

October 28, 2018

***The Hope & Proof of Resurrection!***  
***1Corinthians 15:1-11***

One common element we share with all mankind is our need to be reminded of what is most important! We make resolutions at the beginning of the year and lists on a daily basis: but we all still fight to focus our greatest efforts on the things that are most important! Life gets in the way; other people's priorities prevent us from pursuing our own; and trials & challenges distract and divert our attention, energy and resources from the highest/best!

Much of the NT scriptures are a reminder of the most important priorities/principles – and I believe for 2 reasons:

1) We do not begin as God's children or Kingdom citizens: we must be born-again of His Spirit into His family & learn His ways progressively by yielding to Christ in us.

2) God's Kingdom priorities are not compatible with what the world purports as important; and we all have more experience with the world than the Kingdom initially!

Paul reminds the Christians in Corinth about what's most important in living Christ's life on earth! So, let me ask you, ***“What is the most important promise @ salvation in Christ?”*** Is it God's promise of:

- Forgiveness of sin? (*mercy*)
- Righteousness with God? (*grace*)
- Resurrection to Eternal Life? (*eternity*)

*Only one of these truly deals with all the ramifications of salv!*

During His earthly ministry, Jesus raised many from physical death back to life again – ***but not to eternal life!*** Remember the woman whose son died – *her last living relative?* Jesus stopped the funeral procession, raised him to life again, and returned him to his once grieving, now elated mother! But in time, this young man would eventually grow old & die again! And what about the young girl, Tabitha, or the most famous of Jesus' resurrections, His good friend, Lazarus! *They died again!* Even Paul, thru the Holy Spirit, raised a young man back to life who had fallen asleep in a windowsill listening to a sermon, and fell 2 stories to his death (*he didn't die from the sermon!*). He was

returned to life! But as miraculous as these resurrections were, these people were raised to physical life...only to die again!

In this section of his corrective letter, Paul contends with those in the church who were denying the resurrection of Christ. *What would cause them to let go of this most critical & glorious truth?* I don't know: but this group needed much correction in the longest NT letter Paul writes! To refute the gossip, Paul lays a foundation of undeniably witnessed sightings of the resurrected Christ, including his own testimony. **Paul asserts that the Resurrection is critical** because, if Christ was not raised from death to eternal life, then no one can be! And if no one can be raised to eternal life with God, then God is a liar, the gospel is a hoax, the apostles were deceivers, and the Christians of Paul's day – undergoing such persecution for their faith in Jesus – were suffering for nothing!

Christ's Resurrection is the foundation of our “Hope” – (confident expectation of our own resurrection as believers) and “Proof” – because Jesus' resurrection guarantees our own resurrection to life eternal with God according to His promise! Remember what Jesus said? ***“I am the Resurrection and the life: He who believes in me shall live even if he dies; & those who live & believe in Me will never die! Do you believe this?”*** (John 11:25,26)

**READ: 1Corinthians 15:1-11 (NLT)**

**CLOSING: Are You Believing the True Gospel?** Let's see:

- Faith alone, in Christ alone, saves you alone, w/ God eternally
- Salvation in Christ creates a new creature: conver/rebirth/regen
- Salvation = Rebirth (justif), Reorient. (sanctif), & Resur. (glor)
- Being saved = HS dwells in: agent of continual transformation
- Salvation = vessel of God, relationally knowing/doing His will
- Salvation = living w/ God in His kingdom now & forever (rec)
- Salvation = resurrected to E. Life w/ God both now and forever

**INVITATION:**

- 1)** *Have you been born-again of God's Spirit thru faith in Jesus?*
- 2)** *Are you “continuing in faith” to demonstrate a transforming life?*
- 3)** *Is Jesus gaining significance as your Lord, Guide, & Friend?*

## **1Corinthians 15:1-11 (NLT)**

**1) Let me now remind you, dear brothers and sisters, of the Good News I preached to you before. You welcomed it then, and you still stand firm in it. 2) It is this Good News that saves you if you continue to believe the message I told you—unless, of course, you believed something that was never true in the first place.**

(If Paul seems to waffle on the certainty of their salvation, it's with good cause: 1) some were denying the resurrection of Christ, the very cornerstone of salvation itself, & 2) only be the evidence of changed lives, attitudes & actions can we glimpse anyone else's salvation...for we cannot see their hearts!)

**3) I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me. Christ died for our sins** (In God's perfect economy, the penalty for our sin is death: but Jesus paid our penalty, though He never sinned, and His vicarious death led to the certainty of our resurrection. Death is a necessary prerequisite for resurrection from the dead!), **just as the Scriptures said. 4) He was buried** (the proof of death), **and he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said** (this was the Father's promise: to raise the Son by conquering sin, death & hell (absence of God's presence) and to provide the same resurrection for those who believe in Him). **5) He was seen by Peter and then by the Twelve** (on the evening of resurrection day). **6) After that, he was seen by more than 500 of his followers at one time** (any other reference to this event?), **most of whom are still alive, though some have died. 7) Then he was seen by James and later by all the apostles** (7 days after His resurrection in the upper room with Thomas, & over 40 days as He taught them about the Kingdom; and just before His ascension & sending the HS). **8) Last of all, as though I had been born at the wrong time, I also saw him** (Road to Damascus; 3 yr training in wilderness). **9) For I am the least of all the apostles. In fact, I'm not even worthy to be called an apostle after the way I persecuted God's church.**

**10) But whatever I am now, it is all because God poured out his special favor on me—and not without results.** (Here is the real testimony of salvation: a changed life that begins with a new, holy spirit-nature on the inside producing holy attitudes, words & actions! **1Cor 5:17-18) For I have worked harder than any of the other apostles; yet it was not I but God who was working through me by his grace.** (Eph 3:20; Phil 2:12-13) **11) So it makes no difference whether I preach or they** (other apostles) **preach, for we all preach the same message you have already believed.**

**NASB: 1) Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, 2) by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.**

## **MEDITATION: Jonah 1:17-2:6 (ISV)**

**17) Now the LORD had prepared a large sea creature to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was inside the sea creature for three days and three nights. 1) Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from inside the sea creature. 2) He said: "I called out to the LORD from the midst of affliction directed at me, and he answered me. From the depths of death I cried out for help; and you heard my cry. 3) You cast me into the deep—into the heart of the sea. Flood waters engulfed me. All your breakers and your waves swirled over me. 4) So I told myself, 'I have been driven away from you. How will I again gaze on your holy Temple?' 5) Flood waters encompassed me, the deep surrounded me while seaweed wrapped around my head. 6) I sank to the roots of the mountains; the earth's prison bars closed around me forever. Yet you resurrect the dead from the Pit, LORD my God!**

Jonah says he was dead at the bottom of the sea *before* this sea creature swallowed him; and by that event, God "resurrected" him from the dead! Jonah's not yet standing on the beach! His resurrection from death to life came inside the belly of the fish! Sometimes, what seems like defeat is victory!

Jesus correlated Jonah's experience with His own anticipated death & resurrection when He said, "**For just as Jonah was in the belly of the great fish for three days and three nights, so will the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights.** (Matt 12:40) Like Jonah, Jesus was made alive again "in death!" His resurrection was the proof of His victory over sin, death & hell! Jesus is the Hope – *the confident expectation* – of eternal life with God for all who believe!

**SERMON in a SENTENCE: RESURRECTION: Hope & Proof**