

## **DEVOTIONS FOR EASTER WEEK**

### **RESURRECTION LIFE**

Friday, March 30

Reading: 1 Corinthians 15

**1 Corinthians 15:14** *And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. 15 More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead...17 And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. 18 Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. 19 If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men. 20 But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.*

In 1820, Thomas Jefferson took several copies of the New Testament and cut them apart to make his own version of the life and teachings of Jesus. As a Deist, Jefferson believed in the existence of God but did not believe that God interferes in human history. Thus he removed all mention of angels, miracles, and fulfilled prophecy from the life of Jesus. He believed these were fairy tales added later by Jesus' followers who did not really understand Jesus' teachings. To Jefferson, Jesus never wanted to be worshipped as the Son of God and He did not rise from the dead. His gospel account ends with the words, "There they laid Jesus. And rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulcher, and departed."

For true Christians, Jefferson has completely missed the point! Without the resurrection of Jesus Christ, His teachings would mean nothing. Without a living Savior, His words have no power! The Apostle Paul makes this clear in 1 Corinthians 15. He begins by stating that Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection were the fulfillment of Scripture (15:1-4). He then lists the eyewitnesses to Jesus' resurrection, including himself (15:5-8).

The heart of Paul's argument says that without the resurrection of Christ our faith is worthless, all the sermons and testimonies about Christ are lies, our sins have not been forgiven, and all those who have died believing in Christ are in hell. No wonder Paul says "If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men" (15:12-19). But because of the resurrection of Christ, we have the sure hope that we too will live forever (15:20-53).

Sometimes we read all these great truths and miss the verse at the end of the chapter. We concentrate on the evidence that Jesus really rose. We rejoice that we have a sure foundation on which to rest our faith. We wonder at the mystery of Christ's return when we will be transformed and taken to spend eternity with our Savior. But what does that have to do with the here and now!

In the last verse Paul tells us to "stand firm" and "let nothing move you." While the world doubts and laughs at our faith, we can hold on to this wonderful truth – Jesus said, "Because I live, you will live also" (John 14:19).

He also tells us to "always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord." We can be confident that what we do for Christ is not worthless. Even when we don't see the results, God is keeping an account and He is using our heartfelt service to bring glory to His name. Resurrection life is not just for the future. It should impact and inspire the way we live our lives right now! Can you say with the apostle Paul, "Thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

<sup>1</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jefferson\\_Bible#Content](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jefferson_Bible#Content)