



If No Resurrection, What Then?

As one reads through the book of First Corinthians, it doesn't take long to realize the many problems those Christians had to face. We can read of divisions (chap. 1), condoning of immorality (chap. 5), Christians suing each other (chap. 6), abuse of spiritual gifts (chap. 14), and the denial of the resurrection of Christ (chap. 15). All of these problems were serious and needed their attention, but one in particular stands out. Paul said, "But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain, your faith also is in vain" (I Cor. 15:13-14). Some of the Christians in Corinth were of the belief Jesus was not raised from the dead and because of that belief Paul showed them three things each Christian would lose if they were right.

If there is no resurrection, we have no basis for faith. Paul said in v. 14, "*and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith is vain.*" When something is vain, it is useless. Paul said their faith was useless because the very foundation of the Christian faith was being denied. Their faith (and ours too) it depended upon the resurrection of Jesus being true.

If there is no resurrection, Paul and those who taught the resurrection were false witnesses. Paul said in v. 15, "*Moreover we are even found to be false witnesses of God, because we witnessed against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised.*" Those who have studied the life of the apostle Paul know he gave his all in everything he did. Whether it was in persecuting Christians as a Jew or in teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ as an apostle, he devoted his entire strength and energy to giving it his best shot.

If there is no resurrection, we have no hope. In v. 17 Paul said, "*and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins.*" If one was still in their sins, it follows they were never cleansed of their sins in the first place. Forgiveness of sins depends heavily upon Jesus not only dying on the cross but especially His resurrection from the dead. If the resurrection didn't happen then we have no hope of ever gaining an opportunity to spend eternity in heaven.

If there is no resurrection, we have no home in heaven. After speaking of the Corinthians still being in their sins, Paul then brings those who had already died into the picture by saying, "*Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished*" (v. 18). This would, undoubtedly, cause great anxiety amongst the Christians in that place to know their loved ones whom they thought were in heaven, actually were destined for hell. Again, the premise is the same. If Jesus was not raised from the dead, the dead and the living would have no hope of spending eternity in heaven.

Fortunately for all mankind, Paul would use the rest of chapter 15 to show the resurrection true and why it is to our advantage to make full use of it. Without the resurrection of Jesus Christ we would be as those who have never obeyed the gospel, but praise God we have faith, we have hope, and to the faithful Christian a home in heaven! Dear reader, have you taken advantage of the blessings that only come through the risen Savior?

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