

MEMORY VERSE: “And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty.... And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!” 1 Corinthians 15:14, 17, NKJV

LESSON STUDY INTRO

“This week we will focus on 1 Corinthians 15 and its teaching on the resurrection of Christ.” Qrtly, Sab, last par

1. The resurrection is an essential part of the gospel (Sun, Mon)

- Paul introduces the subject of the resurrection by reminding the Corinthians of the gospel he preached (1 Cor. 15:1-8).
 - “[Christ’s] resurrection is such a vital part of the gospel message that denying it contradicts one’s faith in Christ.”
Qrtly, Sun, par 1
 - The first 11 verses can be summarized as “Christ arose, we testified, you believed.”
- Yet there are apparently in his audience those who profess to believe in Christ, and yet deny the resurrection (1 Cor. 15:12).
 - Paul then outlines how a denial of Christ’s resurrection completely dismantles the Christian faith – “If there is no resurrection,... (1 Cor. 15:13-18).
 - Christ is not raised
 - Our preaching is empty (hollow, devoid of substance)
 - Your faith is also empty
 - We’re false witnesses
 - You’re still in your sins
 - Those who have died are eternally lost
 - We have no hope beyond this life

2. The resurrection is real (Tue)

- While there is overwhelming evidence that Jesus of Nazareth existed and was crucified by the Romans, many fail to realize the “infallible proofs” (Ac. 1:3) of the of the resurrection.
 - The account was established early
 - There were over 500 eyewitnesses (the first of them women)
 - The tomb was empty
 - The disciples began preaching at the “scene of the crime”
 - There was nothing to gain

- Paul goes on to explain that the resurrection is a bodily one (1 Cor. 15:35-38, 49; Phil. 3:20, 21).
 - This is a perplexity to many Christians who are taught that we all become formless spirits in the afterlife. The erroneous teaching of the immortality of the soul destroys the Biblical teaching of the resurrection of the saints.
 - “Paul does not relate the term ‘spiritual’ to an immaterial existence.... We will have real bodies, but they will not wear down or decay.... [T]hat is what we are promised in Jesus.” Qttly, Wed, last par

3. The resurrection gives us a living hope (Wed, Thu)

- Paul presents Christ as the “firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep” (1 Cor. 15:20-23), contrasting death as the consequence of Adam’s life with life as the consequence of Christ’s death.
 - The firstfruits offering was the first part of the harvest, testifying to a fuller harvest later. As the results of Adam’s failure are ours, so the results of Christ’s victory can be ours, too (see 1 Pet. 1:3, 4).
 - We are baptized into Christ’s death so we can be raised by His life. This is what is being referred by the phrase “baptized for [on behalf of - ESV] the dead” (1 Cor. 15:29).
 - “This is certainly the most difficult verse in the New Testament; for, notwithstanding the greatest and wisest men have labored to explain it, there are to this day nearly as many different interpretations of it as there are interpreters.” Dr. Adam Clarke Commentary on 1 Cor. 15:29
- The resurrection foreshadows the end of sin and death.
 - Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God” (v. 50-55).
 - “The parallelism of 1 Corinthians 15:50 suggests that ‘flesh and blood’ is in parallel with ‘corruption,’ such as ‘the kingdom of God’ is in parallel with ‘incorruption’.... In short, Paul uses the ideas of corruption and mortality to refer to our sinful nature.” Qttly, Thu, par 2, 3

CONCLUSION

How many echo Mary's despairing cry, “They have taken away the Lord, ... and we know not where they have laid Him”!... “Go quickly, and tell His disciples that He is risen.” Bid them look not to Joseph's new tomb, that was closed with a great stone, and sealed with the Roman seal. Christ is not there.... Jesus lives, and because He lives, we shall live also.... Grasp this hope, and it will hold the soul like a sure, tried anchor. Believe, and thou shalt see the glory of God. DA 794.6