

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST BIBLE OUTREACH

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DAILY DEVOTION

THE EVIDENCE FOR THE RESURRECTION.

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1 Corinthians 15:12,14

[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?
[14]And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty."

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the very fundamental of Christianity. Without a risen Savior, the wheels of faith would fall off, and there would be no point, no eternity, and no forgiveness for sin available. The grave would have won! Life would lose its value beyond any earthly existence. The Apostle Paul understood that when he wrote the letter of First Corinthians to Christ followers in Corinth who were being led to believe that there was no resurrection.

According to Pastor Warren Weirsbe, "Corinth was a Greek city, and the Greeks did not believe in the resurrection of the dead. When Paul had preached at Athens and declared the fact of Christ's resurrection, some of his listeners actually laughed in contempt at him in Acts 17:32. Most Greek philosophers considered the human body a prison, and they welcomed death as deliverance from bondage. This skeptical attitude had somehow invaded the church, and Paul had to face it head-on." The fact of the resurrection had doctrinal and practical implications for life that were too important to ignore, so Paul presented three proofs to assure his readers that Jesus Christ indeed had been raised from the dead.

Here's the evidence:

Proof #1: Personal transformation. Having been reconciled to God

through the death of Jesus Christ, they were saved by His resurrection life! Jesus gave His life for them that He may offer His life to them! Only a risen Savior could change them from the inside out and make them new! A dead Savior cannot save anyone! The greatest evidence for the resurrection and its power today is a life completely changed! In the first two verses, Paul reminds them of the faith that transformed their lives when he wrote, "Brothers and sisters, I'm making known to you the Good News which I already told you, which you received, and on which your faith is based. In addition, you are saved by this Good News...." (1 Corinthians 15:1-2, GW).

Proof #2: Fulfilled Prophecy. In the next two verses, Paul offers his second proof: "I passed on to you the most important points of doctrine that I had received: Christ died to take away our sins as the Scriptures predicted. He was placed in a tomb. He was brought back to life on the third day as the Scriptures predicted." (1 Corinthians 15:3-4, GW).

In his book 'Evidence That Demands A Verdict', Josh McDowell cited over 300 references to the coming Messiah written in the Old Testament over a 1,000-year period that were all fulfilled in Jesus Christ!

The mathematical probability of someone fulfilling even 48 Old Testament prophecies is one chance in a trillion.

Proof #3: Eyewitness Testimony. In verses 5-8, Paul offers a final proof: "He (Jesus) appeared to Cephas (Peter). Next He appeared to the twelve apostles. Then He appeared to more than 500 believers at one time. (Most of these people are still living, but some have died.) Next, He appeared to James. Then He appeared to all the apostles. Last of all, He also appeared to me" (1 Corinthians 15:5-8, GW).

The eyewitness testimony of those who saw the risen Christ is undeniable evidence of His bodily resurrection. The power of His resurrection so impacted Paul that it radically changed his life – a change that would bring him persecution, great suffering, and ultimately death.

Men may die for what they believe is true, even if it isn't, but rarely would men give their lives for what they know is a lie.

The evidence for the resurrection is beyond question. But what matters the most is if you have settled the question in your own heart. Where do the facts lead you? As Jesus said to Mary and Martha at the grave of their brother Lazarus in John 11:25-26, NIV, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?"

Examine the evidence for yourself. See if it will not lead you to the risen Christ.

Prayer: Thank you Jesus for your resurrection, oh Lord let there be manifestation of the power of resurrection in my life to bring every dead thing back to life in Jesus name, Amen!