

# PAUL'S FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS

LEARNING HOW TO BE A HEAVENLY CHURCH IN A GODLESS WORLD

## 1 CORINTHIANS CHAPTER 15:12-21

MEDIA REFERENCE NUMBER SMX775 JUNE 17, 2012

THE TITLE OF THE MESSAGE:

### WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? – PART 2

*DISCOVERING THE NATURE OF GOD IN OUR EVERYDAY LIFE*

SUBJECT TOPICALLY REFERENCED UNDER:

**Death, Eternity, Resurrection, Hell, Heaven, God**

**The Crowning Event of Our Absolute Conversion  
Will be the moment of our physical, personal, bodily resurrections take place or  
when the LORD suddenly appears.**

If we would just slow down and look around us, we would see overwhelming evidence of God's revealed Word to us thru His creation / natures witness.

#### Romans 1:20

For since **the creation** of the world His **invisible attributes** are clearly seen, being understood by **the things that are made**, *even* His eternal power and Godhead, so that **they are without excuse**,

#### Psalm 19:1

The **heavens declare** the **glory** of God; And the **firmament shows** His **handiwork**.

### Our Passage

#### 1 Corinthians 15:12-21

**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? **:13** But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. **:14** And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching *is* empty and your faith *is* also empty. **:15 Yes**, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up—if in fact the dead do not rise. **:16** For if *the* dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. **:17** And if Christ is not risen, your faith *is* futile; you are still in your sins! **:18** Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. **:19** If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable. **:20 But now Christ is risen from the dead**, and **has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep**. **:21 For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead.**

**You / We Cannot Avoid The Arguments Surrounding Jesus Christ.  
You / We must either deny them, Disprove them, or reject them.**

***Just because someone says***

*“I don’t believe in the Bible, so to me – I mean Jesus Christ wasn’t or isn’t an actual person” is by no means off the intellectual, factual or historical hook.*

**Reasons Must Be Given and Facts Must be Presented  
For You to Come to a Reasonable Conclusion.**

**WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT  
WHEN YOU SAY THAT**

**1.) Christianity’s relevance is anchored to Jesus’ resurrection ?**

**What are we talking about when we say that...  
*It’s all about Jesus Christ being raised from the Dead?***

**The resurrection doctrine  
was the foremost teaching and preaching of the Church from its birth.**

**1 Corinthians 15:12-14**

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? :13 But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. :14 And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty.

**WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT  
WHEN YOU SAY THAT**

**CHRISTIANITY’S RELEVANCE  
IS ANCHORED TO JESUS’ RESURRECTION**

**1a.) Opposition can only strengthen the argument**

**1b.) Opposition can only steel the investigation**

**1c.) Opposition can only sharpen the faith**

## WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT WHEN YOU SAY THAT

### 2.) It's all about Jesus being raised from the dead ?

#### 2a.) The evidence existed in advance

v.15-16

Yes, and we are found **false witnesses** of God, because we have **testified** of God - that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up - **if in fact the dead do not rise.** :16 For if the dead do not rise, **then Christ is not risen.**

**Testified** - marture÷w martureo, *mar-too-reh'-o*

“Atheists argue that they cannot even begin to entertain Christianity because **they do not believe** in the resurrection - because **they do not believe** in the Bible – because **they do not believe** in the existence of God.”

### So - what are we to do about it?

**We're to use the Bible just like any other book, we ask:**

- (#1) What does the book say =
- (#2) What is the historical evidence =
- (#3) What does the examination of the claims produce =
- (#4) We Interview the eyewitnesses
- (#5) We form an educated conclusion / opinion / argument from the data

**Flavius Josephus, not a believer. Not a Christian.**

Pontius Pilate. Herod, King Agrippa, Numerous Caesar's

#### **Hebrews 4:12**

For the word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the **thoughts** and **intentions** of the heart.

#### **Hebrews 4:13**

And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things *are* naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we *must give* account.

#### **The transformed lives of millions**

*if not billions since – they are all saying and living and being ambassadors of this faith.*

#### **The eyewitnesses of the resurrected Jesus Christ so held**

*on to their experience that they went on to be exiled, banished, martyred or imprisoned for what they claimed to have seen and thus believed.*

#### **The apostles all died violent deaths except 1**

*for what they believed they saw. This has continued on to this very day because of the perpetuation of truth and observation – the evidence !*

# Hold On There Jack,

**Almost everyone is willing to die for what they believe in.**

Communists / Buddhists / Hindus / Muslims will even commit suicide for what they believe – that doesn't make them right.

**But it doesn't make the Christian wrong either.**

Your Belief (Worldview) Matters BECAUSE of What or Whom it is you believe in. **(WHAT CAN YOUR GOD DO FOR YOU?)**

Maybe I should ask this question – think now. Use your head, history, your heart. - - **(WHAT HAVE THE GODS OF THE GLOBAL RELIGIONS DONE FOR THEIR WORSHIPPERS?)**

You Are Dying for Something Right Now as I Speak –  
Something You Believe In. What or Whom is It ?

**WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT**

*WHEN YOU SAY THAT*

**IT'S ALL ABOUT JESUS BEING RAISED FROM THE DEAD**

**2b.) The evidence existed in the time of Christ**

**v.17**

And *if Christ is not risen*, (1) your **faith** is **futile**; (2) you are **still in your sins!**

**This speaks of the internal witness**

that is experienced by every true believer. It is a deep, personal and firm confidence.

Your faith (meaning – the life changing, on-going, transforming experience that you've been going through – isn't real)

**(1) Your faith is futile;**

**True Christianity is So Dynamic, So Altering,  
So Battle-Tested, So not of this world that...**

**Ephesians 2:3-5**

among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. **:4** But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, **:5** even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

**(2) You are still in your sins!**

**Nothing has changed. You're no different. You are the same person that you were after you heard the gospel – sin is still your pleasure.**

Christians Must Confess – “Sin has lost its power over us.”

**2c.) The evidence exists in our day**

**v.18**

Then also (3) those who have fallen asleep in Christ **have perished**

The issues of life / love / emotions / suffering / sorrow / death

**Proverbs 4:23 NIV**

Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring (*fence, limits, borders*) of life.

## **WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT**

*WHEN YOU SAY THAT*

**3.) For God so loved the world ?**

**3a.) That God has placed within us the pursuit**

**v.19**

For *If* in this life only we have **hope** in Christ, we are of all men the most **pitiable**.

**Pitiable** *ejleeino/β eleeinos, el-eh-i-nos´*; the pitiable. The miserable.

Victor Hugo called such a Life – Les Misérables.

### **The concept and reality of the origin of things**

is always a good exercise for our hearts and minds.

### **EVERYTHING HAS ITS ORIGIN.**

Nothing is simple in our universe whether it be within our physical bodies or heavenly bodies light years away – the laws of science apply.

**If the Hope that God designed for us is only for now  
– what a joke, Les Misérables.**

**Hope by nature looks ahead.** Hope looks over the hill of difficulty and can see the meadows of peace. Hope looks from a higher vantage point and says – it's better up ahead”.

**Do we have prescient or eschatological information? That is, advance information to go by – (like the advanced information-knowledge that a map provides)?**

**Do we have any physical evidence (photographs)?**

**1 John 1:1-4**

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life - :2 the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us - :3 that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship *is* with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. :4 And these things we write to you

## **We Have an Internal Photograph – an Image**

### **In the Christian's life of hope;**

There is a strange and delightful circle of seeking God and finding God and the seeking of God again... until

**Psalm 42:1-2**

As the deer pants for the water brooks, So pants my soul for You, O God. :2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?

### **This is the soul's longing hard after God.**

All the while we have Him and He has us – we want more of Him and we want Him to have more of us until we are consumed by Him.

Paul is Saying;

“Don't even think about becoming a Christian if this is all there is to living. That would be totally stupid and a waste of time.”

### **WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT**

*WHEN YOU SAY THAT*

### **FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD**

**3b.) That God has promised to welcome us at the end**

**v.20**

**But now Christ is risen** from the dead,  
and has become the **firstfruits** of those who have fallen asleep.

This is an “Unapologetic Declaration of Fact”.

Jesus **IS** risen and you must deal with that.

**Leviticus 23:10-11**

“Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘When you come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest. :11 He shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted on your behalf; **on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it.**”

On the 17th day of the Nisan moon, the firstfruits of the barley harvest was gathered and waved before the Lord in celebration.

**Matthew 28:4-6**

Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. :5 But the angel answered and said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. :6 He is not here; for He is risen,

On that Spring Morning in 32 A.D. Jesus is raised up from the grave. He is the **firstfruits** from the dead. On the very day He fulfilled that feast.

## **As Jesus Christ was dying on the cross it was the Feast of Passover in Israel (a coincidence?)**

Jesus rose from the dead three days later - As Jesus Christ rose from the dead it was the Feast of Firstfruits in Israel. He was resurrected on the very same day that the priests in Jerusalem presented the “firstfruits offering” to the LORD – which represented that the entire harvest belongs to the LORD.

Can anyone tell me on what weekend it was when Jesus was crucified?  
It was the weekend of the Jewish calendar – celebrating the biblical Feasts of Passover, Unleavened Bread and Firstfruits.

### **First comes Passover**

**Leviticus 23:5**

On the **fourteenth** day of the first month at twilight *is* the **LORD’S Passover**.

**1 Corinthians 5:7b**

For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.

### **The Next Day comes Unleavened Bread**

**Leviticus 23:6**

And on the **fifteenth** day of the same month *is* the **Feast of Unleavened Bread** to the LORD

**John 6:41b**

He said, “I am **the bread** which came down from heaven.”

### **On The Next Day The Feast of 1<sup>st</sup> Fruits of the Harvest**

**Leviticus 23:10-11**

“Speak to the Israelites and say to them: ‘When you enter the land I am going to give you and you reap its harvest, bring to the priest a sheaf of the first grain you harvest. :11 He is to wave the sheaf before the LORD so it will be accepted on your behalf; the priest is to wave it on the day after the Sabbath.

**Matthew 28:4-6**

Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, :5 the angel answered and said “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. :6 He is not here; for He is risen,

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT  
WHEN YOU SAY THAT  
FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD

3c.) That God has provided to us the way

v.21

For since **by man** came **death**, (*Adam*)  
**by Man** also came the **resurrection** of the dead. (*Jesus Christ*)

We naturally, supernaturally  
struggle with death, with suffering, with pain, with hardship.  
Why – because it wasn't the way we started out.

**The Apostle Paul Here Teaches by Contrast.**

“Just as sin entered the world thru the first man Adam and sin was passed down to us  
– so Jesus Christ becomes the last man - the last Adam and through Him redemption  
is passed down to us.

**Romans 5:12,14-15**

Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned... :14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come. :15 But the free gift *is* not like the offense. For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many.

O look, she has her mother's nose and her father's eyes.  
So we have Adam's fall.

**“WHAT ARE WE TALKING ABOUT”**

**Notice Please:**

That “Hope” and “Resurrection” are linked together in this passage. That's intended by God.

**Doubters, Skeptics, Unbelievers, Agnostics**

This is where you begin. This is where we all are  
renewed and restored back into the reality.

**“GIVE THEM THE CROSS”**

*End of Study*

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