

Resurrection – Palm Sunday

1 Corinthians 15

1 Corinthians 15:1-11

- Christ's Resurrection is true and central to the Gospel message.
- Paul says: There is one Gospel, and it centers on the Resurrection of Christ.
- He wants to remind them of the Gospel message that was delivered to them.
- It is this message of Christ and His life, death and Resurrection that is the full Gospel, worthy of believing, and there is no other.
- These first 11 verses are to show the centrality and the historical nature of Christ's Resurrection.

1 Corinthians 15:1-11

- Paul wants these Christians to understand that the death and Resurrection were historical fact.
- He wants to make known that the Gospel, the foundation for every issue Paul has brought to light up to this point, is of first importance. The death and Resurrection are central.
- When he writes in verse 2 of vain belief, it is likely that his intention behind this comment is that if someone denied the Resurrection, there would be no saving faith.

1 Corinthians 15:1-11

- Why?
- Because not believing the Resurrection is not believing the Gospel.
- There is no use to your faith if there is no belief in Christ's Resurrection.
- There's no Christianity. There's no eternal hope.
- The Resurrection is the key to a Christian's hope, as Paul will continue to unpack.

1 Corinthians 15:1-11

- The use of “according to the Scriptures” does two things.
- Paul shows that the death of Christ and His Resurrection was God’s message and was God’s plan.
- This was the message of the Old Testament. It’s likely that Paul doesn’t have one passage in mind here, just the overarching message of God’s history throughout the Old Testament.
- Paul also shows that this was God’s plan from the beginning. This was the defeat of the serpent promised in Genesis 3:15.

1 Corinthians 15:1-11

- There's something significant Paul does with his language in this passage.
- Paul uses different tenses (aorist, perfect) in the Greek language when talking about Jesus' death compared with talking about His Resurrection.
- "Aorist is the default tense that simply gives reference to what has happened; the perfect tense highlights that an event has consequences for the present."
- The Resurrection has massive implications for the past, present and future. Its impact has no end because the Resurrection guarantees the hope of eternity itself without sin and death.

1 Corinthians 15:1-11

- When Paul shows the evidence of Christ's Resurrection by listing those whom Christ appeared to, he lists himself last.
- The word that Paul used here, only occurs once in the entire New Testament (hapax legomena).
- The ESV translates the word to read "one untimely born." The Greek term means a stillborn child, but I think it means "surprisingly born."
- Whatever the definition, Paul is wanting to highlight God's grace and power."

1 Corinthians 15:1-11

- Paul explains the nature of his past; his persecution of the Church plays a part in his unlikely conversion. His past was ugly.
- Taking the first definition, Paul is saying that Christ has brought a corpse to life by His power and grace. Christ's Resurrection has given Paul a resurrection as well.
- As he writes in verse 10, the grace shown to him was not in vain because Paul has been transformed by the saving power of the Gospel and continues to testify to its resurrection power. He believes that Christ has risen and wants to show God's grace in his life.

1 Corinthians 15:12-34

- Christ has risen. Therefore, the Church will rise with Him.
- Paul's question in verse 12 shows the connection between Christ's resurrection and the resurrection of the dead.
- Some believed Christ was raised, but not that those in Christ will be raised.
- Paul was attacking the widely held cultural belief that the soul was eternal and divine, and the body was material and mortal.
- Paul wants to show them that God values the physical world, and He will ultimately show this in the resurrection of humanity.

1 Corinthians 15:12-34

- But Paul's argument is that if Christ didn't resurrect, then believers won't, and if believers don't, then Christ didn't.
- On the other hand, if He did, then so, too, will believers; and if we do, then He did as well.
- Paul says in verse 17 that without the Resurrection, our faith is meaningless and hopeless, and we are still in bondage to sin.
- The Resurrection of Christ is directly related to the work He accomplished on the Cross. Denying the Resurrection is to deny the efficacy of the Cross.

1 Corinthians 15:12-34

- Christ died for sins. These sins are the effects of Adam's sin (verse 22).
- Just as in Adam, all die due to sin, so in Christ all will share in His life and Resurrection that believe in Him and confess Him.
- Once Christ comes and resurrects His Bride, the Church, God will rule and reign for eternity.
- Death and sin will be done away with. This is the hope of the Christian.
- This hope hinges on the Resurrection of Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:12-34

- In Paul's concluding section, he describes the basic view of life we should have if the Resurrection isn't real.
- Why put ourselves in danger if this is all there is? Why risk our lives?
- If there's no Resurrection, then let everyone indulge in self-pleasure and gratify every desire.
- Do everything today because tomorrow might be the end.

1 Corinthians 15:12-34

- Verse 29 is controversial. Here is the commentary in the ESV Study Bible:
- *Some interpreters through the centuries have thought this referred to vicarious baptism on behalf of deceased people, probably those who had believed in Christ but had not been baptized before they died (cf. Luke 23:43). But the interpretation is uncertain, and whatever the practice is, Paul reports it without necessarily approving it, and is clearly not commanding it.*
- *Baptism for the dead is an important part of Mormonism, but the Bible gives no support to the idea that anyone can be saved apart from personal faith in Christ (see notes on John 3:18; 14:6).*

1 Corinthians 15:12-34

- *Other interpreters argue that by “the dead” Paul means the bodies of living Christians, which are subject to death and decay: they are baptized “on behalf of their dying bodies,” showing hope that their bodies will rise again (see Rom. 8:23; 1 Cor. 15:42–44, 47–49, 53–54).*
- *On this view, Paul argues here that the baptism of perishing bodies is useless if the dead are not raised.*

1 Corinthians 15:12-34

- Paul compares the Corinthians' confusion concerning the Resurrection with inebriation and tells them to snap out of it.
- Wake up and think rightly. Christ is raised, and believers will be also.
- Believe rightly. Don't be deceived, he writes in verse 33. One's faith directly connects to one's lifestyle.
- Paul wants these misinformed Christians to realize their misplaced views aren't isolated. They will bleed into the church and those that don't know better than to believe wrong teaching.

Application



A close-up portrait of Skip Heitzig, a man with short, light-colored hair, smiling warmly. He is wearing a dark jacket. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be a crowd of people in a well-lit indoor setting.

Skip Heitzig: How Fear Becomes Hope

Four reasons why Jesus' resurrection is undeniable

The Resurrection is Undeniable

- First, scholars agree that the tomb of Jesus Christ was empty shortly after His death.
- Second, the historical records of the life of Christ reveal He predicted both His death and resurrection years before they occurred.
- Third, there were hundreds of eyewitnesses who saw Him alive and attested to it.
- Fourth, many of the eyewitnesses came to believe Jesus was the Messiah and died for it.

D THE RESURRECTION

THE CASE FOR LIFE AFTER DEATH

Apologist **Lee Strobel** investigates
the Bible's teachings on eternity



The Case for Heaven

- Questions about heaven:
 - Eternity in our hearts (Ecclesiastes 3:11)
 - Marriage in heaven (Luke 20:35)
 - Boredom in heaven (1 Corinthians 2:9)
 - Resurrection is the linchpin of Christianity (1 Corinthians 15:17)
 - Heaven and reincarnation (Hebrews 9:17)

Resources

