



"Easter 2022"

Wk. 2 He was raised according to the Scriptures
By Pastor Jody May 04/17/2022

1 Corinthians 15:1-5 ESV

The Resurrection of Christ

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

³For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁴that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁵and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. ⁶Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. ⁷Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. ⁸Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.

[INTRO] - Sherlock Holmes and the Mysterious Camping Trip...

The realization of the facts that God exists propels people to go looking for an answer for their existence. If you look at nature you will see the truth that God exists:

Psalm 19:1 ESV

¹The heavens declare the glory of God,
and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.

Romans 1:19-20 ESV

¹⁹For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. ²⁰For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.

You have viewed nature, then you witness His handiwork. If that's you then what is your **next step**? Your next step should be to try and figure out what is God's plan, the reason for one's existence, what should one be concerned with? Most people when they get to this next step, if they stick with belief in God, start seeing a fundamental problem. They realize they are **flawed**:



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Romans 2:14-15 ESV

¹⁴ For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires (**morality**), they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law (**ethics**). ¹⁵ They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts (**values**), while their **conscience** also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them...

People begin to sense, especially if they have been reading the Bible at all, that their conscious is not clear, things must be amended in their lives, leading to a desperate need to make things right with God if you are going to meet Him one day! That's really what drives people to church on Easter, the realization there is a God, Jesus by His resurrection, helps the world out in some way to make that relationship right, for He helps deal with that guilt.

The Corinthians were neck deep in trying to figure out how they should live, especially if they were going to meet their creator one day. By nature, they were inquisitive people, being in Greece, right down the road from Athens the philosophical Ivy league capital of the world. At the same time being the center of trade, they were flooded with multiple god worship, that placated to all the fleshly desires.

But now the Corinthians, were arguing amongst themselves, trying to salvage the church that Paul had started a couple of years earlier. It seems the mixing of pagan thinking & theology with Christianity was not working for everyone. As Paul had stated in Romans, their conscience was now under siege with the reality that paganism, humanistic philosophies, pursuits of pleasure, pursuits of education, pursuits in culture, none of it could save them because they had been made aware of a better way; Christianity.

Paul, in love does the best thing he can do for them, instead of trying to argue intellectually against all their false ideologies and world views, instead he **reminded** them about the story of the Gospel. The good news that Jesus dies for sinners in accordance with God's Word, and it is in this good news that they have been saved. But that's not all the story.



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This week we are going to look at the second part of the Gospel this week, just as important as the first part and that is **Jesus' resurrection**. Paul reminds them of this part of the Gospel for it is going to clear up the questions about how one should live, and YES, they will meet God when they die, but the power of the resurrection takes the worry out of that meeting. I heard it said this way this week, *The power of the Gospel for the person being saved is that it turns judgment day from a day of sentencing in a courtroom to an adoption recognition bequeathing the rights to an inheritance.*

Perhaps today you are visiting or watching for the first time online, we at HCC don't just like talking about the events in the Bible we like to explain them. We like to get into the Bible, we trust it, we believe it is sufficient for all of life, and that it holds no mistakes, it's inerrant. We believe, the matters of the Gospel and eternal Salvation are too important to stand up here and tell stories and hope you are getting it.

Being that the Bible is direct revelation from God, we TRUST it for what it says about the resurrection and why it is important. So here are the three things we will learn about the resurrection today, from the Bible, for Paul said Jesus rose **ACCORDING to the scripture**: 1st The Resurrection is not based on **blind faith**, 2nd that the Resurrection establishes **hope** in the individual, and 3rd the resurrection points to a **glorious future** for us.

1. The Resurrection is not Blind Faith.

⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁵ and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve

Alright, first off, the things that Paul mentions here are hard facts, and what makes them factual is that they were things that can be proved. For us now, 2K years later, it's not that we struggle to believe 'IF' the resurrection happened, it is the fight for belief in Paul's testimony supported by facts. The question for all of us is do we believe the witnesses and events?

Which is kind of ironic if you ask me, many of us in here, we are quick to take the evidence of one or two individuals (like so-called journalists), and we will



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build a conspiracy theory around it. But when it comes to hard proof like the resurrection, we are willing not to take it to heart!? Comes down to this; you will believe what you want, what fits your values, what fits your way of life because we all want God to fit our personal theology on how the universe works. Friends let me challenge us all in here on that way of thinking:

Romans 3:10-12 (Psalm 53:1-3) ESV

¹⁰ as it is written:

- "None is righteous, no, not one;
¹¹ no one understands;
no one seeks for God.
¹² All have turned aside; together they have become worthless;
no one does good,
not even one."

Scripture says no one wants to believe in God for not heeding and not believing lets you do what you want, which is 'not good'. Here's what I am trying to say, ***If your motives are faulty from the 'get-go' then don't trust your answer for reconciliation, trust what God's Word says...*** Don't fall into that lie, listen now to what God's Word says about the resurrection:

First Paul is quick to mention that there were witnesses: specifically, Cephas and then the twelve: Peter and the other disciples. The men that Paul would have befriended, his personal confidants and peers, Peter the elder of elders, people that would be known by popularity, of which Paul has spent some time around. People that would have had to explain to Paul, why He saw a **resurrected Jesus** on the road to Damascus. But they were not alone in their witnessing:

⁶ Then he appeared to more than **five hundred brothers** at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep.

So, there is some type of event that 500 people were at then Jesus showed up (Galilee), which happened before Paul's conversion. **Two things** this does for Paul and why it is not blind faith. **1st** the fact that this happened about 20 years earlier and many of them were still alive. The Resurrection could be fact



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checked and Paul's statement to it was an offer to anyone that wanted to go and do it. BTW that's what the gospel of Luke is based on, being that Luke and Paul besties shared the same contacts.

2nd there has been a consideration by modern researchers, that people **shared a hallucination**. That people who wanted very much to have Jesus come back, saw what they wanted to see. That perhaps they believed a false prophet claiming to be Jesus, that perhaps they saw a glimpse of a mysterious person wrapped up like a mummy walking around. But the truth is that doesn't hold water, for there has never been a recorded mass hallucination that has caused multiple people to live an altered life, enduring suffering, and persecution for their beliefs, and even leading to martyrdom for some.

⁷Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. ⁸Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.

What makes this even more interesting now is that James is Jesus' brother but none of His siblings' believed Jesus was the Messiah before His death and resurrection (Mark 3:21, 31-35; John 7:1-10). But something changed in James.¹

But after the resurrection, Jesus' brothers show up in the Christian fellowship in the upper room in Jerusalem (Acts 1:14). There is no further mention of them until Acts 12:17. This is the story of Peter's deliverance from prison by the angel. What are Peter's first words? "Report this to James". In Galatians 1:19 Paul tells of his two-week visit to Jerusalem about three years after his Damascus Road experience. He says that besides Peter, he saw none of the other except James the Lord's brother.

This implies that James is now considered an Apostle. James goes on to become one of the pillars in the church of Jerusalem along with Peter and John (Gal. 2:9). Then in Acts 21:18 he is the sole head of the church in Jerusalem. It was testified by the first-century historian Josephus that

¹Craig, William L. *Reasonable Faith/Christian Truth and Apologetics*, Crossway, Wheaton, IL., 2008. 379-380.



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James was put to death illegally by the Sanhedrin in 60 AD. Listen, men who think they have a crazy sibling, don't do a 180, then spend their whole life praising them and following their work. Especially if it leads to death. It must mean James saw his brother come back to life, spoke to Him, offered His allegiance, asked for forgiveness, and then went on to die for Him.

So, Paul believes in eyewitness accounts, he puts himself as last, he's not building this truth on him but on publicized first-hand witnessed accounts. I don't even have time today to go into all the preposterous theories of a misplaced body, in an unknown tomb, when it was guarded on pain of death. Or that something as so important as Jesus' body was allowed to be stolen under guard which would undermine the Sanhedrin, King Herod, and the Roman government itself. There are too many arguments that support the fact that Jesus is risen and none of the other arguments to the contrary have ever had enough teeth to bite.

Friends I just want to summarize this point, you will never find an argument that has as much weight to it against the resurrection as the arguments are for it. It doesn't exist. We have established the point that the resurrection is not based on blind faith, the issue we need to deal with though is the fact that **do we really want to hear it?** Do you want to know how the Gospel of the resurrection can set you free or do you like your theology of God, watered down, in your back pocket under your thumb, so you can live how you want?

If you want more then there is definitely more good news for you today!

2. The Resurrection establishes the Power of Hope.

We get back now to the reason why is Paul offering the hope of the Gospel after what seemed like him doing a lot of chastisement, rebuke, and correction in the first 14 chapters. There is a little more to solve here in this mystery.

1 Corinthians 15:12-14 ESV

The Resurrection of the Dead



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¹² Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can **some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?** ¹³ But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. ¹⁴ And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain.

There were those in the church, perhaps false Christians, even pagans infiltrating the church with false ideologies that there is no resurrection from the dead. Paul admits if there is no resurrection from the dead then there is not much to offer in terms of a religion, and it's all been in vain!

Currently we are experiencing some of the same pressures within our culture as well. Do you know what the unscrupulous Marxists, the mad environmentalists, and the frenzied transgender activists all have in common? None of them really believe in an afterlife. All of those three movements act so desperately, confront so maliciously, and will lie to get their way because to them their best life is not in the future, it's not after death, is not in the glorious reuniting with their God, they act so malignantly because their best life is now for there is no tomorrow! That's why if you don't agree with them, you get shouted down, slandered, ridiculed, and called names because you are messing with their eschatology, for their kingdom has come!

This is why the church has to stop fretting if they have been nice enough in their arguments against worldly philosophies, or worried about their image. The extremists won't like you anyway, because they are opposed to the beliefs of the true church. The sooner you are quiet the better for them! But we can't do that for the glorious truth of the gospel is so much better than living an unfulfilled/dead life now!

1 Corinthians 15:20-21 ESV

²⁰ But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹ For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead.

Death came through one man, Adam, that's why we all are born sinners, we call that original sin, or depravity. But through Jesus we all receive the gift of



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resurrection: a renewed heart, a new heaven and new earth eventually, a New Creation that will work with us and not against us, for He has replaced Adam as our new King! **Where Adam was supposed to hand us the keys to the Kingdom but lost them to the serpent, Jesus has won them back and He will one day give them to us!** Then as our replacement for Adam, our new King/Messiah Jesus, there is more hope to be gained in Him:

1 Corinthians 15:24-25 ESV

²⁴ Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. ²⁵ For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.

As a part of this New Order, Jesus also brings hope in the form of **Vindication, Resolution, Order, and Complete Victory**. Being a Christian believing in the resurrection, means that not only will you be there to see the glory of Christ, to see His last victory, to see Him confront all the powers of Hell and win, but all those that belittled, and tried to steer you away from belief, they will be there too! Jesus must, Paul says, put all enemies under His feet, **and if they are your enemy then they are Jesus' enemy**. Jesus subdues and conquers your enemies for you, even death itself!

You want hope, you got it, and it's not just for this life it is for your future resurrected life to come when you receive a new heaven and a new earth! Your victories don't all come now, they will come in your tomorrow, put stock in that. Talking about that brings us to our third point.

3. The Resurrection points to a Glorious Future.

1 Corinthians 15:51-53 & 56-58 ESV

⁵¹ Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, ⁵² 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. ⁵³ For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality.



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You know every time I drive down to Florida on the Turnpike I am amazed at the number of evangelical messages and billboards. I have seen signs that talk about Jesus being the answer for sins, that *God so loved the World*, that God loves the unborn child, that God wants to change your life today, BUT I have **never seen a sign that tells us the future glories** that await us all! It is as if the message is too hard to accept? The power in the Gospel is just not the cross itself. Many evangelists try to strong arm people into following Jesus by talking about Cross and the injustice of the act to get people to feel guilty and to produce a heart change. But often people neglect the story of the empty tomb, the glorious resurrection to let people in on what is in store for those that endure this life. Our best life is still to come!

V. 53 tells us that a *perishable body must put on the imperishable, that the mortal body must put on immortality*. Christ, since He bodily came back from the dead, shows you what to expect in your future, again He's the **firstfruits**, it means there is **more to come**, more of what - **resurrections!** What I am about to tell you might be hard to believe, hard to accept but it's all true, because Jesus rose according to the scriptures and again, I want to remind us all we accept what the Bible says as true, all of it!

There will come a day, when not just in Spirit but in a physical body you will be resurrected. As the example, **the firstfruits**, Jesus also shows what a glorified body is like that is not bound to the physical laws of the universe. To what degree I don't know, but what we do see is He can come and go as He pleases (Luke 24:36; Jn. 2-:19-23), he appears and then disappears without warning or sign. We are also told right now He reigns (Dan. 7:14, Heb. 1:8, 2 Pet. 1:11) showing that this new body has an eternal lasting to it, no expiration dates, no time limits. To be immortal means our bodies can't be held to the limitations it has had before, **we all shall be changed!** TO be in the presence of the Living God, we must be changed, and to live with an eternal God, we will be changed FOREVER!

1 Cor. 15:56-57 ESV

⁵⁶The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.



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The glorious gospel in the resurrection is that even though, and we know this, we are no longer lost/spiritually dead/ bound to Hell, we do still continue to struggle with sin. BUT THANKS BE TO GOD! The power of sin, death, has been broken! Jesus broke it by living by law perfectly, and was unjustly murdered, and therefore He was given a new life, but as Paul says thanks be to God as our new King Jesus gives us/shares His victory, giving us an eternal life!

[CHALLENGES]

This is all that Paul gave the Corinthians, the GOSPEL - in light of what this world offers you, in light of them trying to tell you there is no such thing as eternal life, and eternal rewards, he says this:

58 Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

Abounding, growing, being fruitful in the work of God, lest our lives have been in vain, the Gospel IS enough for you...

Today family, it may not be a lack of evidence that keeps you from believing in the miracle of Easter, it is simply that you do not want to receive it. The resurrection is **not built on blind faith**, but **it is built on the call to come and die**, to receive the truth and then live differently. It made the disciples give everything over to Jesus to live for Him, it made the Apostles including Jesus' brother to give their life for the cause, and here's the truth, **it may call you to do the same**. What I will also tell you though, that the more it calls you to surrender your will to Him and for His cause the more fulfilled and happier you will be, that is called eternal life. Come to Jesus, surrendered to the FACT that He lived, He died, and He was raised from the dead for you, so you can be set free from a dead life.

Perhaps today you walked in here without a lot of hope. Maybe there have been lots of people and naysayers putting you down, belittling you and even perhaps belittling your faith. You know you were supposed to find joy in



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Easter but outside of the chocolate waiting in a basket you don't see why there is reason to rejoice. Perhaps your down because of what you see on your media threads, and you are thinking to yourself why can't I be that happy? Let me just offer you this, Easter is not about one day a year to experience joy BUT Easter is about living every day realizing that even if death came for you, the grave can't hold you, and you will rise again because of the vindication that Jesus has procured for Him AND you. Maybe today you need to **stop comparing your lives** to others and **embrace** the one God has given you to live for **His glory** and ask Him to help you discover the joy in it. Perception is everything guys!

Today you may have been running so hard in life trying to find that which makes you happy now. Whether it is another kid function, hobby to pick up, another Instagram post to prove people you really are a happy person. Listen, we aren't fooling anyone, but I do have something to take joy in, **this all gets better!** One day you will have no desire, no need for anything this current world can give you because you will last forever in a new and improved body. You will be reunited with an eternal God, and you will finally be able to with a new mind appreciation Him to enjoy Him forever while everything you do will directly Glorify Him!

Lastly, today, perhaps you need all of this, you had a feeling that the resurrection was not fake, you needed some hope, you want a better tomorrow. Then come to Him, surrender your life, fall at His feet, ask Him to forgive you, to love you, to show you the way and He will be yours forever! This morning if you have not surrendered to Jesus to be saved, then do it TODAY and discover the power of the resurrection in your life too! Won't you join us in celebrating Easter as if it meant everything to you!

[PRAYER]

[COMMUNION]

[BENEDICTION]



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Go in the name of the Father, that raised His Son from the dead as the firstfruits of resurrection, presenting to us what's in store for our futures.

Go in the name of the Son, that has conquered sin, the devil, and the grave to bring us into His Father's presence eternally.

Go in the name and power of the Holy Spirit, that opens our eyes to the truth of the Gospel and propels us to give this Glorious Gospel to others.