

### **Focus Text**

*“Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.” (1 Corinthians 15:12–22, ESV)*

### **I Unnatural**

*“By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” (Genesis 3:19, ESV)*

The original plan Adam and his descendants would tend to Eden eating, and working in peace and joy. We would never experience death or hardship. Eden was paradise for humanity. Then we kinda...did the total opposite of what God had commanded us to do. The language of Genesis chapter two is covenantal, so God kept his word. We rebelled and sinned against God and so death was introduced into the world. But this my friends was not the original plan.

So God would have to undo our rebellion while honoring the agreement that because we belong to Adam's race, we must face death.

*“The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” (Genesis 2:15–17, ESV)*

### **II The Resurrection**

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*“But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel. And as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, “Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee,” (Luke 24:1–6, ESV)*

On Resurrection Sunday, Christians all over the world gather together to celebrate one miraculous event. On Friday, Jesus was crucified on a Roman cross. He was buried. This was supposed to be the end of Jesus and the end of Christianity. Yet, As Mary and Martha are coming to embalm Jesus' body properly, they are met by an angel who reminds them Jesus is not here; he has risen, just like He told you!

On its own, this event is crazy. Some have argued that Jesus was not dead when they laid Him in the Tomb. He was wounded but recovered and crawled away. Friends, let's be clear: Roman soldiers were masters of execution and in no way would have left this man alive. The story even portrays Jesus being stabbed in the side to ensure His demise. Jesus was indeed dead on Friday. Today, Resurrection Sunday, we stand amazed that Jesus has defeated death!

Some people in Corinth, the city Paul is writing in, have been spreading rumors that there is no resurrection and there is no life after death. Paul sarcastically reminds them that if there is no resurrection, then not even Jesus has been raised from the dead, and this would make Christianity invalid and foolish. Even today, there are individuals who will say Jesus was a wise teacher, but there are no miracles, and He did not rise from the grave.

Friends, C.S. Lewis depicts this heresy perfectly. Either Jesus is God and rose from the dead, or He is a lunatic that we should never listen to. If one refuses to believe in the literal, bodily resurrection of Jesus, Christianity has nothing more to offer them. This is one of the great miracles of our faith, and if we, like some in Corinth, try to refute this miracle, then all of Christianity is a complete waste of time.

“In *Mere Christianity*, C. S. Lewis wrote, “A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said wouldn’t be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic on the level with a man who says he’s a poached egg—or else he would be the devil of hell; you must take your choice. Either this was, and is, the Son of God, or else a mad man or something worse. You can shut Him up for a demon, or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But don’t come up with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great moral teacher. He hasn’t left that alternative open to us. He did not intend to.”<sup>1</sup>

### **III Restoration**

*“But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ.”*  
**(1 Corinthians 15:20–23, ESV)**

However, if you are willing to believe that Jesus rose from the dead...

“Just as Adam’s disobedience implicated humanity in sin and death, so also Christ’s obedience resulted in the free gift of eternal life for many (Rom 5:18–19). The far-reaching consequences of Adam’s sin are counter-balanced by the far-reaching consequences of Christ’s act of obedience.<sup>123</sup><sup>2</sup>

The New American Commentary says it perfectly. Under Adam, we are due death because Adam rebelled against God, and so have we. Yet, if Jesus lives and we accept His offer of saving grace, He forgives our sins and, even better, pays the price of rebellion so that we may also inherit eternal life.

Resurrection Sunday is so special to the Church because it restores the Christian to a relationship with God.

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<sup>1</sup> \* C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1960), 41.

Morgan, Robert J. 2000. *Nelson’s Complete Book of Stories, Illustrations, and Quotes*. Electronic ed. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

<sup>2</sup> <sup>123</sup> On the comparison of Rom 5 and 1 Cor 15, Thiselton (*First Corinthians*, 1227–28) notes, “The parallel between Rom 5:12–16 and 1 Cor 15:21–22 is close, but whereas the former stresses the ‘how much more’ of divine grace (Rom 5:15), our passage stresses the pledge of new creation as the promise of the resurrection of the dead on the basis of being in Christ, also, however, by divine grace.” Ciampa and Rosner (*First Corinthians*, 763) observe that in 15:21–22 “Paul is presenting the most concise form of the story of redemption imaginable.” Taylor, Mark. 2014. *1 Corinthians*. Edited by E. Ray Clendenen. Vol. 28. The New American Commentary. Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group.

### **Application**

*“Martha said to him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.” Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?” She said to him, “Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world.” (John 11:24–27, ESV)*

Jesus offers everyone a choice. His Saving Grace is a free gift, and His offer for eternal life is available for anyone to accept.

The question before everyone this Resurrection Sunday is. “Do you accept that, like Adam, you have rebelled against God?”

In talking with people about God, there has not been one time someone said, “I think I am perfect, and I have never done anything wrong.” In our hearts, we know that we do, say, and take action on things that are wrong, hurtful, and destructive inward and outwardly. That’s because we belong in Adam’s lineage, and rebellion is a mark we all bear.

Jesus, however, is not content to leave us to death with no hope. He took our sins (rebellion) to the Cross, paying the debt we owe. And upon His resurrection, He offers us eternal life. Though we all have a physical death, it breaks away to eternal life with Jesus in His perfect Kingdom. This is not something you can earn. There is no action you can take to pay for it. It is a gift of God’s amazing grace because, from the moment Adam rebelled, God had a plan for restoration and resurrection. His name is Jesus!

I have one question for you this morning, friend. Jesus is the resurrection and life, and anyone who believes in Him will have eternal life, though they will have a physical death.

“Do you believe this?”

If you have any questions or want to know more, Pastor Richard would be happy to discuss it with you.

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Happy Resurrection Sunday, Friend. He lives, and We live in Him!