

Title: Believe in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ

Passage: 1 Corinthians 15:1-9, 12-19, 32-34

Introduction:

Resurrection

- the key point of Christianity
- without it, Christianity is merely another religion about good behavior.

Jesus spoke about His resurrection before it happened:

Mark 8:31

And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and *after three days rise again*.

John 11:25-26

Jesus said to her, “*I am the resurrection and the life*. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?”

Acts 2:31-32

he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses.

Romans 10:9

because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart *that God raised him from the dead*, you will be saved.

- Note: resurrection of the body (not of the spirit as Jehovah Witnesses distort the truth)

Passage:

1 Corinthians 15:1-9

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. 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. 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. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

1 Corinthians 15:12-19

Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.

1 Corinthians 15:32-34

What do I gain if, humanly speaking, I fought with beasts at Ephesus? If the dead are not raised, “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.” Do not be deceived: “Bad company ruins good morals.” Wake up from your drunken stupor, as is right, and do not go on sinning. For some have no knowledge of God. I say this to your shame.

Overview: Why believe in the resurrection?

I. Because of the testimony of Scripture (v.3)

II. Because of the testimony of eyewitnesses (v.4-9)

III. Hypothetical unreasonable implications if Christ didn't raise from the dead (v.12-19, 32-34)

I. We believe in the resurrection because of the testimony of Scripture.

1 Corinthians 15:3

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures,

- Scripture = in this passage, references the Old Testament
- Many Scriptures spoke of the Messiah's resurrection:

Psalms 16:10

For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol,
or let your holy one see corruption.

Isaiah 53:11

Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.

Hosea 6:1-2

"Come, let us return to the LORD; for he has torn us, that he may heal us; he has struck us down, and he will bind us up. After two days he will revive us; *on the third day he will raise us up*, that we may live before him.

- Also see: Genesis 22, Psalm 22

II. We believe in the resurrection because of the testimony of eyewitnesses.

1 Corinthians 15:4b-9

...he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. 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. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

Jesus showed Himself to many

- Mary

John 20:16

Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned and said to him in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher).

- Peter

Luke 24:34

saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!"

- Few disciples on the road to Emmaus

Luke 24:31-32

And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?"

- Group of disciples

John 20:19

On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."

Luke 24:41-43

And while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling, he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate before them.

- James (half-brother of Jesus)
- Paul

Acts 9:3-5

Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. And falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" And he said, "Who are you, Lord?" And he said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting."

- Paul was previously a Pharisee who persecuted believers for their faith. But once he saw and truly understood the truth of Jesus, he completely changed. He realized all that he previously believed was a lie.

Alternative theories:

- Disciples hallucinated Jesus
 - despite Jesus repeatedly appearing to him and showing proof of bodily resurrection (ex: eating food)
 - despite disciples thereafter all being so devoted to their faith that they were willing to boldly preach and suffer/die for it (contrast: after Jesus was arrested but before resurrection, they all fled scared)
- Witnesses mistook the wrong tomb
 - despite the women followed Joseph of Arimathea of seeing the body placed in tomb days before.

Luke 23:55

The women who had come with him from Galilee followed and saw the tomb and how his body was laid.

III. Hypothetical unreasonable implications if Christ didn't raise from the dead:

1 Corinthians 15:16-19

For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.

1 Corinthians 15:17

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

"You are still in your sins"

- If Christ didn't raise from the dead, then sin doesn't exist.
- But: Question: Are you a sinner?
- Answer: Look to the Ten Commandments - if true to yourself, you have broken them.
 - If so, then we are all sinners and condemned in sin.

1 Corinthians 15:15

We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised.

- If Christ didn't raise from the dead, then disciples would be liars.
- But people lie to get out of trouble, not to get *into* trouble (for their faith, disciples all were persecuted - crucified, jailed, or in exile)

1 Corinthians 15:19

If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.

- If Christ didn't raise from the dead, we are wasting our time.
- But can truth and things of eternal worth ever be a waste of time?

1 Corinthians 15:32-34

What do I gain if, humanly speaking, I fought with beasts at Ephesus? If the dead are not raised, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." Do not be deceived: "Bad company ruins good morals." Wake up from your drunken stupor, as is right, and do not go on sinning. For some have no knowledge of God. I say this to your shame.

- If Christ didn't raise from the dead, then there is no reason to pursue godliness or be moral.
 - If there is no meaning or ultimate judgement/Judge, then no reason to live well.

IV. Application

If don't believe in Jesus:

- Bad news: Jesus is alive who will one day keep you accountable for your sins

Revelation 19:11

Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war.

Hebrews 9:27

And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment,

- Good news: Jesus is alive who can receive you right now!

2 Corinthians 6:2

For he says,

"In a favorable time I listened to you, and in a day of salvation I have helped you."

Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, *now is the day of salvation.*

Revelation 3:20

Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.

If you believe in Jesus:

- our sins are forgiven and our faith is not in vain.

Psalms 103:12

as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

- We need not dwell in past sins because Jesus has paid the full penalty of sin.

- Never continue to feel guilty for what has been done. Always look to the cross and see it has been paid. As Jesus said, “It is finished”
- We can preach the Gospel in courage because the Message is never in vain
- Question: What grounds can we tell others they are wrong?
 - Jesus has resurrected and is forever alive. Only we hope in truth and reality.
 - All other religions only have wishful thinking of the future (if do this or that, maybe...)

John 14:6

Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Psalms 118:6-7

The LORD is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me? The LORD is on my side as my helper; I shall look in triumph on those who hate me.

- His promises are true. Believe His promises even in the midst of any trial and difficulty.

Philippians 1:6

And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

Romans 8:28

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

- pursue godliness. You have all the motivation to fight your flesh and pursue godliness.

Hebrews 12:1-2

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

Colossians 3:4-5

When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Put to death *therefore* what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

- live for heaven

Colossians 3:2-4

Set 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.

Hebrews 13:20-21

Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.