

HOW IMPORTANT IS THE RESURRECTION?

- ✓ Anyone familiar with the Bible knows it makes some bold claims about Jesus. (He's God, He was born of a virgin, He's sinless.) But of all the claims, one of the boldest has *got* to be the Resurrection!
- ✓ Through the years, people have asked me, "Do I *have* to believe that part of the story? (I'm okay up to that point. But that's where you lose me.) Can I be a Christian *without* believing in the empty tomb?" What does the Bible say? How important *is* the Resurrection?

The Early Church Put a Huge Emphasis on the Resurrection

- ✓ It's in almost every sermon in the Book of Acts!

Acts 2:24 – "Death couldn't hold Him. **God raised Him up.**"

v. 32 – "**God raised Him up**, and we are all witnesses."

Acts 3:15 – "You killed the Prince of Life, but **God raised Him up.**"

Acts 4:10 – "You crucified Jesus, but **God raised Him from the dead.**"

Acts 5:30 – "The God of our fathers **raised up Jesus.**"

- ✓ The Resurrection wasn't an "add on". It was central to their message; the "center piece" of every sermon.

Why Is the Resurrection So Important?

1.) The Resurrection Proves Jesus Was Who He Said He Was

Rom. 1:5 – He was powerfully proven to be the Son of God **by the resurrection.** (KJV)

- ✓ What proved His identity? The Resurrection! ("But I thought it was the miracles that proved His Deity!" No. Miracles prove nothing!)

Matt. 24:24 – "For there shall arise **false Christs**, and **false prophets**, and they shall show great **(mega) signs and wonders.**"

Rev. 16:14 – "For these are **demons working miracles** ..."

2 Thess. 2:9 – "**(Antichrist) whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power, and signs, and lying wonders.**" (Rev. 19:20)

- ✓ They had miracles, but they weren't "proven to be the Son of God" by those miracles. Lots of people have miracles. But only one guy has a resurrection on His resume! (Rom. 1:5)

2.) The Resurrection Is an Essential Part of the Gospel

- ✓ You can't just leave it out!

1 Cor. 15:1 – "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you **the gospel** which I preached ... how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day."

- ✓ It's part of the Gospel. But is it essential? (You tell me!)

1 Cor. 15:17 – "And **if Christ hasn't been raised, your faith is worthless; and you're still LOST in your sin.**"

- ✓ That sounds essential to me! Not only was it essential to the overall plan ...

3.) The Resurrection Is Essential to Your *Personal* Salvation

- ✓ Remember the original question: "Can I be a Christian without believing in the empty tomb?" The answer is "no"! There are two things you MUST believe, in order to be a Christian.

Ro. 10:9 – If you confess with your mouth that **Jesus is Lord** (recognizing His power, authority, and majesty as God ... (that's the first thing) ...

and believe in your heart that **God has raised him from the dead** ... (that's the second thing) ... *you shall be saved.*" (Amp.)

4.) The Resurrection Proves His Sacrifice Was Accepted

- ✓ Think about it! If He says, "I'm going to die, and God is going to accept my death as payment for your sin!" ... then He dies, and you never hear from Him again, how would you know that God accepted His sacrifice?

Acts 17:31 – God has given assurance to all men **by raising Him from the dead.**" (RSV)

*"He gave Him life again **to show that He accepted Jesus' death** ..." (Int.)*

5.) The Resurrection Reveals God's Future Plan for Us

1 Cor. 15:23 – "Christ has been raised up – **the first in a long legacy** of those who are going to leave the cemeteries."

Facts About OUR Resurrection

a.) It's Not Just Christians Who Are Raised from the Dead

John 5:28 – Don't be surprised at this. The time is coming when **ALL** that are in the graves shall hear his voice and come forth. Those that have done good, to the resurrection of life. Those that have done evil, to the resurrection of damnation."

b.) You're Not Getting a Brand-New Body

- ✓ Sometimes you hear Christians say, "I can't wait to get my new body!" Your resurrection body isn't new, in the sense of being "something that never existed before". Your *new* body is really your *old* body redone.

- ✓ Even Jesus got His old body back. That's easy to prove! The tomb was empty, and He showed Thomas the holes in His hands and His side. **The body you bury is the same body that is raised up!**

Philippians 3:21 – "Who shall change **our vile body** (body of humiliation), that **IT** may be fashioned like unto his glorious body ..."

1 Cor. 15:38 – The dead body that we bury in the ground and the resurrection body **that comes from it** will be dramatically different."

What Is Our Resurrection Body Like?

i.) In Some Ways, It's Much Like the One You Have Now

- ✓ After His resurrection, Jesus ate (Luke 24:43), He breathed (John 20:22), and He walked (Luke 24:13-15).

ii.) It's a Significant Upgrade

- ✓ It Doesn't Sleep – (Rev. 22:5 – "... no night there".)
- ✓ It Can't Die – (1 Cor. 15:53 – "... change into bodies that never die".)
- ✓ It Doesn't Cry or Feel Pain – (Rev. 21:4 – "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.")
- ✓ It's Stronger Than the Original

2 Cor. 5:1 – Our bodies are like **tents** that house us here on earth. But when we die and leave these bodies – we will have **a building** of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

- ✓ It's Not Bound by Physical Limitations – (Luke 24:31)
- ✓ It's Just Like His Body – (Phil. 3:21, 1 John 3:1-2 Amp, KJV)