

The Power Of The Resurrection

by
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Introduction:

To the world around us today is supposed to represent the annual celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. That event is of absolute importance to us, but once a year seems rather thin-observation of such an important event. We know that the Bible has instructed a special memorial of this event and, according to the pattern of the New Testament Church, this is to be observed every first day of the week (Matthew 26:26-29; Acts 20:7). Paul told us that following this instruction was in fact "proclaiming" His death (and obviously His resurrection), until He returns (1 Corinthians 11:23-29, esp. 26).

Since so many are talking about the resurrection today, we need to share the truth of the resurrection that is revealed in the Scriptures. Let's open the Scriptures to consider 1 Corinthians 15:12-19, as well as other supporting verses, for our lesson today.

Without the Resurrection, Preaching is Powerless

The point of all preaching is to prepare the souls of mankind for three events: Life; Death; and Judgment. Preaching is to help us while living in this mortal world. God is the giver of moral-understanding, that guides us (Ecclesiastes 9:1; Hebrews 5:14). Without this God-given guidance, man would only have the sight of their eyes; the desires of their flesh; and the whims of their ego, to lead them (1 John 2:15-17). Without God-given directions toward right, and away from wrong, we couldn't possibly steer our way through this life and find our way up the "narrow and difficult" way that leads to eternity (Matthew 7:13-14). Preaching is supposed to encourage a proper understanding of right and wrong, "convince, rebuke, and exhort with all longsuffering" (2 Timothy 4:1-5).

Preaching is to help us prepare for leaving this mortal-life. Our preparation requires discovering our Creator God (Acts 17:26-27). Our preparation requires hearing His message of hope (Romans 1:16; 10:17). Our preparation requires coming to the knowledge of the Son of God; and confessing that belief (Matthew 10:32; Acts 8:37; Romans 10:8-10). Our preparation requires being cleansed from our past sins (Acts 2:38-41; Acts 22:16; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11). Our preparation requires continuing to walk in the newness of life (Romans 6:1-4; Ephesians 4:17-32; Colossians 3:1-10).

If there is no resurrection, then Jesus was not raised; His body remains in the grave. Then, as Paul says, "...if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty..." (1 Corinthians 15:14). There would be no reason to believe in any of God's promises-if any fail they all fall. We would need to prepare for any life-beyond; and this life would, at best, be a fight-to-the-finish. Preaching would be a false-witness, proclaiming an event that will never happened (1 Corinthians 15:15).

Without the Resurrection, Faith is Powerless

Faith is the most transformative-power known in this world. Faith reaches into the deepest recesses of our heart and moves us at those deepest levels (1 Corinthians 2:9). Because of faith, there are those who turned from lives of corruption to find the pathway of light and hope (1 Corinthians 6:9-10). Because of faith, infamous men, like Saul of Tarsus, transformed to become great-workers for the Lord and His true-righteousness (Acts 22:16). Because of faith, even a drug-dealer/con-man, was transformed by faith in gospel of Jesus Christ (Acts 8:12-13).

Faith enables us to please God: Faith is trusting, and committing ourselves to doing, His will (Matthew 7:21; James 1:22). Faith is giving ourselves to Him, in this life (Mark 12:30; Romans 12:1-2). Faith is believing that He is, and He is a rewarded of diligent seekers (Hebrews 11:6).

Faith keeps us going: When enduring various trials (1 Peter 1:6-9). When facing physical illnesses (2 Corinthians 12:7-10; Philippians 2:25-30). When dealing with resistance from those around us (1 Peter 4:1-5). When life is difficult, and relief seems very far away (Galatians 4:7-9)

If there is no resurrection, then Jesus was not raised; His body remains in the grave. Our faith-all of our hope, and all of our allegiance to God, would be for not (1 Corinthians 15:14b). We have been believing and following a lie-our faith is futile. Paul continues to say that we would have a completely false sense-of-security-we would still be lost in our sins (1 Corinthians 15:17). All of this "transformative power" would just be more emotionalism and without true substance. There would be no hope for the difficult-situations of life (Matthew 11:28) and we would have no one to go to (1 Peter 5:7).

Without the Resurrection, Hope in Christ is Powerless

Those who are diligent and faithful Christians, have given themselves entirely to a different code of conduct. We have denied self, to follow Him (Matthew 16:24). We have shunned worldliness and its actions (Galatians 5:19-21; 1 John 2:15-17). We have taken on a plan of living to a higher-standard-righteousness in doing the will of God (2 Timothy 3:16-17). In the pursuit of this "better way of living" we have completely dedicated ourselves to its hope: We have given our self to being a "living sacrifice" to God (Romans 12:1). We have changed to be different than those around us (Romans 12:2). We have given ourselves to that hope "entirely" (1 Timothy 4:13, 15-16).

If there is no resurrection, then Jesus was not raised; His body remains in the grave. Why hope for something that God cannot do? We are hoping without hope. Paul says, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ" (and there is no resurrection), "we are of all men the most pitiable" (1 Corinthians 15:19). We have wasted time and opportunity, by hoping against hope.

Conclusion:

If there is no resurrection: Christ was not raised from the dead. Preaching is pointless. Faith is worthless. There is no hope beyond mortal death, and all who take on "hope" are pitiful. But, Paul did not stop at verse 19, he goes on to say, "But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep." Jesus' resurrection is real, God's power is real, faith is real, and hope is real. By the power of God Jesus was raised from mortal death to eternal life. The power of the resurrection, is the assurance of God's truth.

One day we will all be raised and go to Judgment (2 Corinthians 5:10). What you are willing to do now, will make all the difference in that Day! So, have you begun to prepare? Have you taken on a full commitment to the hope of faith? The opportunity to begin, through obedience the gospel, is yours, right now.