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## CHRIST HAS INDEED BEEN RAISED FROM THE DEAD (1 Corinthians 15:12-20)

*Last weekend, Christians all over the world focused their minds and hearts on the foundational teaching of the faith – that the Lord Jesus Christ died for the sins of the world, was buried for three days, and rose from the dead in victory and power. If this was your reason for celebrating, then I hope this study will encourage you with the biblical basis for this belief.*

*If you do not believe or are skeptical, my prayer is that the truth of the Scriptures will show you that this did happen and that Jesus is God, just as he said. Just a few years after the events surrounding the resurrection of Jesus, Paul wrote this passage to a new church who was struggling with believing the facts:*

**1 Corinthians 15:12-20 - But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied. But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.**

Paul begins this section with a startling question – if you have heard my preaching about the risen Christ, then why do some of you not believe it? Paul's passion to get God's revealed truth through to this church is evident. Paul hadn't met Jesus Christ while he was on earth. In fact, as a rising Jewish leader, Paul actively

sought to persecute any who followed this Jesus. But Paul definitely met Christ one day.

*Acts 9:3-6 - As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."*

That's why Paul could understandably ask his incredulous question. He could say, "I saw him. He talked to me. I know he is alive and the testimony of his followers is absolutely true!"

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*The resurrection is not merely important to the historic Christian faith; without it, there would be no Christianity. It is the singular [teaching] that elevates Christianity above all other world religions. Through the resurrection, Christ demonstrated that He does not stand in a line of peers with Abraham, Buddha, or Confucius. He is utterly unique. He has the power not only to lay down His life, but to take it up again.*

- Hank Hanegraaf -

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Then Paul launches into an argument to prove his point. If you are right, skeptical Corinthians, then several things have to be true. Christ is still in the grave. Our message is useless. We are the biggest liars. Your faith is pointless. You stand condemned in your sin. Nobody is in heaven. Christians are in sad shape. All of these things have to be true if the resurrection of Jesus never happened.

But Paul knew the truth. He had seen the evidence and could confidently say "BUT Christ has indeed been raised from the dead." He had met him face to face!

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The bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the crowning proof of Christianity. If the resurrection did not take place, then Christianity is a false religion. If it did take place, then Christ is God and the Christian faith is absolute truth.

- Henry Morris -

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## JESUS' GRAVE IS EMPTY

Matthew 28:6 - "He is not here! **He is risen**, just as he said! Come, see the place where he lay."

Matthew 28:12, 13 - When the chief priests had met with the elders and devised a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money, telling them, "You are to say, 'His disciples came during the night and stole the body while we were asleep...'"

## THE GOOD NEWS IS CLEAR

1 Corinthians 15:3, 4 - For what I received I passed on to you as of **first importance**: that **Christ died** for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he **was buried**, and that he **was raised** on the third day, according to the Scriptures.

## THE RESURRECTION IS TRUTH

John 8:31, 32 - To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. **Then you will know the truth**, and the truth will set you free."

John 14:6 - Jesus answered and said, "I am the way, **the truth**, and the life: no one comes to the Father, except through me."

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The stone was rolled away from the tomb, not to let Jesus out, but to let the world in.

- Steven Lawson -

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## OUR FAITH IS BASED ON WHAT IS REAL

Hebrews 12:2 - Let us fix our eyes on **Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith**, who for the joy set before

him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

## BELIEVERS' SINS ARE TRULY FORGIVEN

Romans 8:1, 11 - There is therefore now **no condemnation** for those who are in Christ Jesus. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

## HEAVEN IS POPULATED

Revelation 7:9, 10 - After this I looked, and behold, **a great multitude** that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"

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I know the resurrection is a fact and Watergate proved it to me. How? Because twelve men testified they had seen Jesus raised from the dead, then they proclaimed that truth for forty years, never once denying it. Every one was beaten, tortured, stoned, and put in prison. They would not have endured if it weren't true.

Watergate embroiled twelve of the most powerful men in the world and they couldn't keep a lie for three weeks. You're telling me twelve apostles could keep a lie for forty years? Absolutely impossible!

- Chuck Colson -

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The evidence is clear. Lives have been changed through the centuries because of the living power of the living gospel of the living Christ. The Scriptures we've shared (and many more) point us to the reality that Jesus died, was buried, rose again, and lives today. The only thing left to do is for humans who hear this message to either accept that message or reject it.

## BIBLE STUDY

Legislators and Staff (During Session)  
Thursdays, 8:00 a.m.  
Room 153, House Office Building