

Beloved, on this Resurrection Day, each of us has probably said, today or at one time or another, “HE IS RISEN”. This affirmation of the truth is the “spiritual super glue” that cements our faith to the object of our faith: Christ Jesus, our Savior!

We all believe that when the Lamb of Gods’ blood was shed on the Cross that He paid the price for our sin-debt; But, if it all stopped there, would our redemption have been complete? How would we know?

The resurrection of our Christ was our “receipt” (as David Guzik writes). This receipt was stamped “Paid-in-full” using blood-red, indelible ink;

Now, if anyone ever challenges your faith or just questions your hope, your joy or your love, you can simply pull out this indestructible receipt that says “paid-in-full” – all of this because HE LIVES!

So important was this that the Apostle Paul dedicated a large portion of his epistle to the Corinthian Church to this miraculous event. Let’s turn to 1 Corinthians 15 to see what Paul has to say.

### The Resurrection of Christ

(1 Corinthians 15:1) Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand,

The Gospel, the good news is where this all starts. Paul preached it and the people of this church joyfully received it; The Greek for ‘received’ has the connotation of receiving it in an intimate way, perhaps like binding it upon your heart. This allows us to “stand” in the truth – embracing in it continually.

1 Thessalonians 2:13 For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed *it* not *as* the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.

Galatians 1:11-12 But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. (12) For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught *it*, but *it came* through the revelation of Jesus Christ.

(1 Corinthians 15:2) by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.

We are not saved by the **gospel** message; but through the truth of it – which Paul makes clear in 2 verses

Believing in vain is believing **without reason; without cause;**

We don’t just ‘believe’ and it becomes real; the world does that: “Oh I believe with all my heart that the universe takes care of me”;

No, we know the Truth and we choose to believe it!

## Psalms 40:1-8

And here is the Truth:

(1 Corinthians 15:3) For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,

Isaiah 53:1-8 Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? (2) For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, *There is* no beauty that we should desire Him. (3) He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, *our* faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. (4) Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. (5) But He *was* wounded for our transgressions, *He was* bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace *was* upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. (6) All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. (7) He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth. (8) He was taken from prison and from judgment, And who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken.

Psalms 22:6-8 But I *am* a worm, and no man; A reproach of men, and despised by the people. (7) All those who see Me ridicule Me; They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, *saying*, (8) "He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him; Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!"

And not just the Scriptures! But the very words of Jesus:

Matthew 16:21 From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.

Matthew 17:22-23 Now while they were staying in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men, (23) and they will kill Him, and the third day He will be raised up." And they were exceedingly sorrowful.

Matthew 20:17-19 Now Jesus, going up to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples aside on the road and said to them, (18) "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death, (19) and deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock and to scourge and to crucify. And the third day He will rise again."

Luke 9:44-45) "Let these words sink down into your ears, for the Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men." (45) But they did not understand this saying, and it was hidden from them so that they did not perceive it; and they were afraid to ask Him about this saying.

So Jesus drank the cup of His Father's wrath; He prayed that He would not have to drink it – but He bent His will to His Father's will; Unfathomable Love! And, consider this:

**Romans 5:8** But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

**(1 Corinthians 15:4)** and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,

**Psalms 16:10** For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.

**Hosea 6:2** After two days He will revive us; On the third day He will raise us up, That we may live in His sight.

**Jonah 1:17** Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

**Job 19:25-27** For I know *that* my Redeemer lives, And He shall stand at last on the earth; **(26)** And after my skin is destroyed, this *I know*, That in my flesh I shall see God, **(27)** Whom I shall see for myself, And my eyes shall behold, and not another. *How* my heart yearns within me!

And not just according to Scripture!

**(1 Corinthians 15:5)** and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. **(1 Corinthians 15:6)** After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. **(1 Corinthians 15:7)** After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. **(1 Corinthians 15:8)** Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by **one born out of due time**. **(1 Corinthians 15:9)** For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. **(1 Corinthians 15:10)** But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God *which was* with me.

### **one born out of due time**

**Clarke:** But it is likely that the apostle had a different meaning; and that he refers to the original institution of the twelve apostles, in the rank of whom he never stood, being appointed not to fill up a place among the twelve, but as an extra and additional apostle.

YES! There were many witnesses to His resurrection! Many saw Him; touched Him; ate with Him; were taught by Him; and in a tender moment, Peter's relationship with Jesus was restored.

**(1 Corinthians 15:11)** **Therefore**, whether *it was* I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

The gospel was proclaimed; the death, burial and resurrection were declared and proven to be "truth"; Those who preached also witnessed with their lives: lives transformed by Him who "*is* called Faithful

and True" (Revelation 19:11);

### The Resurrection of the Dead

There was a major issue brewing in the church. There was no resurrection and perhaps it wasn't even necessary!

(1 Corinthians 15:12) 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?

Paul doesn't say who these people are; But they are part of the church body, albeit not believing a critical doctrine!

Paul was a brilliant man who often proved his arguments by sheer logic. He does so here!

(1 Corinthians 15:13) But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. (1 Corinthians 15:14) And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching *is* empty and your faith *is* also empty.

Empty: worthless;

(1 Corinthians 15:15) 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.

There was nothing about the character of these men that would lead us to believe that they would lie about His resurrection; And, more importantly, telling a lie about God who they said had raised Him from the dead!

(1 Corinthians 15:16) For if *the* dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. (1 Corinthians 15:17) And if Christ is not risen, your faith *is* futile; you are still in your sins!

A thing repeated is an important thing!!! So Paul repeats what he wrote in verse 13. The word futile carries with it the idea of an unsuccessful search or even folly!

The consequences of an unrisen Savior are life-threatening! If Jesus didn't rise on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day, then He was a liar and worse: He did NOT remove their sin. Therefore, they are hell-bound without any hope at all!

(1 Corinthians 15:18) Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.

And if Christ did not rise as the first-fruits of all who would rise; then those in the grave are "fully destroyed" as the word perish means;

(1 Corinthians 15:19) If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.

Without a risen Christ we can only hope in a completely material existence because Jesus is our only Way to the Father; Jesus is our only Truth and our only Life; Without a risen Christ our reality is only through the 5 senses given to us; Without a risen Christ we all should be pitied the most for trying to live a lie and trying to perpetuate that lie;

If Christ remained dead there was nowhere else to go for salvation, for eternal life;

**Ephesians 1:13-14** In Him you also *trusted*, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, (14) who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

**(1 Corinthians 15:20)** But now Christ is risen from the dead, *and* has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

**(1 Corinthians 15:21)** For since by man *came* death, by Man also *came* the resurrection of the dead.

**(1 Corinthians 15:22)** For as in Adam all die, **even so in Christ all shall be made alive.**

My beloved, I don't want to focus on other concerns of Paul as he explains the resurrection as it relates to the end-of-days when Jesus returns. Nor do I want to explain how we are to understand our resurrection bodies;

I want to turn our attention to 2 passages that have a more practical focus:

**(1 Corinthians 15:32)** If, in the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantage *is it* to me? If *the* dead do not rise, "LET US EAT AND DRINK, FOR TOMORROW WE DIE!"

Paul was in constant danger; he wrote of his trials and persecutions to this church in his second letter to them:

**2 Corinthians 11:23-27** Are they ministers of Christ?—I speak as a fool—I *am* more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. (24) From the Jews five times I received forty *stripes* minus one. (25) Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; (26) in journeys often, *in* perils of waters, *in* perils of robbers, *in* perils of *my own* countrymen, *in* perils of the Gentiles, *in* perils in the city, *in* perils in the wilderness, *in* perils in the sea, *in* perils among false brethren; (27) in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness— (28) besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches.

“why would I go thru all of this? For a lie?” If there is no resurrection, we might as well live a life of pure pleasure- seeking;

But again, Jesus did rise and so will we! So, he says, do not be deceived by those claiming there is no resurrection! And do not even associate with them – for their intentions are evil and you will fall into the snares of Satan! **(1 Corinthians 15:33)** *Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits."*

**And wake up!** shake off the lies; stop acting out the lies which is another word for sin. These people who are teaching you about a “this life only” religion have no real knowledge of God! You have been taught the truth! Shame on you if you believe this nonsense! *(1 Corinthians 15:34) Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame.*

Paul concludes with two thoughts:

*(1 Corinthians 15:57)* But thanks *be* to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Bad thinking leads to bad behavior!

Victory over bad-thinking is through the Truth of Jesus: He was crucified, and He rose from the dead! The resurrection was the proof of the efficacy of His atoning death! And the resurrection was more than a Lazarus-like raising of the dead; Jesus did rise from the dead but not to die again! He was raised in incorruption, glory, power and immortality!

**What do we do with such a “Truth”? How then shall we live this life now, as we wait:**

1. **eagerly** wait for the adoption, the redemption of our body. Romans 8:23
2. **eagerly** wait for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ 1Corinthians 1:7
3. **eagerly** wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. Galatians 5:5
4. **eagerly** wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, Philippians 3:20

But we don't just wait! No there are things to do!

*(1 Corinthians 15:58)* Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

steadfast, immovable: Be like the wise person Jesus taught about in Matthew 7:

*Matthew 7:24-25* "Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: (25) and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.

Build your life on the Rock. He is steadfast; He is immovable!

There's a huge world out there that wants you to bend and twist what you believe into what they believe to be true: but we know the truth and therefore we choose to believe it!

And while we don't work for our salvation, our response is to live our lives as a “living sacrifice” – living for others and doing good as acts of worship of Him who saves to the uttermost; (Hebrews 7:25).

This isn't as difficult as it seems:

**Ephesians 2:10** For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

**Philippians 2:13** for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for *His* good pleasure.

**Hebrews 10:23-24** Let us hold fast the confession of *our* hope without wavering, for He who promised *is* faithful. (24) And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works,

**Hebrews 12:1-2** Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares *us*, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, (2) looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

ALL of this and the promise of eternal life with Him because our Savior rose from the grave!

If I might borrow an idea from the Old Covenant Scriptures:

I have set before you today the finality of death AND the resurrection life. **Choose today the resurrection life! Live it now.** If you don't know where to start, study the life of Paul who told the Corinthian Church "Imitate me, just as I also *imitate* Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1);

Do as Paul did as he explained to the Church in Philippi:

**Philippians 3:7-11** But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. (8) Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as dung, that I may gain Christ (9) and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but that which *is* through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; (10) that I may know Him **and the power of His resurrection**, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, (11) if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

And if anyone asks you about Jesus, tell them "YES, HE IS RISEN INDEED!"