

Christ Lutheran Church

127 N. Spring St., Klamath Falls, OR 97601
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April 2021

“And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable. But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.” (1 Corinthians 15:17-20)

When the apostle Paul wrote these words to the believers at Corinth, their faith was threatened by those who preached that there was no such thing as a physical resurrection from the dead. These false teachers reflected the typical pagan Greek attitude, as we hear in the words of Aeschylus: "...when the dust has drunk the blood of man, and he's once dead, there is no uprising." Paul had met this attitude toward the resurrection in Athens, when he preached Christ to the Greek philosophers: *"And some said, 'What does this babbling want to say?' Others said, 'He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign gods,' because he preached to them Jesus and the resurrection"* (Acts 17:18).

Like the believers at Corinth, how sad it is to see many in the world around us living apart from faith and hope in Christ, who died for us and rose again. And what a tragedy it is to hear of false teachers in the visible church who deny the physical resurrection of Christ as they deny many miracles recorded in Scripture.

The resurrection of Christ is central to our faith, as Paul explains here by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Let us consider each of his points:

"If Christ is not risen, your faith is futile." Indeed, what would our faith mean if we believed in a man who simply died on a cross... whose blood the dust had drunk and, once dead, saw no uprising? Our faith then would be in a deceiver, not a Savior. Jesus had repeatedly told the Jews that He is the Son of God, and that His doctrine is of God. When they demanded a sign from heaven as proof of His divine mission and authority, Jesus pointed to the ultimate sign in His resurrection from the dead (Matthew 12:38-40; John 2:19-21).

"But now Christ is risen from the dead." Therefore, He is not just another deceiver, in whom our hope must die. But He was *"declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead"* (Romans 1:4). Jesus' resurrection is proof that He is who He claimed to be, and our faith is founded on His rock-solid truth.

"If Christ is not risen... you are still in your sins!" If He were just a man, crucified and buried 2000 years ago, how could His sacrifice do us any good today? How could He be *"The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world"* (John 1:29)? It would show that His suffering and death was not sufficient to atone for our sins and reconcile us to God.

"But now Christ is risen from the dead." Therefore, what He did on the cross as our Savior really worked! He *"was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification"* (Romans 4:25). His resurrection proves that God the Father accepted the sacrifice of His Son to take away our sins and the sins of the world. By faith in Jesus, we stand justified – forgiven and reconciled to God in peace; and we have good news to share with all!

"If Christ is not risen... Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable." Think of what a pitiful life it would be if, after all, we were putting all our hope in a dead man. All the ways we deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow Jesus through this world, all that we sacrifice and suffer for His sake – while hoping for an eternal glory that far outweighs our present suffering (Romans 8:18) – all would be meaningless! We would be fools, living a lie, losing out on life. And our lives would still end in the grave like any other.

"But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep." So we can rejoice in the good news of Easter! Christ is risen! We can trust His promise: *"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die"* (John 11:25-26). Already, we live in the forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life He won for us. Though our bodies die, yet our souls shall live on with Him in heaven. At the Last Day, our living Savior will raise our bodies as well, glorified like His, to live with Him in everlasting joy.

In His resurrection hope, Pastor Glenn Smith

Is the Resurrection Fact or Fiction?

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What is the most important question in all human history? The answer to that question is really quite obvious. The most important question in all human history is:

Did Jesus really rise from the dead?

This is the most important question because if Jesus did rise, then Christianity is proven true, and the doors of paradise have been opened to all believers. It also means that all contrary religions and worldviews are known to be false.

There is an amazing amount of evidence that Jesus actually did rise from the dead. First of all, the New Testament documents are unanimous in saying that Jesus did, in real time and real history, rise from the dead. These New Testament documents have proven to be accurate time and time again.

In addition, there were numerous eyewitnesses of Jesus' appearances after his resurrection. Paul, for instance said: "After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born." (1 Corinthians 15:6–8)

Imagine a courtroom trial where one side had 500 eyewitnesses to back up its side of the case. Under normal circumstances, the outcome of the case would not be in doubt.

And why should we suppose that the Apostle John began his biography of Jesus at the time of Jesus' baptism? Why didn't he begin with Jesus' birth as Luke did? The Apostle John explained his reason at the end of his gospel by emphasizing that he had first-hand knowledge of everything he wrote in his gospel. (John 21:24) The Apostle John became a follower of Jesus at the time of His baptism by John the Baptist. This means that John was a witness to the resurrected Jesus, too.

The resurrection accounts also explain a number of historical facts that otherwise have no reasonable explanation.

For example:

1. The resurrection explains how Jesus' followers were transformed from terrified cowards in hiding to become the courageous spokesmen with no fear of death who transformed the world with their claim that Jesus had risen.

2. The resurrection also explains why Jesus' opponents could not produce His body—a feat that would have stopped the Christian church in its tracks if it could have been done.

3. It explains why the Jewish leaders tacitly admitted that the tomb was empty by claiming the disciples stole the body—which would have been impossible given the Roman guard unit at the tomb.

4. The resurrection explains the conversions of the Apostle Paul and James, Jesus' brother.

5. The resurrection explains the change in the day of worship from Saturday to Sunday.

6. And it explains how Christianity could arise in Jerusalem—in a culture that was hostile to the claim of Jesus being the Messiah.

All in all, the resurrection of Jesus is one of the best supported events of ancient history. The New Testament documents are unanimous in proclaiming that it happened; over 500 eyewitnesses testified that it happened; and, the resurrection explains a number of historical facts that we otherwise cannot explain. All in all, we have very good reasons for believing that the marvel of the resurrection is true.

Not only is the resurrection the most important fact among all *past* events, but it also is of utmost importance to our *future*: trusting in the risen Christ, we have peace with God and the sure hope of heaven.

Allen Quist is author of *The Reason I Believe: The Basics of Christian Apologetics*. For a free video archive of his "Evidence for Easter" presentation, visit www.blc.edu/apologetics/events.

Learn More:
www.els.org/apologetics

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><i>“But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.”</i> <i>(1 Corinthians 15:20)</i></p>				<p>1</p>  <p>Maundy Thursday Communion Service 4:00 PM</p>	<p>2 <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Eric Anderson</i></p>  <p>Good Friday Service 4:00 PM</p>	<p>3 <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Maria Smith</i></p>
<p>4 <i>Easter Sunday</i></p> <p>Radio Program 8:30 AM (KAGO 1150 AM) Easter Sunrise Service 8:30 AM Easter Brunch 9:30 AM</p> 	5	6	7	8	9	10
<p>11 <i>Easter 2</i></p> <p>Radio Program 8:30 AM (KAGO 1150 AM) Worship with Communion 9:30 AM Sunday School & Bible Class 10:45 AM</p>	12	13	14	15	16	17
<p>18 <i>Easter 3</i></p> <p>Radio Program 8:30 AM (KAGO 1150 AM) Worship with Communion 9:30 AM Sunday School & Bible Class 10:45 AM</p>	19	20	21	22	23	24
<p>25 <i>Easter 4</i></p> <p>Radio Program 8:30 AM (KAGO 1150 AM) Worship 9:30 AM Sunday School & Bible Class 10:45 AM <i>Happy Anniversary Bill & Ana Jay</i></p>	26	27	28	29	 <p><i>“I am the resurrection and the life.”</i> <i>(John 11:25)</i></p>	
				<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>West Coast Pastors' Conference (West Jordan, UT – In Person / Virtual)</p> </div>		

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