



Resurrection Reaction

Today's Scripture Text

1 Corinthians 15:12-34

Sermon Points

#1. Without the Resurrection, following Jesus is pointless

- Read 1 Corinthians 15:12-19

In the Roman world, no one believed in a bodily resurrection after death, which made the claims of Christ totally radical. It was obviously being challenged in the church, and Paul needed to set their beliefs straight. They needed to accept the reality that Christianity could only be believed if they held to all of its miraculous claims. Paul therefore had to test their logic regarding the resurrection, and suggested that if it was not true then the rest of the claims would also fail to be true. If there is no such thing as a bodily resurrection, then:

- Jesus was never raised – if Jesus was not raised from the dead then Christianity is futile and should be abandoned entirely. But because he was raised to life, and is seated at the right hand of God, he must be worshipped. When we are struggling with our faith, we should remind ourselves of the truth of the resurrection, as every other belief we have rests on this.
- The Bible isn't true – if Jesus did not rise from the dead then all of the prophecies about the king are still unfulfilled, everything in the New Testament is untrue and the whole church is built on a lie.
- Sin is not forgiven – if Jesus did not rise from the dead, then his death was in vain, and the price for sin (death) has not been paid for us. This means that we remain in our sin, and have no way of atoning for or overcoming it at all.
- There is no hope beyond the grave – if Christ did not rise from the dead then there is nothing beyond the grave at all, which makes this life futile. It makes funerals beyond bearable, and makes life frightening, because we are all going to face our death sooner or later.



- Christians are dumb and naïve – if Christ did not rise from the dead then our whole community and our whole purpose falls away. There is no point in meeting if he is not ruling and reigning from heaven.

#2. With the resurrection, following Jesus is everything

- Read 1 Corinthians 15:20-29, 1 John 3:2, Romans 5:12

Paul then goes on to say that if the resurrection IS true then the implications are huge for us. It means that:

- We will rise like Jesus – the scriptures say that Jesus is the first-fruits among many. He is the resurrection prototype. When we rise, we will be like him.
- We are no longer under Adam's curse – though we struggle with sin and death as part of life, it is no longer our identity because the curse of sin has been broken, and though it is a temptation for us, sin no longer has mastery over us. Though we were born under the curse, which was passed down through Adam, we are no longer under the curse because we are now in Christ. We are NEW creations IN CHRIST.
- We belong to God's advancing kingdom – sometimes we do get discouraged when we see the ongoing sin in our lives, both individually and corporately, but this is not who we are. Jesus defeated the curse of sin and death, once and for all, and he continues to bring his kingdom to earth through the gospel. His kingdom IS advancing, and we see it each and every time someone new comes to Christ. We need to remind ourselves, at times when we feel discouraged, that God is ruling and reigning and that he is committed to the work he started in each one of us. Though we slip and fall, he is faithful and will continue the good work and bring it to completion. He is committed to seeing his promises fulfilled. We can absolutely count on that.

#3. In response to our certain resurrection

- Read 1 Corinthians 15:30-34 & Revelation 14:13

We ought to respond in two ways:

- We live lives of meaningful sacrifice – Paul's life was lived on the line for Christ. He, of all people, knew that if Jesus did not rise from the dead, that there would be no point in living the life of sacrifice he chose to live. If there was no resurrection, then there would be no urgency,



and we should all then live for the moment and please ourselves and no one else. But since we know that Christ did rise from the dead, it means that our lives now matter, and that every sacrifice we make for the kingdom of God matters. We can be sure that we will not labour for Him in vein and that we will be rewarded in the next life.

- We live lives of valuable holiness – Paul instructs us to live their lives worthy of the calling in the here and now, because it counts. He wants us to fight against sin and pursue holiness now, because it matters.

Q. Do you ever struggle with the idea of a bodily resurrection and how do you confront your doubts?

Q. Why is Paul right when he says that without a bodily resurrection that Christianity is entirely pointless?

Q. Why is it incredible to think that Jesus is the first-fruits of the resurrection, or the “prototype” for us?

Q. Why is the reality of the resurrection an encouragement to us when we are struggling in our sin?

Q. If Jesus was raised from the grave, why is worship the only fitting response?

Q. Why is it so important for us to come back to the truth of the resurrection regularly?

Q. How many times have you actually told a non-believer about the resurrection of Christ and why do you think it is a key point in the gospel story that needs to be shared?

Q. Why do you think that we find it so difficult to actually tell people that we believe in a resurrection?