

Sermon Notes

Practical Lessons for Understanding the Word of God



Your Convictions About the Resurrection of Jesus Christ

KEY PASSAGE: 1 Corinthians 15:12-20 | **SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES:** Matthew 7:21-23 | 2 Corinthians 5:8
Ephesians 2:8 | Romans 6:23; 10:9 | Hebrews 9:27

SUMMARY

All believers need to have strong convictions regarding certain truths about Jesus Christ.

Primarily, we must be convinced that He was crucified, buried, and raised to life. If He was not resurrected, then He was just like any other man who was crucified at that time, and we'd have no forgiveness for sins and no hope of eternal life. His resurrection proves that Jesus is the Son of God, who overcame death. Because He lives, we too will be resurrected one day and live forever.

SERMON POINTS

Belief in the resurrection is not optional for salvation.

Romans 10:9 says, "If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." Salvation is impossible if we don't have a conviction about this. A conviction is being so thoroughly convinced that something is absolutely true that we'll take a stand for it regardless of the consequences.

All of Christ's disciples considered His resurrection to be an essential part of the gospel that they proclaimed. Wherever they went, this was their main message. These men were eyewitnesses of His death and resurrection. They'd talked with Him and had seen the nail prints in His hands. They were totally convinced of His resurrection, and from that point on, nothing could dissuade them. All of them except John were killed for insisting that Jesus was the Son of God

who paid the penalty for sin with His death and was raised to life.

This was also the primary message Paul delivered as he traveled around the Roman world spreading the gospel. He founded a church in Corinth, which was one of the most immoral cities of that time. When Paul wrote to them, he wanted to make sure they understood the truth about Jesus' resurrection.

The Importance of the Resurrection

In 1 Corinthians 15:12-20, Paul very clearly explained why it is so vital to have a firm conviction about the resurrection.

- **Verse 12, "Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?"** To deny Jesus' resurrection is to reject both the gospel message and the hope of our future resurrection as well. Without this hope, we have no assurance of life after death. Therefore, those who don't believe Christ was raised to life may think that at death their bodies are put in the grave, and they simply cease to exist.
- **Verses 13-14, "But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain."** Without the resurrection of Jesus, we have no message worth preaching, and those who hear and believe our message have a worthless faith that accomplishes nothing. There would be no reason to attend a church service because there would be no purpose for a church to exist. Furthermore, if what the

Bible says about Jesus being raised is not true, then we have no reason to trust anything else in the Scriptures.

- **Verse 15, “Moreover we are even found to be false witnesses of God, because we testified against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised.”**

Since God affirms in His Word that Jesus was raised from the dead, to deny this truth is to deny what the Lord has said.

- **Verses 16-18, “For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.”**

The resurrection proved that God the Father was satisfied with Christ’s death as the payment for our sins. If He had not been raised, there’d be no basis for the forgiveness of our sins, and we’d all have to bear the penalty ourselves, which is eternal separation from God. However, Jesus was raised from the dead, and now all those who believe in Him have absolute confidence that when they die, they will immediately be present with Christ in heaven (2 Cor. 5:8).

- **Verses 19-20, “If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied. But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep.”** Our hope is not in this world or even in what Christ does for us here and now. There is another life coming, and we wait for it with great anticipation. Because Jesus was raised to life, we know that we too will be resurrected some day.

Two Possible Convictions

We can only choose between two possible convictions about the resurrection—either Jesus died and rose again, or it’s a fictional tale. We must each make a decision, and the consequences of our choice are eternal. Scripture says, “The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 6:23). Jesus died on the cross to

pay this penalty for us and rose again to give us new life. It’s a free gift accessed through faith in Him, but if we reject His death and resurrection on our behalf, we must suffer the penalty for all our sins.

Jesus warned the crowd that followed Him saying, “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter” (Matt. 7:21). If we have a lifestyle of disobedience and sin, it won’t matter that we claimed to know Christ because our actions prove otherwise. Genuine faith results in a changed life characterized by obedience.

We will all face God’s judgment after we die (Heb. 9:27). But for those of us who have placed our faith in Jesus and His death and resurrection, there is hope. Although our bodies will remain on earth, our souls will be with Jesus. And in heaven, we will see our loved ones who have died in Christ.

RESPONSE

- How convinced are you that Jesus died on a cross and was resurrected? What difference does His resurrection make in your life today?
- Have you ever thought about the ramifications if Jesus had not been raised? How would your life be different if He was still in the grave? How would it have affected history? Christianity? Your current culture? Your eternal destination?
- What emotions do you feel when you think about your own death? Are you confident that Christ is your Savior? If not, won’t you believe in Him today, repent of your sins, and ask Him to forgive you?

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