 15.3-4**

5. Few things in history are as accurate as the truth of the resurrection. Eyewitnesses,

archaeological evidence, textual evidence, and the evidence of a changed heart by those who have responded by faith in the gospel.

6. The FACT of the resurrection sets Christianity apart from any other religion.

**I serve a risen Saviour  
He's in the world today.  
I KNOW that He is living  
Whatever men may say.**

**I see His hand of mercy  
I hear His voice of cheer.  
And just the time I need Him  
He's always near.**

**He lives! He lives!  
Christ Jesus lives today  
He walks with me and talks with me  
Along life's narrow way.**

**He lives, He lives**

**Salvation to impart.  
You ask me how I know He lives,  
He lives within my heart!**

## **Conclusion**

You have a choice. Believe the Bible or not. Believe God or not. Trust Christ or not. Believe in the resurrection or not.

I choose to believe the truth. The resurrected Christ is the way, truth and life. There is NO OPTION for abundant life now and forever apart from real faith in the resurrected Christ!

Prayer