

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MAY 29TH, 2022 // BOOK OF 1 CORINTHIANS

## THE GOOD NEWS (1 CORINTHIANS 15:1-11) OTHER VIEWS ABOUT THE RESURRECTION

Most Greek philosophers viewed the body as a prison and therefore welcomed death, since it freed them from bondage. This thought, along with the Sadducees' denial of a resurrection, has crept its way into the church.

- Paul had to correct the omission of the resurrection because it is a central part of the gospel and could not be ignored.

## SANCTIFICATION OF THE CHURCH

Despite the issues the church in Corinth had with divisions, immorality, and misplaced spirituality, Paul asserts that they had received the gospel, responded to the gospel, and were being saved.

- Paul encouraged them **to hold to the entirety of what was being preached**, including the resurrection, **so their belief would not be in vain** (without meaning).

## "WHAT I ALSO RECEIVED"

Paul taught the gospel, that "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." To the world, the thought of a savior dying would have been foolishness, but to us, it is the power of God to save those who believe (1 Corinthians 1:18).

- We preach Christ crucified because He willingly took our punishment upon Himself and died for our sins satisfying the wrath of God (Isaiah 53).

## "HE WAS BURIED"

Another integral part of the gospel is that Jesus was buried just as prophecy described.

- It is good news that Jesus was buried because it confirms that He did die as a payment for our sins. The scripture that says, "He was assigned a grave with the wicked, but was with a rich man at His death" (Isaiah 53:9), was fulfilled when Jesus borrowed a rich man's tomb (Matthew 27:57-60).

## HE ROSE AGAIN

The resurrection is central to the gospel because it proves that though our sin was laid upon Him and He bore punishment, He remained a perfect Savior through the whole process and defeated death.

- The resurrection after 3 days fulfills the scripture that decay would not touch His body (Psalms 16:10). "If the cross was the payment for our sins, the empty tomb is the receipt" (David Guzik).

## CONCRETE EVIDENCE

To dispel any doubt that Jesus was resurrected, Paul calls to account the many eye-witnesses to the resurrected Jesus.

- The resurrected Jesus appeared to Peter, then to the disciples. Then He appeared to over 500 brothers and sisters at one time. Paul essentially is saying, "many of them are still alive so you can go ask them."

## HE APPEARED TO PAUL

To round out the eye-witness accounts, Paul says that Jesus "appeared to James, then to all of the apostles." He then states that Jesus appeared to him "last of all, **as to one born at the wrong time.**"

- The terminology Paul uses speaks to an **untimely birth with peculiar circumstances**, perhaps because his Apostleship did not come in the same manner as the others.

## THE LEAST OF THE APOSTLES

Paul regarded himself as the "least of the apostles" and "not worthy to be called an apostle," possibly because of his pre-conversion persecution of the Church. Though he felt unworthy of his calling, he still defended his calling.

- **We too should feel unworthy of the grace that has been shown to us. None of us are worthy of the love that has been displayed towards us.**

## UNMERITED FAVOR

Paul says, "by the grace of God I am what I am." He knows that the change within is due to the grace of God and not anything he had done.

- **Paul met the measure of grace he had received with the same measure of hard labor, so that what he had received would not be in vain** (without meaning).

## OUR HOPE (1 CORINTHIANS 15:12-19)

### JESUS HAD RESURRECTED

Paul wants the Corinthians to see the implications of believing that there is not a resurrection of the dead.

- He established in the last section that they had stood on the truth of the gospel and accepted that Jesus had resurrected. So, Paul asked, "**how can someone say there is no resurrection of the dead?**"

## IT WOULD BE ALL IN VAIN

Paul laid out the unacceptable fallout that would take place in denying a bodily resurrection.

- Without belief in a resurrection, doubt would be cast on Jesus' resurrection. Without Jesus' resurrection, the gospel is false, and those teaching and believing a lie would be considered false witnesses.

## A FUTILE FAITH

Paul repeated that the dead cannot be raised if Christ had not been raised. Next, he points out the ways a believer would suffer if Christ had not been raised.

- **If there is no resurrection, then our faith would be futile. A belief in a dead savior is worthless and leaves us dead in our sins.**

## A TEMPORARY CONDITION

Without a resurrection, those who had died with a hope in Christ (asleep) would have misplaced their hope and be lost forever. Using the word "sleep" for the death of believers gives us the sense that their deaths are only temporary conditions.

- By denying the resurrection, the Corinthians **were casting aside the very reason they had hope and comfort in this life.**

## FOOLS TO BE PITIED

Paul says, "if we have put our hope in Christ for this life only, we should be pitied more than anyone."

- We endure in this life because of our hope in a future resurrection life. Paul is essentially saying, "with all we endure for Christ if there is no resurrection, no eternal reward, nothing after this life, then we are fools to be pitied."

## WE TOO WILL RISE (1 CORINTHIANS 15:20-28)

### THE FESTIVAL OF THE FIRSTFRUITS

The OT ritual of "firstfruits" is where the first portion of the harvest would be given to God as an offering (Leviticus 23:15-17). The "firstfruits," the partial harvest, would be followed up by the entire harvest.

- The idea of Christ being the "firstfruits" communicates that **because He resurrected, we are able to look forward to our own resurrection.**

### THE RESURRECTION OF LIFE OR CONDEMNATION

Paul shares the same idea found in Romans 5:12-21. Death came by a man (Adam), whose sin brought guilt and judgment to all humanity. Since sin came through a man, the resurrection of the dead also came through a man (Jesus).

- Though "all" are resurrected not everyone will receive the resurrection of life (John 5:29).

### HIS RETURN

The idea of "firstfruits" also communicates a certain order, with Christ resurrected first, then us later at **His coming.**

- Christ will return to judge the earth. **He will destroy every rule, authority, and power and reign until He has put all His enemies under His foot.**

### MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

Paul is most likely referring to the 1,000-year reign of Jesus described in Revelation 20:1-6.

- Though there are various theological viewpoints around this, it seems clear that there will be resurrected believers who rule and reign with Christ and share in His glory and authority during this time.

### JESUS' "FIRSTFRUIT" OFFERING TO GOD

V.27 seems to allude to the idea that death will still be present during the millennial reign of Jesus, but He will abolish death and the "last enemy" will be destroyed.

- When this life comes to a close and everything is subjected to the Son, death and Satan will be defeated, and Jesus will subject Himself to the Father and hand over the Kingdom.

### TAKE A STAND AND HOLD FAST

- We must stand for the truth of what we believe (1 Peter 3:15) and not allow the world to dictate our beliefs (Romans 12:2).
- The idea of holding fast to what we believe implies that someone or something is trying to snatch it from us.
- As Christ-followers, we are to be in the world, but not of the world (John 17:14-15).

### CONFIDENCE TO ACT

- Paul gave concrete evidence to a resurrected Jesus, and **we too can have confidence in a risen savior.**
- It is not enough to receive grace with thankfulness alone. **We should be willing to work in response to the grace that has been given to us, or we will have received it in vain.**

### WE ARE CO-LABORERS WITH HIM

- "Working together with Him, we also appeal to you, 'Don't receive the grace of God in vain'" (2 Corinthians 6:1).
- "For we are God's coworkers, you are God's field, God's building" (1 Corinthians 3:9). We must not neglect our end of the partnership as co-laborers with Christ.