

It would be a “crime” to testify that God had raised up the Lord Jesus, if he had not done it. If what the Apostles preached was not true, then of course they were lying; giving a false witness, and deliberately distorting the historical facts. It also would deny all the Biblical teaching about the future resurrection of people. But the gospel message is true! We proclaim a genuine message that continues to change lives. (cp. 2Corinthians - chapter 4)

4. We Have The Forgiveness of Sins

V.17: "And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless, and you are still under condemnation for your sins."

This means that if this literal bodily resurrection of Christ is not true, then we have no hope that anything else this gospel declares to us is true. For this resurrection is proof that his death on the cross has actually accomplished our deliverance from sin. After the resurrection forgiveness was preached to all who believe. Look at what Jesus said in Luke 24: 46-47.

5. We Have A Permanent Hope

V 17a, 18: "If Christ has not been raised, then in that case, all who have died believing in Christ have perished!"

If the resurrection story is untrue, then when you lay a loved one in the grave you have no hope that you will ever see him again. If this story is not an actual fact, then all hope of life beyond the grave crumbles. But think of Jesus words in John 11:25. We do have an eternal hope!

6. We Have An Envable Position

V 19 "If our hope in Christ is for this life only, we should be pitied more than anyone else in the world."

That is, if the resurrection is untrue, then

Christianity is no better than any pagan philosophy. In fact, Christians are to be pitied for wasting their time in a foolish dream. Why spend time like this, in worship and prayer? Why not be out on the golf course on Sundays, enjoying the beauty of the day? Why invest fortunes in spreading the gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth, even denying ourselves luxuries and pleasures in order that it might be spread? After all, Paul says, if this is not true there is nothing to be trusted about the whole thing. If it is a pack of lies, then we are pitiable fools if we follow it.

But we have an enviable position because our Saviour lives and our message is true. We are Heaven bound to be with Him forever.

Are you a Christian? Do you truly believe in the resurrection of Christ? If not, then pray this **East-er Prayer for Salvation**

Thank You Lord Jesus for dying on the cross and for rising again. Please forgive my sins, save me and give me eternal life. I trust You as my Savior and Lord, now and forever. Amen. (Now take a few moments to read Romans 10: verse 9-10 for the assurance of your Salvation)

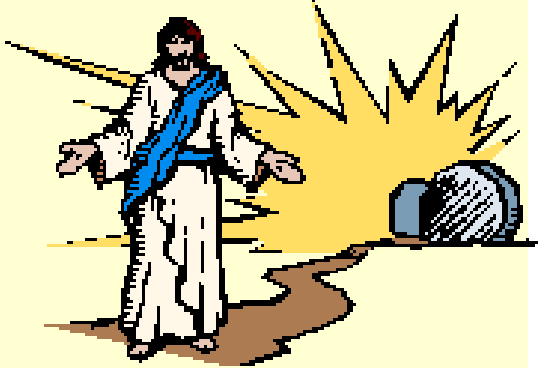
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What If There Was No Resurrection of Christ?



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What If There Was No Resurrection of Christ?

1 Corinthians 15

People in general have a difficult time with the Easter story about the death and resurrection of Christ. Non-Christians attack it with open unbelief. Some Christians are not sure what to believe when they read modern writers and listen to television programs that call it a hoax.

The Gospels tell the story of the birth of Jesus, His life, and detailed record of the events of his death and resurrection. No one can read the New Testament without seeing the disproportionate emphasis put upon the death of Christ. Then, following that, there is this great story of the resurrection of Christ, the fact of all facts, His bodily resurrection from the dead.

Paul is ready for the critics who spread lies. He said the resurrection is an undeniable fact. Paul states it is a fact! ***“But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead”*** (1 Cor. 15:20 RSV).

We must stress those two words, **“in fact.”** This is absolutely vital to Christian faith. Paul makes a particular point of it. Earlier in the chapter, he lists the witnesses who saw this event (1Corinthians 15: 5-7). He details how many there were and where their encounters with Christ occurred.

There is simply no way for us to overstate the importance of this great claim that the bodily resurrection is no myth. If this were a myth -- if it were only a dream, the wild hope of the early Christians, a figment of somebody's imagination, then the whole fabric of Christian faith tears apart.

In other words, if you deny the bodily resurrection, you deny the heart of Christianity. That is what Paul is saying.

Paul argues that there would be no Christian teaching and no Christian church if there had not been a bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ:

“Now, brothers, I want you to remember the Good News I brought to you. You received this Good News, and you continue strong in it. And you are saved by this Good News. But you must continue believing what I told you. If you do not, then you believed for nothing.

I passed on to you what I received. And this was the most important: that Christ died for our sins, as the Scriptures say; that he was buried and was raised to life on the third day as the Scriptures say.” (1Corinthians 15:1-4). (ICB)

That is the gospel the early disciples preached. They were declaring that Jesus Christ died and was risen from the dead! There would not be a church without that message. That is what made them come alive. The Christian hope dates from the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Remember that after the crucifixion the disciples were utterly shattered. Their faith was gone; they were in shock, inconsolable and hopeless; they were even returning to their old ways of life. But in three days all of this suddenly, dramatically reversed and something brought them back together and sent them out as flaming evangelists in the very city where he had been crucified, telling the good news that Jesus Christ was risen from the dead.

That was the beginning of the Christian message, which has gone on for twenty two centuries because of the actuality of that event.

1. We Have A Powerful Message To Share V 14a: *“And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless.”*

That is, if this event is not an historical fact, then Christianity has been a waste of time. It is

an empty faith; it is in vain. Think of the tireless labors of this mighty apostle (2Corinthians 11: 23 -33). Yet he was never willing to quit. And there were the other apostles, though the details of their sufferings are not given to us (John 21:17-19, Hebrews 10:32-35), they went everywhere and endured great hardships, all of them laying down their lives at the last. Why? Because of a hoax, a fable, a whimsical yarn that someone started back in the beginning? This idea is monstrous, is it not? Who could believe it?

But like them we have a powerful message because Christ is alive!

2. We Have A Positive Faith

V 14b *“And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is also useless”.*

Think about all the converts everywhere these disciples preached? Wherever these men preached this message in pagan societies, lives were changed and churches established. Converts and churches were everywhere. Men and women were won over from fear and darkness, and from their pagan ignorance.

What did all this? Was it a joke that got out of hand? Was it a psychological trick caused by the eloquent preaching of an absurd tale?

Christian faith is in vain if this is the case. But on the contrary, we have a positive Christian faith, because is tried and true!

3. We Have a Genuine Message

V 15 - 16: *“And we apostles would all be lying about God, for we have said that God raised Christ from the grave, but that can't be true if there is no resurrection of the dead. If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised.”* (NLT)