

The Importance Of The Resurrection

Introduction. No event has had a greater impact on the history of mankind than the resurrection of Jesus Christ. We know the Bible speaks of this event, but sometimes we need to know just how vital it is to our faith.

The historical fact of Christ's resurrection is the lynchpin of the gospel. If the resurrection did not really take place, then everything about the New Testament falls like a house of cards. Before we study why the resurrection is important, we will talk about why we can believe in the resurrection.

I. Why We Should Believe The Resurrection

A. The way He died.

1. Some suggest that Jesus did not really die upon the cross. Instead, they say that He was mistaken for dead, taken down from the cross, and later revived.
2. All four gospels record that Jesus died (Matthew 27:50; Mark 15:37; Luke 23:46; John 19:30). The men whose lives depended on being certain of His death would have known if He were faking.

B. His burial.

1. Again, all four gospels tell us that Jesus was buried according to the custom of the Jews (Matthew 27:59-60; Mark 15:46; Luke 23:53-54; John 19:38-40).
 - a) The Jews wrapped the dead body in linen three times – once to the armpits, then to the neck, and finally the entire body. Spices were mixed in with the layers of cloth.
 - b) One of these spices was myrrh, which serves as a gummy adhesive. Thus, these three layers were literally glued in place.
2. No one, having gone through a crucifixion, could have wrestled himself out of such an encasement, let alone leave the grave clothes (John 20:6-7).

C. The empty tomb.

1. Jesus was buried in a new tomb (Matthew 27:60; John 19:41), thus His was the only body placed in the tomb. This tomb was hewn out of rock, so there was not a back door through which to remove the body. A large, sealed stone covered the door of the tomb, and a guard was posted to keep it undisturbed.
2. Despite these precautions, on Sunday the women found an empty tomb. What happened to the body? The women did not go to the wrong tomb; they had carefully observed where His body was laid (Mark 15:47; John 20:4-10).
3. Jesus did not survive and walk out alive, for He could not have moved the stone from the inside and gotten past the guard. The disciples did not steal the body, for they could not have gotten past

the guard. His enemies did not move His body, for it was in their best interest to keep Jesus' body in the tomb. The only way to account for the empty tomb is the resurrection.

D. Post-resurrection appearances.

1. Jesus appeared in 11 separate instances after His resurrection. One of these appearances was to His disciple named Thomas. Jesus appeared to him and invited him to touch Him.
2. Thomas refused to believe that Jesus was alive until he saw the physical evidence, but he saw the evidence he needed and confessed that Jesus was his Lord and God (John 20:24-31). Thomas stands in the place of every skeptic who would come after him.

II. Why The Resurrection Is Important

A. It proves Jesus is the Christ.

1. The resurrection of Jesus from the dead was the crowning piece of evidence to mankind that Jesus was who He claimed to be (John 2:18-22; Romans 1:4). His disciples did not understand what He meant by this statement until after His resurrection. It was then that they believed.
2. In Deuteronomy 18:22, Moses told the children of Israel how to tell if a prophet was indeed from God. Jesus said that He was going to be raised from the dead (Matthew 16:21; 17:22-23; 20:19). If He had not risen from the dead, then He would have failed Moses' test, and no one would have a reason to listen to anything else He said. However, since what He said about His resurrection did come true, there is no valid reason to doubt anything He has said, including His claim to be the Son of God.

B. It produces victory over sin and death.

1. When Jesus died on the cross it appeared that Satan had won. Death came into the world because of sin. Death was the greatest power that the devil had, but it was not powerful enough.
2. Peter says that God raised Jesus (Acts 2:24). When Jesus rose from the dead, He gained victory over the devil and all his power, including sin and death. We can share in this victory through obedience (Romans 4:25; 5:10).

C. It validates our faith.

1. In 1 Corinthians 15, Paul spoke about the reality of our future resurrection. He said the assurance of this promise is found in our Lord's own resurrection. Our faith depends on the resurrection of Jesus from the dead (vv. 12-19).
2. If Christ did not rise from the dead, then the gospel is a lie. The Lord's resurrection was a major theme of gospel preaching in the

New Testament (Acts 2:24-32, 3:15, 10:30, 13:33, 17:31; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4). Without it, there was no reason to believe or obey what the apostles preached.

D. It assures us of judgment.

1. If we believe that Jesus rose from the dead, we must also accept the fact that we will be judged in the end of time (Acts 17:30-31; Romans 2:16).
2. It has been observed that more people attend worship assemblies on Easter Sunday than on any other Sunday of the year. The resurrection of Jesus from the dead should motivate people to do more than just attend one worship assembly a year. Assurance of this fact should move all men to repent, change their life, and faithfully serve the Lord every day until He returns.

Conclusion. Either Jesus rose from the dead like He said He would, proving that He is the Son of God and gaining victory over death, or He did not. There is no middle ground. The resurrection of Jesus from the dead is critical, for without it, Jesus is just another dead prophet. However, the evidence supports the fact of the resurrection, and if we accept that Jesus rose from the dead, we need to then accept that He will return to judge the world in righteousness. Are we ready?