

If Christ Be Not Raised

Introduction:

- A. "I have more important things to consider than the presence or absence of an empty tomb in the land of Palestine some nineteen centuries ago" (Mahatma Ghandi).
 - B. The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is in fact the single most important even in human history. - mentioned at least 104 times in the New Testament
 - C. How important is the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead? - 1 Corinthians 15:12-19
- I. If Christ has not been raised, our faith is vain. - 1 Corinthians 15:12-15
- A. Our preaching is vain.- 1 Corinthians 15:12-14
 - 1. "vain": "without substance" (The resurrection gives substance to the gospel.)
 - 2. The resurrection of Christ is the heart of the gospel message.- 1 Corinthians 15:1-4
 - 3. Thus, if Christ be not raised, the gospel message is utterly without substance!
 - B. Your faith is vain.- 1 Corinthians 15:14
 - 1. The religion of Christ is one of faith. - Hebrews 11:6; Romans 5:1,2; 2 Corinthians 5:7
 - 2. That faith is that Jesus is the Son of God.- Matthew 16:13-18; John 20:30-31
 - 3. Faith that Jesus is merely a good man is absolutely useless.- John 8:24
 - 4. That faith is based on the evidence of testimony. - Hebrews 11:1
 - 5. The supreme evidence for our faith is the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. - Matthew 12:38-40; Romans 1:3-4
 - 6. If Christ has not been raised, our faith has no substance.
 - C. We are found false witnesses of God. - 1 Corinthians 15:15
 - 1. The mission of the apostles was to bear witness of Christ.- John 15:27; Acts 10:39-41
 - 2. Their apostleship required they be able to give this testimony. - Acts 1:21-22; 1 John 1:1
 - 3. Their constant and consistent testimony and the substance of their preaching was the resurrection of Jesus Christ. - Acts 2:32; 17:30-31
 - 4. If they cannot be believed here, how can they be believed on anything? - 1 Corinthians 15:15
 - 5. If they right here, they must be believed in all things. - Acts 2:36; 2 Corinthians 5:20
- II. If Christ has not been raised, our hope is vain.- 1 Corinthians 15:16-19
- A. Ye are yet in your sins.- 1 Corinthians 15:16-17
 - 1. Jesus' sacrifice on the cross was useless if he has not been raised. - Romans 4:25
 - a. The resurrection proves the worth of the sacrifice. - Acts 13:26-39
 - b. It allows Christ to intercede for us as our high priest.- Romans 8:33-34; Hebrews 7:15-17,25
 - 2. If Jesus' sacrifice is of no avail, we are yet sinners.- 1 Corinthians 15:17
 - 3. If we are yet sinners, our lot is eternal, spiritual death.- Romans 6:23; Revelation 21:8
 - B. They also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.- 1 Corinthians 15:18
 - 1. The resurrection of Christ is the proof of immortality.- 1 Corinthians 15:20
 - 2. If He has not been raised, there is no hope for our dead loved ones.- 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14
 - 3. If Christ has not been raised, eternal, physical death is our lot.

C. We are of all men most miserable (pitiably - ASV).- 1 Corinthians 15:19

1. The life of a Christian is far more than a good, moral life; it is a life of total self-sacrifice in hope of eternal life.- Matthew 16:24-27; Philippians 3:4-11; 2 Corinthians 11:23-30
2. Take away the resurrection, and the Christian has no hope.- 1 Peter 1:3-4
3. Life without hope is meaningless and vain. - Ephesians 2:12
4. Life with false hope is worse.- Job 8:13-14
5. A life of complete self-sacrifice based upon false hope is most the most pitiable of all. - 1 Corinthians 15:19

Conclusion:

- A. ... *while the literal bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ is the cornerstone of the Christian doctrine, it is also the Gibraltar of Christian evidence, and the Waterloo of infidelity and rationalism.* (R.A. Torrey, **Fundamentals**. 5:82)
- B. Christ has been raised, and our faith and hope are secure!- 1 Corinthians 15:20