

So What If Christ Didn't Rise from the Dead?

1 Corinthians 15:3-8; 14-20; 53-58

Grace Fellowship Church / Easter / April 17, 2022

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Living as if Christianity is true is not the same thing as knowing and believing that it is.

I. How Do We Know the Resurrection Really Happened?

If the resurrection's going to make a difference in your life, you have to decide whether it actually happened or not.

1 Corinthians 15:3 "For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received..."

Paul chose to use technical Greek verbs that mean, "I researched, I gathered information, talked to eyewitnesses, and passed it on to you."

Paul's writing this letter only 20 years after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The start of Christianity rocked the Roman Empire the way it did because there were hundreds of witnesses. Paul is essentially saying "try to refute the evidence; talk to any of the other witnesses."

1 Corinthians 15:20 "But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead..."

II. So What Difference Should the Resurrection Make in My Life?

It changes everything! The resurrection of Jesus was never meant to create some new religion. It was designed to accomplish something that would change your life forever!

Some of the radical changes that take place when you embrace the truth of the resurrection:

A. Your Sins and Your Broken Mess No Longer Have to Condemn You or Define You

Christ's death made the payment for our sins in full and His resurrection proves He is who He says He is - the only perfect God-Man who gave His life for us.

1 Corinthians 15:17 "And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins."

If Christ is alive and your faith is in Him, then God looks at you and is satisfied. He accepts you because your sins have been paid in full by the death and resurrection of Jesus, so that you can be forgiven and free.

B. Your Fear of Death No Longer Has the Power to Rob You of Hope or Keep You from Really Living

1 Corinthians 15:55-57 "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?"⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

The resurrection is God's solution to our greatest fear.

Until you have the answer for death, it's hard to live a full life!

C. You'll Start Living with a New Sense of Purpose

1 Corinthians 15:58 "Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain."

Without the resurrection, your life can just wander and stagger from one cheap sales pitch to another, trying to get satisfaction and trying to find some kind of fuel that will make the engine of your heart run smoothly every day.

It's the resurrection of Christ, validating the person of Christ, that your heart yearns for.

If you don't believe in the resurrection of Jesus, your biggest problem still hangs over you. Confusion about why you're here and what you should live for still haunts you at every season of life.

If Jesus rose from the dead – and He did – then you can have Him in your life today.

The Gospel Message:

- All of us are sinners by nature and by choice. God saw the problem from the very beginning and promised to do something about it. He knew we would struggle to believe we needed the solution He was offering.
- He gave us the Ten Commandments so that we would see how sinful we are and know that we need a Savior.
- God sent His Son into this world to do for us what we could never do for ourselves.
- Jesus lived the only perfect life, keeping God's law perfectly.
- He died on the cross in payment for our sins and not His own. In other words, He became a substitute for us and took the punishment that should have been ours.
- When He rose from the dead, He proved to all the world that He is the Son of God who can take away the sins of the world. If He can do *that*—Rise again, then He can do *this*—forgive our sin!

2 Corinthians 5:21 "For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

We all have faith; it's just a question of where you're putting your faith. Absence of faith is never the problem. It's the presence of something else you're already trusting that causes you so much trouble.

Let go of whatever it is that you've been trusting in and trust in someone better—Jesus—who lived, died, and rose again for you!