

The Resurrection Matters!

4.4.10

“Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you— unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed. Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. 1 Corinthians 15:1-22 ^{ESV}

“remind you brothers” Re-communicating the Truth to his spiritual family.

“the gospel” The Good News about Jesus and all He came to do.

“received...stand...being saved” Different aspects of salvation. (justification—when we become Christians, sanctification—our growth as Christians, glorification—when the process is finally completed in heaven.

“if you hold fast to the word I preached to you” Not loss of salvation, but an

encouragement to live out their salvation. Works like the ‘warning passages.’

“unless you believed in vain” If their faith wasn’t genuine.

P: Salvation is both an event and a process.

Have I experienced the event? Am I growing in the process?

“first importance” The most important thing he communicated

“I also received” Paul didn’t make this message up. It came to him as it came to them.

“Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures.” The Gospel storyline didn’t just come out of the blue. It is the Big Story of the Bible; referenced in Genesis, there were types and shadows along the way (the Ark, prophets, priests, a sacrificial system, etc.), prophesies of a Messiah written centuries earlier, longing people, etc.

“...he was buried...” in the borrowed tomb of Joseph of Arimathea (Mt. 27:57)

“...raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures” In fulfillment of Jesus own predictions and the prophesies that foretold its occurrence.

P: Jesus life, death and resurrection are rooted in actual history and not religious speculation.

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“he appeared to Cephas” His follower Peter who had denied him only days before.

“then to the twelve” The rest of His disciples that had fallen asleep and deserted Him.

P: Our God is a God of second chances.

“he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep.” An appearance to a large number of people who could refute this if it were false. Biblical language for death.

“James” the brother of the Lord Jesus. Author of the book of James.

“all of the apostles” The rest of Jesus’ key followers.

“one untimely born...me” Ref. to the fact that he wasn’t with them at the time.

He supernaturally appeared to Paul on the road to Damascus (Acts 9)

“I am the least of the apostles unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.” Paul remembered his past before he knew Jesus.

“But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.

P: True encounters with Jesus give us the proper assessment of ourselves.

Am I walking in the proper assessment of myself today? If not, what needs to change?

“Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.” The same message.

P: If it is truly the Gospel, it is the same no matter who communicates it.

“How can some of you say...” Greeks rejected the notion of the resurrection of the dead.

“But if...” The resurrection of Jesus and resurrection from the dead are inseparable.

“If Christ has not been raised...” (v. 14-19)

1. Our preaching is in vain.
2. Our faith is in vain.
3. We are misrepresenting God.
4. We are still in our sins.
5. Those also who have fallen asleep (died) in Christ (with their faith in Christ) have perished (to spend eternity in Hell separated from God).
6. Of all the people in all the world, we are the most to be pitied because we have wasted our entire lives believing, preaching and hoping in a lie.

“But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead...” (v. 20-22)

1. The OPPOSITE of everything that was just listed is true.
2. Jesus has come to fix everything that Adam broke.

The Resurrection is the lynchpin of Christianity. If it is not true, our faith and ministry are worthless. Because it is true, there is hope for us and the world.