

## The Realities of the Resurrection

1 Corinthians 15: 12-14; 17

This is a day of utmost significance for the believer, and in fact, for the entire world. While we should be mindful of the resurrection of Christ our Lord each day, Easter Sunday is the day when the resurrection is celebrated by churches and believers around the world.

It is impossible for us to fully understand and appreciate the eternal implications of the resurrection. Although I may not be able to comprehend or adequately express the resurrection, I know it is central to the Gospel and the cornerstone of our faith in Christ. Consider the words of the apostle Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians: [1 Cor.15:12-14, 17 – Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?](#) <sup>[13]</sup> [But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen:](#) <sup>[14]</sup> [And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.](#) <sup>[17]</sup> [And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.](#) If Christ did not rise triumphantly in resurrection life, our faith is vain, our preaching is of no value, and we are without hope, yet in our sins. Thankfully, Christ has risen, our faith is not vain, our preaching is worthwhile, and we have pardon from sin in Christ's finished work!

Take a moment to consider the thoughts of John MacArthur – *“The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the single greatest event in the history of the world. It is so foundational to Christianity that no one who denies it can be a true Christian...A person who believes in a Christ who was not raised believes in a powerless Christ, a dead Christ. If Christ did not rise from the dead, then no redemption was accomplished at the cross and “your faith is worthless...” “If Christ was not raised, His death was in vain, your faith in Him would be pointless and your sins would still be counted against you with no hope of spiritual life.”* Now consider what Adrian Rogers had to say about the resurrection – *“The resurrection is not merely important to the historic Christian faith; without it, there would be no Christianity. It is the singular doctrine that elevates Christianity above all other world religions.”*

With the words of Paul as our base text, I would like for us to examine the [facts](#) revealed in other passages of Scripture as we consider: [The Realities of the Resurrection](#). I hope these facts will enlighten us to the profound significance of the resurrection of Christ. What does the Bible confirm about the resurrection? We discover:

**I. It Verified the Lord's Deity** – As we study the Bible, we discover that Jesus Christ was born into the world as a humble baby – being fully God and fully man. As He lived a perfect, sinless life among men, He declared His deity, knowing He was the only begotten of the Father. Now others had come before Jesus, making that claim, but they were unable to provide convincing evidence of such a claim. Jesus was different, because He truly was the only begotten Son of God the

Father. One claim that Jesus made while living upon the earth would be impossible for a mere mortal to fulfill – willingly laying down His life and miraculously taking it up again three days later. If Jesus could fulfill such a promise, one would rightly discern that He was in fact, God.

- His resurrection cannot be denied. It is not a mere fable or legend. The angels declared to the women at the tomb – he is not here, but is risen. Paul declared in [1 Cor.15:5-8](#) – *And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: <sup>[6]</sup> After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. <sup>[7]</sup> After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. <sup>[8]</sup> And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.*

- The resurrection of Jesus stands as irrefutable proof of Jesus' deity because He prophesied of His death, burial, and resurrection prior to these events happening. [Mark 10:33-34](#) – *Saying, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles: <sup>[34]</sup> And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again. [John 10:17-18](#) – Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. <sup>[18]</sup> No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.*

**II. It Settled the Lord's Authority** – As Jesus ministered among men, He declared Himself to be the Christ, the promised Messiah, who had come to take away the sin of the world. He knew He had come to offer Himself the atoning sacrifice for our sin, and yet most did not believe. They rejected His claim of being the Christ. They refused to believe on Him as the Savior sent from God. His resurrection forever settled His authority as the Christ, Savior of the world. Had He not risen, His authority could rightly be questioned; but since He rose as He said, one must believe that He is the Christ, Savior and Redeemer of mankind! [John 14:6](#) – *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.* [Acts 4:10-12](#) – *Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. <sup>[11]</sup> This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. <sup>[12]</sup> Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.* His resurrection settled the debate regarding His deity and His authority. He is the Christ, the sole means of salvation and reconciliation to God!

**III. It Defeated the Lord's Enemy** – With the first of God's creation, sin entered the human race because of the fall. Because of their sin, humanity abides under the curse of sin, which ultimately leads to death. With the exception of Enoch and Elijah, both taken up to God alive, all men since

Adam have faced death. The mortality rate in humanity stands at 100%. Death is brought about because of sin. Through His glorious resurrection, Christ defeated sin, death, hell, and the grave. He served notice to Satan that the reign of sin upon the earth had been defeated. Satan and sin suffered a mortal blow as Christ rose triumphant over death, the ultimate consequence of sin! **1 Cor.15:20-21 – But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.** <sup>[21]</sup> For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead. Heb.2:14 – Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. Rev.1:18 – **I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.**

**IV. It Provided the Believer's Clemency** – Through the resurrection of Christ, those who come to Him by faith unto salvation are justified in the sight of God. We are literally declared righteous and now acceptable to God based on the resurrection and righteousness of Christ! **Rom.4:24-25 – But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;** <sup>[25]</sup> **Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.**

▪ I am thankful for the guidance of the Spirit in revealing Scripture. Regarding the resurrection, I have mistakenly said in the past, that if Christ had not risen from the dead, we might have been pardoned from sin, but we would never enjoy eternal life. That is partly true; we could not enjoy eternal life had Christ not risen from the dead. However, had He not risen from the dead, we would not be justified in the eyes of God. We cannot separate the atonement of the cross and the glory of His resurrection when it comes to our justification in Christ. Both were necessary, and both remain essential. Consider the thoughts of Charles Hodge, found in MacArthur's commentary: *"With a dead Saviour, a Saviour over whom death had triumphed and held captive, our justification had been for ever impossible. As it was necessary that the high priest, under the old economy should not only slay the victim at the altar, but carry the blood into the most holy place, and sprinkle it upon the mercy-seat; so it was necessary not only that our great High Priest should suffer in the outer court, but that he should pass into heaven to present his righteousness before God for our justification. Both, therefore, as the evidence of the acceptance of his satisfaction on our behalf, and as a necessary step to secure the application of the merits of his sacrifice, the resurrection of Christ was absolutely essential, even for our justification."* <sup>i</sup>

**V. It Secured the Believer's Eternity** – As Christ rose from the grave in triumphant, resurrection life, He secured a miraculous benefit for all who come to Him by faith – eternal life! We have the promise of eternal life because Christ our Savior rose from the dead. Having atoned for our sin and conquering death, He grants eternal life to those who are saved by His grace, resting solely in His atoning work. Because Jesus lives, we have the promise of life beyond the grave! **1 Cor.15:20 –**

But now is Christ risen from the dead, *and* become the firstfruits of them that slept. 1 Cor.15:51-57 – Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, <sup>[52]</sup> In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. <sup>[53]</sup> For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality. <sup>[54]</sup> So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. <sup>[55]</sup> O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory? <sup>[56]</sup> The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law. <sup>[57]</sup> But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

**VI. It Impacted the World's History** – Although born in a humble stable, to parents of meager means, Jesus Christ fulfilled the will of His Father. Through His sinless life, sacrificial death, and victorious resurrection, mankind now has the opportunity to be saved by grace, forgiven of sin, reconciled to God, and promised eternal life. Never has a single life so impacted humanity and the course of human history as the life of Jesus Christ the Lord. Heb.1:1-3 – God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, <sup>[2]</sup> Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; <sup>[3]</sup> Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. Take a moment to consider the words of *One Solitary Life* written by Dr. James Allen Francis:

*Here is a man who was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He grew up in another village, while He worked in a carpenter shop until He was thirty. Then for three years He was an itinerant preacher.*

*He never owned a home. He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never had a family. He never went to college. He never put His foot inside a big city. He never traveled two hundred miles from the place He was born. He never did one of the things that usually accompany greatness. He had no credentials but Himself...*

*While still a young man, the tide of popular opinion turned against him. His friends ran away. One of them denied Him. He was turned over to His enemies. He went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed upon a cross between two thieves. While He was dying, His executioners gambled for His garment, the only piece of property He owned. When He was dead, He was laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend.*

*Nineteen long centuries have come and gone, and today He is the centerpiece of the human race and leader of the column of progress.*

*I am far within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, all the navies that ever sailed; all the parliaments that ever sat and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon this earth as powerfully as has that one solitary life.*

**Conclusion:** Although it would be impossible to exhaust the truths of the resurrection, I hope you have been enlightened and encouraged through this study. Because Jesus Christ lives, we have the hope and promise of eternal life with Him! He ascended back to His Father following the resurrection, where He is seated today making intercession for us. He left with the glorious promise to come again and receive those who believe upon Him unto Himself.

What does the resurrection mean to you? Do you know Christ as your personal Savior, having the hope of eternal life in Him? If so, you have received the greatest gift ever given. Rejoice in all you have received in Christ! If you have yet to respond to His gracious offer of salvation, I urge you to come in repentance and faith today!

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<sup>i</sup> MacArthur New Testament Commentary, The - MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Romans 1-8.