



Our View of the Resurrection

Like the New Testament Christians, we should not lose sight of the importance of the resurrection. Let's look at a few areas in which the resurrection affects us today.

Belief in the Resurrection is Necessary for Salvation


Beware of any individual, denomination or movement that claims to be Christian but denies the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Bible teaches that a belief in the resurrection is necessary for one to be saved.


 Rom 10:9. **Q.** According to this verse what two things must we confess in order to be saved?

 Rom 1:4. **Q.** How was Jesus declared to be the son of God?

The fact of the resurrection strikes to the very heart of who Jesus was. If He rose from the dead then he was the Lord and the son of God. If he did not rise, then he is a liar. When we confess that he rose from the dead we are confessing that we believe he is who he said he was – the Lord and the son of God. One cannot be saved if he does not confess this.

The Resurrection Gives us Power for Daily Living

 Philp 3:10 That I may know him, and the _____, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;


What did Paul mean by *knowing* the power of his resurrection? For the answer to this we can look at another statement of Paul's in  2 Cor 1:8,9, where he gives an account of the troubles that he has faced.

Q. Who did Paul say he trusts in? Why?

A belief in the resurrection gives us confidence in the face of trials, and even death. It gives us hope of heaven and our own resurrection from the dead.

Our Response to the Resurrection

As Christians, there is a proper way to live and respond to the resurrection of Jesus Christ. When we accept Christ as our Lord and Saviour, we identify with his death and resurrection. We should die to ourselves and live a new life for Him (Gal 2:20). The following verses describe this new life.

 Rom 6:4. **Q.** How should we now live in response to Christ's resurrection?


Jesus, Our Risen Saviour

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Of all the subjects which we have studied since we have started this series on the Lord Jesus Christ, none rises to the level of importance that this week's study does. All that Jesus did in his earthly ministry would amount to nothing, if it were not for His resurrection from the dead. In fact, it is upon the foundation of his literal, historical resurrection that all of Christianity rests.


Because of our limited space we will only deal briefly with a few aspects of this important doctrine.


First, consider that Jesus staked the credibility of his entire earthly ministry on the fact that he would rise on the third day following his crucifixion.


 John 2:19 Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days _____.

Q. According to verse 21 in this passage, what temple was Jesus speaking of?

 Matt 16:21. **Q.** What 3 things did Jesus tell his disciples would happen?

 Matt 26:32. **Q.** When did Jesus say he would go before them into Galilee?

 Mark 9:31. **Q.** What 3 things did Jesus teach his disciples?

 Matt 27:63. **Q.** According to the chief priests and Pharisees, what did Jesus claim would happen after his death?


During Jesus' earthly ministry he made it very clear to both his disciples and his enemies, that he would be killed, buried and that he would rise again three days later (See also, Matt 17:23, 17:9, 20:19). **Q.** If Jesus was crucified but did not rise again the third day, what would we be reasonable in assuming about the rest of his teachings? Why?

Jesus himself set the standard for his own authenticity as the son of God – if he rose from the dead as he said he would, then he must be who he claimed to be; if he died just like every other man and did not rise, then he is not who he claimed to be and can be dismissed as just another false teacher. Christianity cannot survive apart from the resurrection of Jesus Christ, as Paul said “what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die.” (1 Cor 15:32)

The Resurrection and the Spread of Christianity

The purpose of this study is not to perform an exhaustive examination of the resurrection and its evidences, but rather to briefly touch on some key facts. In regard to the resurrection, one basic but powerful truth that cannot be ignored is the fact that *something* following the death of Jesus Christ occurred which transformed what appeared to be a dead religion into a living, growing, and ultimately world-changing movement. According to scripture, this *something* was the resurrection of Jesus Christ.


The Five Hundred Witnesses

 1 Cor 15:4-6. **Q.** How many people saw Jesus alive, after his death, all at once?

Q. What did Paul say regarding the *greater part* of these witnesses?

In this passage Paul is laying out evidence for the Corinthians regarding the resurrection of Christ. The strength of the evidence which he cites here should not be underestimated. Paul was writing to the Corinthians at a time when the majority of these 500 witnesses were still alive. These men could have been sought out at any time and asked to confirm or deny Paul's claims. If these witnesses did not exist and did not verify Paul's account, the authenticity of Paul's writings and Christianity itself would have been brought into question and the Christian faith would not have survived through the first century.

The New Found Boldness of the Disciples

This next evidence can be illustrated very well by the following passage where we read about the disciples after the death of Christ but before his resurrection was known to them.  Read Luke 24:13-35.

Q. As the Disciples were talking about the missing body of Jesus, who *drew near, and went with them*? _____.


Q. What emotion were these disciples experiencing at this time? V17.

The disciples, yet unaware that the one which spoke with them was Jesus, were saddened by the events of the day. It was the third day since the death of Christ, yet they had not seen him alive. You can imagine the somber mood which would have fallen over all of the disciples at this time. They were confused and in despair.

Q. According to Luke 24:26, as all the disciples spoke to one another about these events, who stood *in the midst of them*? _____.

At what must have been a dark and discouraging time for these men, the Lord Jesus Christ himself, risen from the dead, stood in the midst of them and showed them his hands and his feet (40). He took fish and a honeycomb and ate before them (42,43) and then reminded his disciples that while he was alive, he told them he would die and rise again from the dead (44).

After Jesus had finished speaking and had left his disciples we read:


 Luke 24:52-53 And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem _____ . And were _____ in the temple, _____ and _____ God. Amen.

What caused clouds of heaviness and sadness to be lifted from the disciples? It was a resurrected Christ! After this encounter the disciples were no longer sad, but were filled with joy. Their attitudes and actions were transformed. Before this appearance they were gathered together discussing what the death and disappearance of Christ's body might mean, now they were blessing and praising God in the temple.

It was the truth of the resurrection of Jesus Christ that changed his disciples from discouraged and defeated followers of a defunct religion, into joyous, bold proclaimers of the gospel. The very fact that Christianity has continued for two millenia since this time is evidence that these disciples were powerfully changed by the resurrected Christ.

The disciple's encounter with Jesus after his resurrection was so powerful and so important that it was the key subject of their witness wherever they went. In fact, in the book of Acts, every time the disciples are called witnesses, it is in reference to their witness of his resurrection. For example:

 Acts 1:22. **Q.** What was Matthias ordained to be a witness of?

 Acts 2:32. **Q.** What did Peter say they were all witnesses of?

 Acts 4:33. **Q.** Of what did the apostles give witness with great power?

The reason Christianity survives today is the fact that these disciples wholeheartedly believed that Jesus rose from the grave. It was because of this undying commitment to the truth of the resurrection that many of these men were beaten, stoned, tortured, crucified and even thrown to lions. Whether one chooses to deny the resurrection or not, one thing that cannot be explained away is the fact that something powerful and life-changing happened to these early Christians – something so powerful, they were willing to die for it.

📖 Rom 6:9-12. **Q.** Because Christ defeated death and sin by the resurrection, what relationship should we now have with sin?

📖 Col 3:1-3. **Q.** Because Christ has risen from the dead, where should our affections now be?

The resurrection life of Christ should have real power and impact in our daily lives. Because he has defeated sin (Acts 3:26), death (1 Cor 15:26), and the devil (Heb 2:14), we should now live as if it is so. Through his resurrection, he was able to send the Holy Spirit to dwell within us; when we walk in the Spirit, we are experiencing the power of his resurrection. When we grieve, quench or ignore the Spirit within us, we are in essence denying the power of his resurrection in our own lives.

In Conclusion let's look at 1 Corinthians 15, to see what Christianity would be without the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

📖 1 Cor 15:14. **Q.** What did Paul say regarding our faith and preaching if the resurrection did not take place?

📖 1 Cor 15:17. **Q.** If Christ did not rise, what are we still *in*?

📖 1 Cor 15:18. **Q.** If Christ did not rise, what has happened to those Christians who have died?

📖 1 Cor 15:19. **Q.** How did Paul describe the man who does not have the hope of the resurrection?

We can thank God that the resurrection did indeed happen. By it, we have been delivered from our sin and now have hope of our own resurrection and eternal life in Heaven. Let us never minimize the fact that Christ has been raised from the dead, but let us rather be like the disciples and make it the theme of our witness.

Think & Discuss

1 Peter 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

Jesus, Our Risen Saviour Review

1. Why is the historical resurrection important in regards to the credibility of Jesus?
2. How could Paul's evidence for the resurrection of Christ have been easily discredited?
 - a. What is significant about the time that Paul wrote to the Corinthians regarding the resurrection?
3. The disciples were expecting Jesus to remain on earth and to set up an earthly kingdom, how do you think they felt after they saw him die?
4. What are some evidences that the disciples were not lying about the resurrection?
5. How can we experience the *power of the resurrection* in our own lives?
6. With 1 Cor 15 in mind, where does our faith stand if the resurrection did not happen?