

Defending Your Faith!

Session 9- Salvation: Resurrection, Eternal Life; Is There A Heaven and Hell?

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Minister La Verne Wilson McLaughlin

I Peter 3:15, "but in your hearts reverence Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to make a defense to any one who calls you to account for the hope that is in you, yet do it with gentleness and reverence"

I. Why the Resurrection Matters

Simply put, Paul tells them very clearly that **if the resurrection didn't actually happen as a real, physical event in history, Christianity is worthless.**

Familiarity can breed deafness and blindness. Paul wants to ensure that what he passed on to the church in Corinth "as of first importance" didn't fade into the background of **familiarity**. He reminds them, and us today, of the vital importance of the resurrection. There were numerous incidents of Christ raising folk from the dead...the centurion's daughter, the widow's son, Lazarus. These occurrences were precursors to what Jesus Himself believed.

Paul says that if Christ has not been resurrected, preaching the gospel is useless, faith is futile, and those who fail to believe be the most pitiful people. Scholars, both believers and skeptics alike, agree that without the resurrection, there is no Christianity.

Why is Paul so emphatic regarding the importance of the resurrection?

It is because everything about Jesus is validated in the resurrection event.

Jesus predicted His bodily resurrection and pointed to it as the "sign of Jonah." As we will see, the resurrection is on firm historical footing. Because of this, we can be confident that Jesus wasn't a charlatan or a madman. He is Lord.

(I Cor. 15:14, 17, 19; Matt. 12:39-40; Luke 11:29; John 8:58)

II. Nature of the Resurrection

Precision (exactness, care) and accuracy (correctness, truthfulness) are often considered synonymous, but they describe distinct qualities. A target with a bull's-eye has circles spreading out from the center. Being able to hit the same point repeatedly is precision. But hitting the Bull's eye every time is accuracy. A good marksman must have both. It is vital that we are accurate in our understanding of what the resurrection is and what it is not.

To understand resurrection, one must ask the right question. It often helps to gain a firm understanding by weeding out what character and nature something is not, in order to arrive at what it is.

Resurrection, what it is not

- ... an obscure notion or foreign concept during the time of Jesus.
- ... the readings of the historic Easter narratives in the gospels, that simply rationalize early Christian spirituality.
- ... a form of mythology
- ... an empty claim
- ... a fancy way of describing a disembodied or spiritual existence that one might not pass into upon death. (Greco-Roman belief.)
- ... just a claim that Jesus is Spirit alone.
- ... just a figure of speech.

Resurrection, what it is

Resurrection is the accounts of two actual events; the empty tomb of Jesus and His several "appearances.

- ...the early Christians answer that Jesus had indeed been bodily raised from the dead;
- ...the early Christians recognizing, claiming, and following Jesus as the messianic "son of God."
- ...a complete reversal of death (N.T. Wright)
- ...something that had never happened before.
- ...a claim that Jesus rose from the dead in victory with a physical body.
- ...Jesus predicting His physical resurrection, (John 2:19)
- ...historical record we can investigate

(John 2:18:22; Luke 24:36-49, John 20:19-31; John 21:1-5)

III. How Can We Know the Resurrection Really Happened?

When it comes to sifting through the facts and subtle details of a situation and solving a mystery, there is none better than Sherlock Holmes. He is the icon of (***deductive reasoning***, ruling out all the conclusions that do not fit the evidence, and then arriving at the truth, however improbable it may be.)

Looking back at *1 Corinthians 15:3–8*, it must be mentioned that this passage is a very early creed that is quite conclusively dated to within three to eight years of Christ's death.

The early dating of a sizeable collection of evidence for the resurrection, both subtle and not so subtle gives weight to the reality of the actual event because it was first mentioned within three to eight years of Jesus' death. The collection strongly rules out the possibility of a myth that developed long after the time of Jesus. The passage gives us three crucial points to investigate as evidence for the resurrection: **Jesus' death, an empty tomb, and eyewitnesses.**

How do these stack up? **First**, the scholarship of both skeptics and believers has concluded irrefutably that Jesus' death by crucifixion at the hands of the Romans is the most knowable fact about His time on earth.

Second, the empty tomb, a vital piece of evidence for the resurrection, is also on solid historical footing for multiple reasons.

And finally, we come to the eyewitnesses who had, either individually or in a group setting, an experience that convinced them that Jesus had risen.

None of these points are much disputed, and there are many more pieces of evidence available. We are left, then, with the task of determining what explanation fits all the pieces together. There are alternate theories to explain away the resurrection, but none fit well.

When it comes down to it, the best explanation is simply to acknowledge that Jesus did indeed rise from the dead.

(I Cor. 15:3-8; Matt. 28: 11-15; Heb. 11:1)

IV. What Does the Resurrection Mean?

John Adams once said, “Facts are stubborn things.” You can ignore them, run from them, try to discount them, and so on, but eventually you will have to square with them and determine what they mean and what you’re going to do about them.

For the disciples, the resurrection changed everything. Because of the resurrection this ragtag group of scared men became willing to give all they had, even their lives. Priorities, relationships, work life, family life, parenting — there was nothing that was not changed in the light of the resurrected Christ. While the wages of sin is death, the gift of God that is made available through the resurrection is eternal life (*Rom. 6:23*).

Jesus said, “Because I live, you also shall live” (*John 14:17*) and that He came that we would have life and life abundantly (*John 10:10*). **This is possible only because He is alive.** We are all slaves to sin, but Jesus and His truth are freedom to those who seek it. The resurrection is important because it is true, and because it is true it has the power to change us, to conform us into the image of Christ (*Rom. 8:29*).

Because of this we not only have hope for the future but a hope for the present—a hope that, in Christ, the abundant life is reachable. Because Jesus is risen, every single claim He made, every promise, and every lesson can be trusted completely. And we can live our lives for Him because He lives in us.

(Rom. 6:20-23; John 14:17; John 10:10)

Worksheet!

What would have been your first reaction to hearing news that Jesus has risen?

The Disciple Thomas specifically mentions his need for clear physical evidence, evidence that he literally could touch. Why do you think he needed this?

What does Christ's resurrection communicate to us about God's ultimate purpose and promise for humanity?

Five Misconceptions About Sharing the Gospel.

Viewing, Volunteering, Visioning

1. **Gather in a group of no more than five. Choose one member to report to the larger assembly.**
2. **Pray.**
3. **Only work on the question assigned to your group.**
4. **Choose one member of your group to report to the larger assembly.**
5. **Use the standing microphones.**

Question # 1

TO BE EFFECTIVE YOU HAVE TO BE GOOD AT SHARING THE GOSPEL
I Cor 1:26-31; Is. 8:10-13; 2 Cor 12:1-10

Question # 2

EVERYTHING IN YOUR OWN LIFE HAS TO BE TOGETHER
Phil. 1:6; I Cor 2:6-15; Amos 8:33; Heb 9:12

Question # 3

THE ONLY WAY TO GET SOMEONE SAVED IS TO INVITE THEM TO CHURCH
Rms. 15:13-19; Acts 1:7-8; Luke 4:23; 2 Cor 5:18-20

QUESTION #4

YOU HAVE TO MAKE THE GOSPEL SOUND GOOD
Rms. 6:20-23; 2 TIM 4:2-4; 1John 4:1-6; John6:44

QUESTIONS #5

YOU MUST WAIT FOR A PARTICULAR SEASON, OR SAYING, OR SYSTEM TO SHARE THE GOSPEL.

JOHN 4:35-38; I Cor. 3:5-11

RESOURCES

QSCRIPTURE

RESURRECTION

BODY » Resurrection of ([1 Corinthians 15:19-54](#))BODY » See [RESURRECTION](#)CLEOPAS » A disciple to whom Jesus appeared after his resurrection ([Luke 24:18](#))EMMAUS » Appearance of Jesus in, after his resurrection ([Luke 24:13](#))IMMORTALITY » See [RESURRECTION](#)PETER » Jesus sends message to, after the resurrection ([Mark 16:7](#))PHARISEES » Concerning the resurrection ([Acts 23:6,8](#))RAISING » See [RESURRECTION](#)READINGS, SELECT » THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST ([Luke 24:1-12](#))SADDUCEES » Reject the doctrine of the resurrection ([Matthew 22:23-34; Mark 12:18-27; Luke 20:27-40; Acts 23:7,8](#))SEA » The Dead, to be given up by the, at the resurrection ([Revelation 20:13](#))THOMAS » Absent when Jesus first appeared to the disciples after the resurrection ([John 20:24](#))THOMAS » Sees Jesus after the resurrection ([John 20:26-29;21:1,2](#))ASSURANCE » SAINTS PRIVILEGED TO HAVE » A glorious resurrection ([Job 19:26; Psalms 17:15; Philippians 3:21; 1 John 3:2](#))DEAD (PEOPLE) » UNCLASSIFIED SCRIPTURES RELATING TO » See [RESURRECTION](#)EARTHQUAKES » INSTANCES OF » At the resurrection of Jesus ([Matthew 28:2](#))FISH » Miracles connected with » Furnished to the disciples by Jesus after his resurrection ([Luke 24:42; John 21:9-13](#))FORTY » DAYS » Christ's stay after the resurrection ([Acts 1:3](#))GALILEE » The northern district of Palestine » Jesus appeared to his disciples in, after his resurrection ([Matthew 26:32;28:7,10,16,17; Mark 14:28;16:7; John 21](#))JAMES » (An intimate companion of Jesus, and present with » Present at Lake Tiberias when Jesus revealed himself to the disciples after his resurrection ([John 21:2; 1 Corinthians 15:7](#))JAMES » An apostle » Witness of Christ's resurrection ([1 Corinthians 15:7](#))JESUS, THE CHRIST » HISTORY OF » Foretells his own death and resurrection (near Caesarea Philippi) ([Matthew 16:21-28; Mark 8:31-38;9:1; Luke 9:22-27](#))JESUS, THE CHRIST » HISTORY OF » Foretells his own death and resurrection (in Galilee) ([Matthew 17:22,23; Mark 9:30-32; Luke 9:43-45](#))JESUS, THE CHRIST » HISTORY OF » Foretells his own death and resurrection (in Perea) ([Matthew 20:17-19; Mark 10:32-34; Luke 18:31-34](#))JESUS, THE CHRIST » HISTORY OF » Tested by the Sadducees concerning the resurrection of the dead (in Jerusalem) ([Matthew 22:23-33; Mark 12:18-27; Luke 20:27-40](#))

ETERNAL LIFE

ABISHAI » Seeks Saul's life ([1 Samuel 26:6-8](#))ABISHAI » Seeks the life of Shimei ([1 Samuel 16:9;19:21](#))BETHANY » Lazarus dies and is raised to life at ([1 John 11](#))BLOOD » Is the life ([Genesis 9:4; Leviticus 17:11,14;19:16; Deuteronomy 12:23; Matthew 27:4,24](#))BOOK » OF LIFE ([Exodus 32:32,33; Psalms 69:28;87:6; Daniel 12:1; Luke 10:20; P](#))BORING THE EAR » A token of servitude for life ([Exodus 21:6](#))BREAD » Called the STAFF OF LIFE ([Ezekiel 4:16;5:16;14:13](#))BREATH » Of life ([Genesis 2:7;7:22; Acts 17:25](#))CALEB » Life of, miraculously saved ([Numbers 14:10-12](#))DAYSTAR » Figurative of spiritual life ([2 Peter 1:19](#))DEAD (PEOPLE) » Raised to life, (see ([Hebrews 11:35](#))EAGLE » The long life of ([Psalms 103:5](#))ELISHA » Life of, sought by Jehoram ([2 Kings 6:31-33](#))ELISHA » Bones of, restore a dead man to life ([2 Kings 13:21](#))ESTHER » Tells the king of the plot against his life ([Esther 2:22](#))ETERNAL LIFE » See [LIFE EVERLASTING](#)ETERNAL PUNISHMENT » See [PUNISHMENT, ETERNAL](#)EUTYCHUS » A young man from Troas, restored to life by Paul ([Acts 20:9-11](#))EVERLASTING LIFE » See [LIFE, EVERLASTING](#)EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT » See [PUNISHMENT, ETERNAL](#)FAITH » SUM TOTAL OF RELIGIOUS BELIEF AND LIFE ([Romans 1:8; Jude 1:3](#))FUTURE PUNISHMENT » See [PUNISHMENT, ETERNAL](#)HISTORY » See [JESUS, LIFE OF](#)JAIRUS » Daughter of, restored to life ([Matthew 9:18,23-26; Mark 5:22-43; Luke 8:41-56](#))JAPHETH » His life preserved at the time of the great flood ([Genesis 7:13;9:18](#))

Bible Gateway <https://www.biblegateway.com/>

Right Now Media <https://www.rightnowmedia.org/Library>

New Revised Standard Bible

www.ahheartofgod.com

www.thomasnelson.com

DVD

Right Now Media “Resurrection” Kay Arthur

Right Now Media “What Jesus Said About Resurrection” Mart De Hann

Right Now Media “Aftermath” Andy Stanley

Scriptures for Reflection:

John 8:58-59: Jesus claims to be God, using ego ami “I am, ” in this passage, it is clear that this is a claim of divinity from the reaction of the Jews that follows. In *Matthew 12:39-40* and *Luke 11:29*, Jesus states that His resurrection will be the sign to validate his claims.

1 Corinthians 15:3–8: One of the earliest creeds of the Christian faith. Includes a list of witness who could be questioned.

Matthew 28:11–15: The rumor that the disciples stole the body of Jesus is started.

Faith, we are told, “is the substance of things hoped of, the evidence of things not seen” (Heb, 11:1 NKJV).

How does the evidence for the resurrection affect your faith?

Scriptures for Reflection:

Romans 6:20–23: Christ’s resurrection calls us to make a choice between death and life.

Acts, Chapters 1–7: Provides a great picture of the powerful impact the resurrection had on the disciples and their boldness and fearlessness in the face of unbelief and persecution.

Did Jesus really rise from the dead? Is eternal life guaranteed?

Can you loose your salvation?

Are heaven and hell real destinations?

Resurrection: in conjunction with the sacrificial act of Jesus – what has been resurrected in your life?

What does scripture say about DEFENDING One’s FAITH?

Bible verses about defending the faith

We need apologetics! We must boldly hold the truths of Jesus Christ. If we don’t defend the faith people won’t know about Christ, more people will be going to hell, and more false teachings will be brought into Christianity. It is so sad that most so-called Christians just sit back and let the false teachings spread, many even endorse it. .

Biblical leaders defended the faith they didn't just sit there and let lies enter Christianity, but many wolves are claiming to be Christian-leading others astray.

Through death we are to defend the gospel of Jesus Christ. What happened to the people who actually cared? What happened to the Christians who actually stood up for Christ because He is everything? Learn Scripture so you can spread Jesus, know about God, refute error, [and expose evil](#).

What does the Bible say?

1. Jude 1:3 Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt compelled to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God's holy people.
2. 1 Peter 3:15 but honor the Messiah as Lord in your hearts. Always be ready to give a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you.
3. 2 Corinthians 10:5 We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ
4. Psalm 94:16 Who will rise up for me against the wicked? Who will take a stand for me against evildoers?
5. Titus 1:9 He must be devoted to the trustworthy message we teach. Then he can use these accurate teachings to encourage people and correct those who oppose the word.
6. 2 Timothy 4:2 Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.
7. Philippians 1:16 The latter do so out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel.
8. Ephesians 5:11 Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.

God's Word

9. Psalm 119:41-42 Let your steadfast love come to me, O Lord, your salvation according to your promise; then shall I have an answer for him who taunts me, for I trust in your word.
10. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness. so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.
11. 2 Timothy 2:15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who doesn't need to be ashamed, correctly teaching the word of truth.

You will be persecuted

12. Matthew 5:11-12 "You are blessed when they insult and persecute you and falsely say every kind of evil against you because of Me. Be glad and

rejoice, because your reward is great in heaven. For that is how they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

13. 1 Peter 4:14 If you are ridiculed for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. None of you, however,

should suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, [or a meddler](#). But if anyone suffers as a “Christian,” he should not be ashamed but should glorify God in having that name.

Reminder

14. 1 Thessalonians 5:21 but test everything; hold fast to what is good.

Example

15. Acts 17:2-4 And Paul went in, as was his custom, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, and saying, “This Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, is the Christ.” And some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a great many of the devout Greeks and not a few of the leading women.

Bonus

Philippians 1:7 So it is right that I should feel as I do about all of you, for you have a special place in my heart. You share with me the special favor of God, both in my imprisonment and in defending and confirming the truth of the Good News.

How does the principle of Salvation equip the believer to Defend and Share his or her faith?