

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST PART TWO:

1 CORINTHIANS 15:12-34: Paul in his writing to the Corinthians defended the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He did so by making a number of statements showing the results if Christ had not been raised from the dead the effect it would have on what is preached and believed by the Christian faith. Let us examine his arguments in 1 Corinthians 15:12-19

1. IF CHRIST HAS NOT BEEN RAISED FROM THE DEAD, THE GOSPEL IS BAD NEWS.

If Christ has not been raised from the dead; Christ is still dead (v 13) If Christ has not been raised from the dead; our preaching and faith are in vain. (v14) If Christ has not been raised from the dead; We are false witnesses because we testify that God raised Him from the dead which He did not. (v15) If Christ has not been raised; Our faith is worthless and we are still in our sins (v17) If Christ has not been raised from the dead; Those who died in Christ have all perished; (v18) After giving all those reasons, Paul stated a fact in verse 19. It reads;” If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied” (NASV). Have you ever found yourself in a situation and the Lord dropped something in your spirit at that moment which changed your outlook immediately.? I had an incident back in the ‘70s; it was my first appointment as a Sales Manager, I was sitting in my District manager’s office because he made a racist remark concerning two of my agents, one a Jew the other an Italian. After I pointed it out to him privately that as a manager, he should not be making such racist remarks, he called me into his office and tried to use his authority to justify what he said. He was very prideful and while he was trying to intimidate me, the thought was dropped into my spirit; “if in this life only we have hope we are men most miserable.” At that moment I smiled, and he was infuriated. I saw how miserable he was, but I had peace. I just sat there and allowed him to vent. When he was

finished, I asked him to arrange a meeting with his boss. He refused to do so. I went back to my office and called his boss for an appointment, he reprimanded me for not following protocol. I told him I did, but my manager told me that he would not speak with me. Then I said I called because I wanted to know who he was by his refusal to speak with me. His boss asked me to call my manager on the phone, not to go to his office and tell him that he said he should make an appointment with him for me the next day. Shortly after, he came to my office and said he did not know that I would call his boss. I reminded him why I called him. He gave me the address and time of the appointment. The next day when I met with his boss, I was given an immediate transfer to another office. His boss was the regional manager. He called my new manager and arranged an appointment for me that day. He also told me to arrange to take all my personal belongings from the office and go to my new office. God protects and provides for us even when we are disobedient. Oh! I did not mention that I was not born again when that happened; yet He gave me a word to show His love. Paul said that if our hope in Christ is only in this life we need to be pitied; our hope in Christ is in this world and in the one to come. We must live and act knowing that our hope for our future is in Christ. This world is not our home, we are pilgrims on our journey to our future home.

2. BECAUSE CHRIST ROSE FROM THE DEAD, THE GOSPEL AFFECTS ALL FOR

GOOD OR BAD: THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST MEANS DEFEAT FOR HIS

ENEMIES: Because Christ has been raised from the dead, His enemies will be under His feet. (1

Corinthians 15:25) The Bible refers to death as an enemy. On the other hand, death is the door

between us and God. Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 5:8; that to be absent from the body is to be

present with the Lord. When a believer dies, his body is asleep until the resurrection, but his

spirit goes back to the Lord. If death is the last barrier between us and God, (sin being the first

barrier) why does Scriptures call death an enemy. It is an enemy because it represents the opposite of all God is and desires. Death is surrounded by darkness, sickness, suffering and mourning. God is light and life and He desires us to have good health and joyful lives.

3. THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST MEANS RESURRECTION AND REWARD FOR HIS

FOLLOWERS: Because Christ has been raised from the dead, His followers who died will be raised from the dead when He returns for His church. Paul clarifies this truth with two powerful illustrations-the first fruits and the Adams. (1 Corinthians 15:20-23) FIRST Paul assures us of our resurrection by using the example of the first fruits. The first fruits celebration took place when the Israelites celebrated the barley harvest in the spring. Before they could enjoy the barley crop, God required of them the first fruits- a ripe stalk of the grain as an offering (Lev. 23:10-14) Jesus is the first fruits of the resurrection. (1 Corinthians 15:20-23; Romans 1:3-4, 8:29-30)

SECOND, Paul assures us of our resurrection by using the illustration of the two Adams. "So it is written, The first Adam became a living being; the last ADAM became a life-giving spirit" (1 Corinthians 15:45) Adam disobeyed God and that one act of disobedience opened the door for sin to all. As a result, through Adam, all face death. The good news is that Jesus died for all our sins and rose from the dead. All who trust and obey Him are forgiven and receive new lives, will conquer death, and live forever. Death entered the world through the first Adam, but through the last Adam- Jesus Christ, resurrection of life comes to those who belong to Him. (1 Corinthians 15:23) At Christ's second coming all who died will be resurrected, those who obeyed Him will be resurrected to eternal life and those who disobeyed Him, to eternal damnation (Matt.25:41-45; 2 Thes. 1:7-9; Rev. 21:8; Acts 24:1-27; 1 Thes. 4:16; Revelation 20:4-6; Daniel 7: 9-10,22)

4. THE GOSPEL OF THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST REQUIRES HIS FOLLOWERS TO

STOP SINNING: Paul taught in 1 Corinthians 15:34 that those who have evil friends and live in sin have lost their senses. Earlier in 1 Corinthians 11:30 he wrote that some at Corinth were dead, and some were sick because they lived in sin. He continued in verse 31 that if we judge ourselves God will not judge us. We must avoid friendship with evil people who will corrupt our good characters. That was a warning to those at Corinth who were indulging in pagan feasts and serves as a warning to us. Let us learn from this teaching and seek God's help is guiding us so that we will not be like them.

5. Father I thank you for your Word, your Son and the Holy Spirit who You gave us so that we can live holy lives if we make ourselves available to Him and are obedient. Help us not to be just hearers of Your word but to be hearers and doers also, in Jesus name. Amen.