

# The Resurrection of Jesus

*I Corinthians 15 - Easter*

*April 3-4, 2010*

## Introduction

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### ❖ Historical:

#### ➤ Luke 24:1-7

- 1 *On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb.*
- 2 *They found the stone rolled away from the tomb,*
- 3 *but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.*
- 4 *While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them.*
- 5 *In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead?"*
- 6 *He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee:*
- 7 *"The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again."*

### ❖ Theological: 1 Corinthians 15:1, 3-4

#### ➤ 1 Corinthians 15:1, 3-4

- 1 *Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand.*
  - 3 *For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,*
  - 4 *that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,*
- The Meaning of the "Resurrection" = physical, bodily resurrected (cp. 1 Cor. 15:42-43; "awake" is a physical not a spiritual truth; prophecy of the "Temple")
  - The Evidence of the Resurrection
  - The Importance of the Resurrection

## The Evidence of the Resurrection

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### ❖ **Primary: witnesses**

#### ➤ 1 Corinthians 15:1

1 *Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand.*

- The Corinthians stand (in their faith) on the resurrection of Jesus
- They received their “evidence” from Paul
- Paul was an eyewitness

#### ➤ 1 Corinthians 15:5-8

5 *and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve.*

6 *After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep.*

7 *Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles,*

8 *and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.*

- Peter, the Twelve, more than 500, James, all the apostles, me {Paul}
- The greatest evidence of the resurrection of Jesus is the witness of those who saw Him following His resurrection
- Paul and other Jewish leaders (Acts 9; Acts 6:7, “priests”; Acts 15:5, “Pharisees”)
- The chain of witnesses extends from those who originally saw Him to those that have heard and believed their testimony

### ❖ **Secondary:**

- Written accounts: Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John); non-Canonical Christian books; Historians (Josephus, Tacitus, Suetonius, Thallus); Other documents (Pliny the Younger, Trajan, Hadrian)
- Archaeology: Empty tomb or the lack of a tomb
- Sociology: Rise of Christianity (following a lie or a dead Savior)
- History: Failure of any competing charge to be given, take hold or last

### ❖ **Challenge:**

- The world will be reached by witnesses not “evidence” or proof or apologetics
- That does not mean that everyone will accept the message of the witnesses – many will not

## The Importance of the Resurrection

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### ❖ Is it important?

➤ 1 Corinthians 15:2-3

2 *By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.*

3 *For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,*

- The resurrection is a necessary part of salvation
- It is of **first** importance

### ❖ If it had not happened...

- ...then Faith in Jesus is futile

➤ 1 Corinthians 15:17

17 *And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins.*

- ✓ If Christ is not raised, then you have put your trust in a dead Savior.
- ✓ If your faith is in a dead Savior, then He can't offer you eternal life.
- ✓ If you haven't received eternal life, then your faith is worthless.

- ...then Christians are still in their sins

➤ 1 Corinthians 15:17

17 *And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins.*

- ✓ If Christ is not raised, then He lied.
- ✓ If He lied then His work on the cross is negated.
- ✓ If His work on the cross is negated, then we are still in our sins (and death).

- ...then the dead in Christ are lost

➤ 1 Corinthians 15:18

18 *Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost.*

- ✓ If Christ is not raised, then He has no power over death.
- ✓ If He has no power over death, then those who have died in Him are still defeated by death.
- ✓ If they are still defeated by death, then they are still lost and Heaven is not in their future.

- ...then Christians are to be pitied
- 1 Corinthians 15:19
  - 19 *If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men.*
  - ✓ If Christ is not raised, then we have no hope beyond this life.
  - ✓ If we have no hope beyond this life, then we are wasting this life in living for the next life.
  - ✓ If we are wasting this life, then we are to be pitied above all other men (not just are we wasting this life but we are choosing to waste it).

❖ **Since it has happened...**

- 1 Corinthians 15:20
  - 20 *But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.*
- ...then Faith in Jesus is meaningful
  - ✓ He is raised, therefore He can offer eternal life to those who put their faith in Him.
- ...then Christians are forgiven of their sins
  - ✓ He is raised, therefore He has paid the penalty of your sins and you are forgiven of them.
- ...then the dead in Christ are in Heaven
  - ✓ He is raised, therefore He has eternal life and has given it to those who believe in Him.
- ...then Christians are to be envied
  - ✓ He is raised, therefore He has set us free from our sins here and set eternal life in Heaven before us.

❖ **The resurrection is a central teaching of Christianity – no other teaching is true or meaningful without it**