



## ***“If There Were No Resurrection”***

### **INTRODUCTION**

I feel like every Sunday is a celebration of the resurrection of Jesus. At least once a year we focus our full attention on the pinnacle of our faith. Any denial of the physical resurrection of Jesus Christ collapses our entire belief system. It must be considered in a divinely designed sequence of historical events conceived before time and unfolded in time stretching into the ages to come. Paul, in his trial before Felix the Roman governor, said this...

*‘It is with respect to the resurrection of the dead that I am on trial before you this day.’” Acts 24:21*

The importance of the resurrection cannot be underestimated. It runs all through the divinely inspired documents. It was the central focus of all the early preaching of the apostles.

- **What if Jesus DIDN’T rise from the dead?**
- **What if Jesus DID rise from the dead?**
- **Since Jesus DID rise from the dead, what do we need to do?**

### **WHAT IF JESUS DIDN’T RISE FROM THE DEAD?**

If Jesus didn’t rise from the dead the bulk of what we hold dear regarding our blessed salvation couldn’t be true. If the body of Jesus still lies in some Israeli cemetery, none of the things promised for those IN HIM are true. None of the things God does for those who believe and embrace His Son are true. The apostles, who claimed to have seen Him, are liars and not to be trusted. Neither can you trust anything that Paul, who also claimed to have seen Him, wrote. Even the gospel records of the life of Jesus become suspect. Without doing an exhaustive study, I listed just some of the things that came to mind in my reflecting on various Scriptures related to the blessing of knowing a RISEN Christ.

You can do a study on you own by thinking about what wouldn’t have happened or will never happen did we not serve a risen Lord.

The first ones in my list are points Paul himself made in what is known as the “Resurrection Chapter” recorded in 1 Corinthians 15.

- Our preaching is pointless (vs 14)
- Our trust (faith) is in vain
- The Apostles were false witnesses (15)
- Our faith is worthless (16)
- We are still personally responsible before God for our sin
- There is no hope of ever seeing our dead loved ones (1)
- We wasted our life serving Jesus if there is no future purpose (19)
- Live it up while you can since it’s all over when you die (32)

### **Here are some other observations from my reflection on various passages.**

There is no hope for our resurrection since it is based on Jesus’ resurrection  
No hope of ever experiencing true life change since it is based on “Christ in you”.  
There is no future kingdom since the promised future king is dead.  
Death reigns.  
God lied.  
Scripture can’t be trusted.  
There is no mediator between us and God.

There is no intercessor for us – no one praying for us.  
Satan is still the “ruler of this world”.  
Satan still has the power of death.  
We have no defense or offense against Satan.  
There is no reconciliation between sinful man and the Holy God.  
We remain children of wrath.  
Holy Spirit didn’t come because Jesus didn’t go to the Father.  
There is no redemption.  
There is no justification. Rom 4:25  
We stand condemned  
There is no guarantee of God’s love (Rom 8)  
There is no guarantee of anything working together for good.  
There is no adoption.  
There is no inheritance (Joint heirs with Christ).  
We are still under the curse. (Gal 3:13)  
We are still slaves to sin. Gal 3:25  
We are still subject to the Law of God. Gal 4:5  
There are no spiritual blessing to those who are IN Christ Jesus (Eph 1:3)  
There is no forgiveness of sin because there is no acceptable sacrifice for sin.  
There is no expression of mercy or grace.  
There is no sealing by the Holy Spirit.  
There is no new creation or no new life in Christ Jesus.  
There is no future glory. Col 3  
There is no peace.  
There is no church.  
There are no spiritual gifts.  
There is no joy.  
There is no rescue from the wrath to come 1 Thess 1:10  
There is no walking in newness of life Rom 6:4; 8:34  
There is no promise of life to our moral bodies. Rom 8:11; 1 Cor 15  
There is no hope 1 Peter 1:3, 21  
There is no new birth. 1 Pet 1:3  
There is no eternal place being prepared. John 14

This is the ultimate BAD news. If Jesus were still in some grave, there would be no hope of any kind of personal relationship with God or Him. We would be forced to come to the same conclusion that Solomon did about life on this earth without personal relationship with God. It is the difference between life under the “sun” and life under the “SON”.

*I have seen everything that is done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and a striving after wind. What is crooked cannot be made straight, and what is lacking cannot be counted. Ecclesiastes 1:14-15*

*Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had expended in doing it, and behold, all was vanity and a striving after wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun. Ecclesiastes 2:11*

*For of the wise as of the fool there is no enduring remembrance, seeing that in the days to come all will have been long forgotten. How the wise dies just like the fool! So I hated life, because what is done under the sun was grievous to me, for all is vanity and a striving after wind. Ecclesiastes 2:16-17*

*All go to one place. All are from the dust, and to dust all return. Who knows whether the spirit of man goes upward and the spirit of the beast goes down into the earth? So I saw that there is nothing better than that*

*a man should rejoice in his work, for that is his lot. Who can bring him to see what will be after him?  
Ecclesiastes 3:20-22*

*Who knows what is good for man while he lives the few days of his vain life, which he passes like a shadow?  
For who can tell man what will be after him under the sun? Ecclesiastes 6:12*

Talk about futility.

*If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. 1 Corinthians 15:19*

The whole picture changes if Jesus actually did rise from the dead. Fortunately, there is GOOD news.

### **WHAT IF JESUS DID RISE FROM THE DEAD?**

Jesus said the only lasting proof of His outrageous claims was the resurrection. No matter how many signs Jesus performed they never seemed to be enough. When they kept asking for more, He told them there was only one that would do. He referred to His coming death and resurrection. It stands today as the irrefutable trigger for many who have abandoned their skepticism for faith in the resurrected Christ. Paul called attention to the resurrection as the verification of Jesus deity.

*and He was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord... Romans 1:4*

Paul recorded the core elements of the GOOD news he received from Jesus Himself in 1 Corinthians 15.

*For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. 1 Corinthians 15:3-5*

### **First, Christ died for our sins according to God's revealed plan.**

Four points

1. Jesus died
2. Jesus died because of OUR sins not His.
3. Jesus died according to a predetermined and declared divine plan
4. Proof the He died lies in the fact that He was buried.

Some try to account for the empty tomb because Jesus really didn't die. The historical record makes such a claim unsustainable.

### **Second, Christ rose on the third day according to God's revealed plan.**

Three points

1. Jesus was raised on the third day.
2. Jesus rose perfectly in accord with a predetermined and declared plan.
3. Proof the He rose lies in the fact that He physically appeared to witnesses.

The witnesses were specifically named and able to be interviewed. The sources could be checked and verified. Peter and the twelve apostles. But they were not the only ones.

*Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. 1 Corinthians 15:6-7*

Paul Himself testifies to a personal encounter with the risen Christ.

*Last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared also to me. 1 Corinthians 15:8*

Some claim that the apostles lied or were deluded in their assertions. Again, the historical record makes such assertions unsustainable. Every one of these witnesses to the resurrected Jesus, except John, suffered execution for refusing to renounce their testimony concerning the resurrection.

### **Third, Christ will return to rule and reign.**

## Four Points

1. He is the source of new life vs 22
2. He is the ruler of all the earth vs 25
3. He will judge all the earth vs 25
4. He will finally eliminate sin and death vs 26

What if Jesus did rise from the dead? All the things mentioned above would be a phenomenal reality. Here is the ultimate GOOD NEWS, the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ.

Paul would say.

Our preaching is powerful  
Our trust (faith) is effective  
The Apostles were true witnesses of the risen Christ. (15)  
Our faith is precious. (16)  
We are not personally responsible before God for our sin  
We are assured of seeing those who have died IN Christ.  
Our life has meaning both now and eternally.  
Live for Jesus since it is not over when we die.

Here are other observations from my reflection on various passages.

**We have hope for our resurrection since it is based on Jesus' resurrection.**

*Because I live, you also will live. John 14:19 also Phil 3:20-21*

**We have hope experiencing true life change because it is "Christ in you the hope of glory". Rom 5:2; Col 1:27; Col 3:4**

**He will return to rule and reign forever.**

*On his robe and on his thigh He has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords. Revelation 19:16*

**Life reigns**

*so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Romans 5:21*

**God IS the source of ALL truth.**

**Scripture CAN be fully trusted. 2 Tim 3:16**

**Jesus IS the effective mediator between us and God.**

*For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time. 1 Timothy 2:5-6*

**Jesus continually intercedes for us.**

*Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. Hebrews 7:25*

*Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. Romans 8:34*

**Satan is defeated "ruler of this world".**

*The Holy Spirit convicts concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. John 16:11*

**Satan no longer has the power of death.**

*Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, Hebrews 2:14*

## **We have complete defense and offense against Satan. Ephesians 6**

### **He has reconciled us to God.**

*All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; 2 Corinthians 5:18*

*And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, Col 1:21-22*

### **We are dearly loved children of God.**

*But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God. Galatians 4:4-7*

### **Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to indwell us.**

*Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Encourager will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. John 16:7*

### **We have redemption and forgiveness.**

*In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, Ephesians 1:7*

### **We have justification.**

*He was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification. Romans 4:24-25*

### **There is now NO condemnation.**

*There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Romans 8:1*

### **Nothing can separate us from God's love.**

*nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 8:39*

### **God promises to work all things together for good.**

*And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. Romans 8:28*

### **We have new birth with full kingdom inheritance**

*The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. Romans 8:16-17*

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. 1 Peter 1:3-5*

### **We have been delivered from the curse.**

*Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree”— Galatians 3:13*

**We are no longer slaves to sin.**

*But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed... Romans 6:17*

**We are blessed with EVERY spiritual blessing.**

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies... Ephesians 1:3*

**God showers us with mercy, love and grace.**

*But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— Ephesians 2:4-5*

**God places His Spirit’s protective seal on us**

*In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, Ephesians 1:13*

**We are His NEW creation.**

*For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. Ephesians 2:10*

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, he has become NEW. 2 Corinthians 5:17*

**We have a glorious future.**

*Christ in you, the hope of glory. Colossians 1:27*

*When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Colossians 3:4*

*Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Romans 5:2*

**We have peace with God and within.**

*Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 5:1*

*And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:7*

**Jesus is the builder and head of the church.**

*And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Matthew 16:18*

*And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. Colossians 1:18*

**Jesus gifts us for service.**

*But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ’s gift. Ephesians 4:7*

**We have fulness of joy.**

*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope. Romans 15:13*

*Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen. Jude 1:24-25*

**Jesus rescues us from the wrath to come**

*and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come. 1 Thessalonians 1:10*

**We can walk in newness of life**

*We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. Romans 6:4*

**We have the promise of new bodies.**

*But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself. Philippians 3:20-21*

*But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. 1 Corinthians 15:20-22*

*Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" 1 Corinthians 15:51-55*

**We have hope.**

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 1 Peter 1:3*

**He is preparing an eternal home.**

*"Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also." John 14:1-4*

**SINCE JESUS ROSE FROM THE DEAD...**

Every one of the things listed above only applies to those who have believed and embraced the risen Lord.

The Apostle John made it very clear.

*And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. 1 John 5:11-12*

*Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him. John 3:36*

*He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. John 1:11-13*

Here is how Paul described the Corinthian believers.

*Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. 1 Corinthians 15:1-2*

The heard the good news preached. They received the good news. They stood fast in the truth they received. They experienced salvation. There was the possibility of some who did not fully embrace Jesus.

Today you heard the BAD news and the GOOD news. Jesus died for our sins according to the scriptures. Jesus was raised on the third day according to the scriptures. God promises life to all who embrace Jesus. The message of the resurrection is as critical today as it was then. Consider Paul's message to the people of Athens. Acts 17:22-34

God still commands all people everywhere to repent because a day of judgment is coming through His Resurrected Son. You can mock or believe. Since the death and resurrection of Jesus, you can no longer claim ignorance. God will no longer overlook your indecision. You feel like you don't deserve salvation. Paul felt the same way.

*For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. 1 Corinthians 15:9-10*

*All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself...2 Corinthians 5:18*

*Therefore, I stand here today as an ambassador for Christ, God making his appeal through me. I implore you on behalf of the risen Christ, be reconciled to God. 2 Corinthians 5:20*

For those who have embraced Jesus...Rejoice. Give thanks. Renew.

*Since you have been raised with Christ, keep seeking the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Keep setting your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Colossians 3:1-4*