

“I Know He Lives!”

1 Corinthians 15.1-24

Today Churches around the World CELEBRATING!

Bold Statement of FAITH “Christ is Risen!” ----- “He is Risen INDEED!”

Sometimes we WONDER, QUESTION, DOUBT – Is it REALLY True?
 RISING from DEAD Not Easy to Believe any Country, Culture, Century
 DEATH Sadly Familiar Reality > People we LOVE All DIE > US too!
 NEVER Known anyone to RISE! Contradicts our LIFE Experience!
 Corinth > Greek City > Bodily Resurrection: Impossible AND Undesirable
 Ancient World – Spiritual Focus – Body Not Matter – Escape from It!
 Body like ANCHOR holding Us Down from SPIRIT World > Death ESCAPE!
 Ap Paul OPPOSITE Message > Jesus rose from DEAD – Never to Die Again

1. Is it Really Important?

LETTER: Questions Corinthian Xtians sent to Apostle Paul

Ch 1 – 4: DIVISION in Church “I follow Paul, Peter, Apollos, Jesus!!”

Ch 5 – Strange Misbehavior / Man & Father’s Wife > Church APPROVES!

Ch 6 – LAWSUITS between Believers in Church

Ch 7 – Marriage, Divorce, Re-Marriage, Children, Singleness

Ch 8-10 – Conscience, Idolatry, Eating Food Sacrificed to IDOLS

Ch 11 – Roles of Husbands / Wives / Proper Practice of Lord’s Supper

Ch 12-14 – Spiritual Gifts: Importance of Each Member of Body of Christ

Ch 13 – LOVE: Faith & Hope & GREATEST is LOVE!

Vital, Essential, Non-Negotiable Issues for Healthy Xtian Life & Church

Up to 15th Ch NOT Yet told us what is of FIRST Importance, Until NOW!

v. 3 **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

FIRST Importance / Foundational Truth > W/Out THIS... Ya Got NOTHING!

So Far in 1 Corinth – Important Teachings for Xtian Life & CHURCH Life!

Would be NO Xtian and NO Church if Jesus DID NOT Rise from the DEAD!

GOSPEL OF JESUS > Gospel FROM Jesus – GIVEN by REVELATION

v. 1,2 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.

v. 2 “by which you are being saved” / No Rez, NOT Saved > Clear Word Bible
 Gospel of Christian Faith > Rez --- you can make up your OWN Gospel / Truth
 Many Peeps Smorgasbord Faith: Pick & Choose WHAT they WANT Believe
 People talk about MY TRUTH - I am Interpreter of Right/Wrong, Good/Evil
 1st Amendment Rights in America! – FREE to Have your TRUTH > For YOU!
 Historic Xtian Faith is Revealed in Bible > Bible teaches JESUS is ALIVE!

Can you be a Christian if you DO NOT Believe Jesus rose from Dead?

Many CLAIM they IDENTIFY as Christian, Not Believe He’s Son of God

Follower of Jesus but Not Believe literally, actually, Rose from DEAD

“I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Christ: ‘I’m ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don’t accept His claim to be God.’ That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic—on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg—or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or else a madman or something worse.... You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come up with any patronising nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.”
 –C.S. Lewis in Mere Christianity

2. Is it True?

v. 4 “he was buried” > Likely Near place CROSS was LOCATED

EXACT SITE is UNCERTAIN > 2000 yrs of CHANGE > WARFARE, SIEGE

ENEMIES Thought they were FINISHED with JESUS >> CORPSE Remained

...people sentenced to death forfeited their property and were forbidden burial
 Tacitus, Roman historian

NOBODY IMPORTANT was Crucified > No Victim Worthy of NEW Tomb

700 Years EARLIER – Prophet ISAIAH saw these Events and PREDICTED:

He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death Isa 53.9

GRAVE – Between 2 Guilty THIEVES – as Hung on Cross

In DEATH – Placed in Expensive Tomb of Prominent Leader

Resurrection ONE of Best ESTABLISHED Facts in HISTORY

v. 4 “he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures”

Challenges Greek-Thinking Corinthians who THOUGHT it was IMPOSSIBLE

Walked to Emmaus – Ate Fish on Beach – Taught 40 Days - Ascended

Apostle Paul – Puts on HAT of Defense Attorney > WITNESSES...

v. 5 “RISEN JESUS/ He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. 6 Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. 7 Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. >> **500 at Once, most of whom are still ALIVE > ASK Them!**

2) v. 8 “Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me/Paul”

PAUL Born in Tarsus, capital of Cilicia, Asia Minor – modern day Turkey

Father was Roman – named Paul from birth / Jewish name Saul

Jewish influence – most formative / Pharisee / student of Gamaliel

Strong Opponent of Followers of Jesus > v. 9 “I persecuted the church of God”

Saul of Tarsus Angry about Jesus > VIOLENT RELIGIOUS Fundamentalist

v. 8 “Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me/Paul”

‘untimely born’ = Greek word for ABORTION

LAST OF ALL to me also -

1. No More Appearances- not Joan of Arc, Muhammed, or Joseph Smith

2. Paul’s Calling & Standing was EQUAL to All other Apostles

Paul Declares Resurrection of Jesus as Space & Time HISTORICAL Event

Text: BOTH TRUTH of Resur & Paul’s TESTIMONY as Believer Risen Jesus

Jesus NOT Messiah Paul expected: Sought Glorious King / Saw Gory Criminal

Jesus was Poor, Weak Man who Could Not Save Self from Executioner

Paul’s World was Forever Changed when he saw RISEN LORD JESUS Christ

“The resurrection of Jesus is the Gibraltar of Christian evidences” R.A. Torrey

My Prayer on this Easter Morning that YOU TOO will Encounter Risen JESUS

3. What Would We Lose if there is NO Resurrection?

v. 14 “And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. 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.”

If Rez NOT TRUE we’re LIARS: 50 yrs preaching Resurr # of Countries

Still have the teaching of Jesus? NO! – Woven into His teaching is REZ

“From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.”

Matthew 16.21

All 27 Books of NT based on REALITY of RESURRECTION

Apart from Rez we stand on SAND – We are MOST to be PITIED? Why?

PAUL: Take SHIRT off Back > LASHINGS in SKIN > Absolute FOOL!
 No Rez > You've Been FOOL - Money Given? Words Sung? Hours Spent?

This is not a small matter – Everything depends on it

All RELIGIONS HOPE for Something GOOD beyond their GRAVES
 HUGE DIFFERENCE between Resurrection Ideas of Xtianity & All Else...
 RISEN CHRIST! --- Claimed “Way, Truth, Life” – Then ROSE from DEAD

Muhammed, Budda, every Other Religious Leader Still in GRAVE

If Christ is risen – then nothing else matters. And if Christ is not risen – then nothing else matters.
 Jaroslav Pelikan

4. Does Resurrection Really make any Difference?

Parallel btwn BIRTH and RESURRECTION of Jesus

BIRTH – Completely NATURAL > Conception was Super-Natural

VIRGIN Conception in MARY by H.S. > Hidden from EYES of Man

DEATH – Completely Natural CROSS > Resurrection was Super-Natural

Resurrection Body Emerging from Grave > Hidden from EYES of Man

Christ was FIRST-FRUITS – Begins HARVEST, Final Fruits are Guaranteed
 “According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” 1 Peter 1.3

“This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” 2 Timothy 1.9,10

v. 17 “if X has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins”

v. 2 the gospel...by which you are being saved

“By this gospel YOU ARE BEING SAVED” Continuous Action

JESUS DID NOT JUST SAVE FROM YESTERDAY'S SINS

BY FAITH HE HAS EVEN SAVED YOU FROM TOMORROWS SINS

vs. 1,2 the gospel...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.

v. 1 RECEIVED / IN WHICH YOU STAND / v. 2 HOLD FAST

Words are Decisive Acts – Firm Commitment

SALVATION EXPERIENCE – BIGGER THAN ONE POINT IN TIME

Stretches from ETERNITY PAST – Chosen by God – unto ETERNITY FUTURE – Dwell
Forever in His Presence

Yom Kippur > Priest who entered Most Holy Place wore garment w BELLS

People listened for Sound – Bells = NOT Struck Dead

God ACCEPTED his Sacrifice so they will Not be Struck Dead

“Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written:
Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree” Galatians 3.13

JESUS WAS CURSED > NOT PERSONALLY > VICARIOUSLY – FOR US

HE TOOK OUR CURSE – BORE OUR SINS – PAID OUR PENALTY

“The Lord spoke to Moses... Thus you shall bless the people of Israel: you shall say to them,
The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious
to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.” Numbers 6.22-26

For 3 Days Disciples HEARD No Bells – Jesus stone cold dead in Tomb

Resurrection of Jesus is RINGING of Bell from Heaven > SHALOM!

Peace with God & Man / Christ is Risen! - Christ is Risen, INDEED!

1 Corinthians 15 ¹Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, ²and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. ³For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁴that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁵and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. ⁶Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. ⁷Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. ⁸Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. ⁹For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. ¹⁰But 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. ¹¹Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed. ¹²Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? ¹³But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. ¹⁴And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. ¹⁵We 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. ¹⁶For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. ¹⁷And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. ¹⁸Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. ¹⁹If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. ²⁰But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.