

**Hope Beyond the Grave**  
**“Resurrection Logic”**  
**1 Corinthians 15:12-19**  
Pastor John Miller

**Introduction:** What if Christ had not risen from the dead? It has been said that “the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the most wicked, vicious, heartless hoax ever fostered on the minds of men,” or “it is the most fantastic fact of history.”

- I believe the resurrection of Jesus to be the most important and fantastic fact of history! There’s hope beyond the grave!
- (v. 19) Paul says “if Christ not be risen, we are without hope (and miserable).”
- (v.20) “But now is Christ risen from the dead”

**\* Christianity is a religion of resurrection!**

- Of Jesus Christ
- All believers
- All unbelievers

**\* Other views of what happens after death:**

- 1) Termination
  - a. “Soul sleep”
  - b. Believers will be raised
  - c. Unbelievers will be terminated
- 2) Reincarnation
  - a. You get recycled
- 3) Absorption
  - a. Pantheism
  - b. The divine spark
  - c. Becomes one with the universe

**\* This is not what the Bible teaches.**

- Jesus said “Because I live, you will live also.”
- “I am the resurrection and the life”

**\* There was a problem in the Corinthian congregation.**

- (v. 12) Greek philosophy
- Dualism
- Note the danger of bringing your own philosophical, preconceived ideas in your understanding of Jesus.

**\* We must think Biblically!**

- Paul shows them that their thinking is both unscriptural and illogical.
- (v. 12) “Now if Christ be preached that He rose from the dead...”
  - 1) Christ’s resurrection is necessary for our salvation (v.v. 1-2)
  - 2) Christ’s resurrection is a necessary part of the gospel definition (v.v. 3-4)
  - 3) Christ’s resurrection is proven by His appearances (v.v. 5-7)
  - 4) Christ’s resurrection changed Paul’s life (v.v. 8-11)

**\* Now Paul comes to the problem.**

- He shows them that their denial of their own resurrection is illogical.
- (v. 12) “...how say some (not all) among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?”
- If the dead don’t rise, Paul says there are three logical conclusions.

## **I. The Denial of a Resurrection Means that Christ is Still Dead (v. 13)**

\* Paul says “The resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of the human race cannot be separated.” They are two sides of the same coin.

\* Remember, Jesus is both human and divine! As a man He cannot be separated from the rest of the human race!

- Jesus was born, lived, and died as a man, and He rose again in a resurrected human body! One day men will as well.
- Revelation 1:17-18- “I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive forevermore and have the keys of hell and of death.”
- 1 John 3:2- “We will be like Him...”
- Philippians 3:21- “For God will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory.”
- So, if no resurrection- then Christ is still dead!

## **II. The Denial of a Resurrection Means that Paul’s Message Was Wrong (v.v. 14-16)**

\* It was wrong in three ways:

- 1) “...our preaching is vain (or empty).” (v. 14)
  - a. Without the resurrection, gospel preaching is empty!
  - b. John Stott- “*The person and work of Christ are the rock upon which the Christian religion is built. If he is not who he said he was, and if he did not do what he said*

*he had come to do, the foundation is undermined and the whole superstructure will collapse.”*

- 2) Their faith was also “empty” or “vain.”
  - a. (v. 14) “...and your faith is also vain.”
  - b. If the gospel is empty, then our faith in the gospel is vain.
  - c. Illustration- Faith is only as good as the object it is placed in.
  - d. Illustration- Car over a bridge
  - e. What is the object of your faith?
- 3) Paul and the other apostles were false witnesses (v. 15)
  - a. Paul lied, Peter lied and John lied.
  - b. Also Augustine, Aquinas, Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Wesley, George Whitfield, Charles Spurgeon, D.L. Moody, Billy Graham and Jesus lied!
  - c. Illustration- Romans 1:4

### **III. The Denial of the Resurrection Means that we are Lost and Without Hope** (v.v. 17-19)

- 1) We are not forgiven (v. 17)
  - a. Romans 4:25- “Jesus was delivered for our sins and was raised again for our justification”
  - b. Christ’s resurrection is proof our sins can be forgiven.
  - c. We would still be under sin’s power, and we would have to pay sin’s penalty.
  - d. A dead Christ cannot save!
- 2) Christians who have died have perished (v. 18)
  - a. Your loved ones who died “in Christ” are gone forever!
  - b. Illustration- 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18- “Don’t be ignorant...”
- 3) We Christians are to be pitied (v. 19)
  - a. Why? This world and this life is all there is! So, eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we may die!
  - b. Illustration- Paul’s suffering
  - c. Romans 8:18- “For I reckon that...”
  - d. Illustration- Jim Elliott- “He is no fool...”

## **CONCLUSION**

**\* (v. 20) “But now is Christ risen from the dead...”**

- **The gospel message is true!**
- **Our faith is not empty!**
- **Our sins can be forgiven!**

- **Our loved ones are waiting for us in heaven!**
- **This life is not all there is!**