

## What If Christ Was Not Raised From The Dead?

### 1 Corinthians 15: 12-22

- When you think of a man dying on a cross, you probably think of Jesus Christ. But, over the years, there have been many men who have been crucified. In 519 B.C. the Persian King Darius crucified 3000 Babylonians. In A.D. 66, the Romans crucified 3,600 Jews which started a revolt. By the time order was restored, they had run out of wood for the crosses.
- So what makes this particular crucifixion so different? The answer, no one else came back from the dead!!!! If it hadn't been for the resurrection, the ministry of Jesus would have ended, His claims would be ignored, and he would have been simply another religious martyr and forgotten a long time ago.
- So that's why it is important that we come to a decision in our hearts in regard to the resurrection of Christ. Either he rose from the tomb or he did not.
- The resurrection Of Jesus was very much a reality. Jesus himself said in Revelation 1: 17-18 "I am the First and the Last. I am the Living one; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever."
- Apart from the resurrection, Jesus could not have conquered death, and death would always conquer us. Without the resurrection, the good news would be bad news and there would be nothing worth preaching.
- Without the resurrection, the gospel would be an empty hopeless message of meaningless nonsense.
- Here is a list of things that would be worthless if not for the resurrection.

1. Faith in Christ would be worthless. 1 Corinthians 15:14 says, "And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith."

- The hall of faith would be the hall of fools. Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Moses, Rahab, David, the prophets, would have been faithful for nothing!! They would have been mocked, imprisoned, stoned, afflicted, ill-treated and put to death for nothing, lived for nothing and died for nothing.

2. All witnesses to, and preachers of the Resurrection would be liars.

- To deny the resurrection is to call the apostles and every other leader of the New Testament church not simply mistaken but liars!!
- And if the apostles, the prophets and the New Testament writers lied about the heart of the gospel why should we believe anything else that they wrote? All New Testament truth stands or falls together based on the resurrection!!

3. All men would still be in their sins.

- 1 Corinthians 15:17 "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins."
- If Jesus did not rise from the dead, then sin won the victory over him and over all man!! There would be no forgiveness of sins or salvation or reconciliation or spiritual life!! **BUT!!!!!!**
  - The fact is HE HAS RISEN!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Acts 5:30-31 "The God of our ancestors raised Jesus from the dead whom you killed by hanging him on a

cross. God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might bring Israel to repentance and forgive their sins.”

- 1 Corinthians 15:20-22 “But Christ has been indeed raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through man, the resurrection from the dead comes also through a man. For as in Adam all die. So in Christ all will be made alive.”
- Paul calls Jesus the “first fruits of the dead.” In the Old Testament, before the Israelites harvested their crops, they were to bring a representative sample, called the first fruit, to the priests as an offering to the Lord. The full harvest could not be made until the first fruits were offered.
- The fact that Jesus is the first fruit indicates that the rest of the crop is going to be harvested!
- Illustration: There’s a story that’s told in Brazil about a missionary who discovered a tribe of Indians in a remote part of the jungle. They lived near a large river.
- Jesus came into the world and found a people enslaved by their fear of death. He could have explained that the river of death was nothing to fear, but the people wouldn’t have believed him. He touched a boy and called him back to life, but his followers were unconvinced. He brought a little girl back to life but still they would not believe. He even let a dead man spend four days in a grave and then healed him. But was that enough? I guess not.
- See it was necessary for Jesus himself to enter the river, to submerge himself in the waters of death only to emerge after three days on the other side. It was only then that we could believe that death had been conquered!!!
- Isaiah 53: 3, 5 “He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces, he

was despised, and we esteemed him not. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.”