

## Quarter Three: *1 and 2 Corinthians*

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### Lesson 8—The Power of Christ's Resurrection

Sunday: Proclaiming the Resurrection of Christ

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- **Last Week:** “A Portrait of Love”
  - 1 Cor 13
  - Love as revealed in the life of Jesus
    - Love as an attitude expressed in the life, words & actions of the believer
- **This week:** “The Power of Christ's Resurrection”
  - 1 Cor 15: Resurrection power:
  - **Christ rose**
    - To secure our salvation
      - Without His resurrection, we remain in our sins
      - Without His resurrection, our faith is empty
    - To fulfill God's promises
      - Confirms OT prophecy
      - Validates the truth of His Word
    - To establish the gospel as a fact
      - Witnessed by many
      - Grounds our faith in evidence (Historical proof of His resurrection)
    - To conquer sin, death, & the grave
      - Sin is defeated
      - Death is overcome
      - Jesus is victorious
    - To empower the believer's life
      - Power to overcome sin
      - Growth in holiness (resurrection power in the life of the believer)
    - To guarantee our future resurrection
      - Secures our resurrection at the second coming of Christ

**Memory Text:** “And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty. ... (17) And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!” (1 Cor 15:14 – 17, NKJV)

#### The week in brief:

- 1. Sunday: Proclaiming the Resurrection of Christ (Jill)
  - 1 Cor 15:1 – 8 – the gospel & its historical veracity: Jesus was crucified, buried & raised in history; He appeared to many; His death, burial & resurrection is the direct fulfillment of OT prophecies.

- 2. Monday: The Risen Christ, Our Only Hope! (Ryan)
  - 1 Cor 15:9 – 19 – the consequences if we don't believe in the resurrection of Christ
- 3. Tuesday: Christ, the First Fruits (James)
  - 1 Cor 15:20 – 34 – those who died in Jesus to be resurrected; Christ as the last Adam to win over death & sin where Adam failed
- 4. Wednesday: The Resurrected Body (John D)
  - 1 Cor 15:35 – 41 – the miracle of resurrection & a new tangible body
- 5. Thursday: Final Victory Over Death (John L)
  - 1 Cor 15:50 – 58 – glorious promise of resurrection at the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ

## Sunday: Proclaiming the Resurrection of Christ

1 Cor 15:1 – 8; Rom 10:9, 10; Luke 24:44 – 48; Romans 1:1 – 4

- 1 Cor 15:1 – 8: The gospel & the historical veracity of Christ:
  - 1. Historical evidence: Jesus really was crucified, buried & raised
  - 2. Eyewitness evidence: many people confirmed Jesus' resurrection
  - 3. Biblical evidence: Jesus' death, burial, & resurrection fulfilled the OT prophecies
- 1 Cor 15:1, 2 – “Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I **preached** to you, which also you **received** and in which you **stand**, (2) by which also you are **saved**, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.”
  - 1. Paul preached the gospel
  - 2. Corinthians (believers) received that gospel
  - 3. Believers stood in that gospel
  - 4. Believers were saved by that gospel
- **What is that gospel?**
  - Early Church's Creed: 1 Cor 15:3 – 5 – “For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, (4) and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, (5) and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve.”
    - Church's sacred body of common teachings – developed right after the resurrection of Christ
    - Paul is passing on what he knew & was taught
    - **Jesus**
    - Jesus perfect life & death on the Cross (Substitutionary Atonement)
      - 2 Cor 5:21 – “For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”
    - Jesus' resurrection & victory over sin, death & the grave
      - Heb 2:14, 15 – “Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh & blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, (15) and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.”
        - When Jesus became man (partook of flesh & blood)
        - When He died – He destroyed Satan, sin & death

- 1 Cor 15:17 – “And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!”
- 1 Cor 15:54b – “...’Death is swallowed up in victory.’”
- My repentance & receiving His forgiveness & righteousness by faith
  - Rom 10:9, 10 – “that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. (10) For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”
  - 1 John 1:9 – if we confess our sins, He is faithful & just to forgive us & cleanse us from all unrighteousness
- **1. Historical evidence:** Jesus really was crucified, buried & raised
  - **Early written testimony**
    - Early Church’s Creed: 1 Cor 15:3, 4 – “For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, (4) and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.”
      - Developed right after the resurrection of Christ
      - Belief in the resurrection wasn’t a later legend – it emerged immediately
  - **The empty tomb**
    - All 4 gospels report that Jesus’ tomb was found empty
      - Tomb discovered by women (Mary Magdalene) whose testimony had low legal standing at the time – an unlikely detail to invent
      - No strong ancient claim that the body was still in the tomb
        - In fact, multiple independent sources from the 1<sup>st</sup> century report that the tomb was empty
  - **Transformation of the disciples**
    - Before the resurrection: fearful & scattered
    - After, boldly proclaimed His resurrection – even under persecution
      - Willingness to face martyrdom for their claim they’d seen the risen Christ
  - **Proclamation in Jerusalem**
    - Resurrection message first preached in Jerusalem
      - Weren’t scattered until the stoning of Stephen & persecution
    - Jesus had been publicly executed; tomb could be checked
      - If a body could have been produced, the movement would have been quickly suppressed
  - **Conversion of skeptics**
    - Such as Saul / Paul – formerly a violent persecutor of the church
    - And James, Jesus’ brother – became strong proponents after claiming to see Jesus

- **Non-Christian sources**
  - Tacitus mentions Jesus' execution under Pontius Pilate & that a "most mischievous superstition" broke out again
    - About AD 116: Roman orator, historian & public official
  - Josephus refers to Jesus & early Christians (some parts debated)
    - 1<sup>st</sup> century Romano-Jewish historian, military leader & Pharisee
  - These support that Jesus lived, was crucified & early Christians believe He rose
- **2. Eyewitness Evidence:** many people confirmed Jesus' resurrection
  - 1 Cor 15:5 – 8 – "and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. (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. (7) After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. (8) Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time."
    - 9 separate instances of the **Witnesses of the Risen Christ** (+3)
      - 1. The Women (resurrection morning)
      - 2. 2 Disciples on way to Emmaus (resurrection day)
      - 3. Simon Peter (resurrection day)
      - 4. Disciples (resurrection day, evening)
      - 5. Thomas & other disciples (one week later)
      - 6. Disciples by the sea (40 days)
      - 7. Over 500 brethren at once (40 days)
      - 8. James & all the apostles (40 days)
      - 9. The ascension
      - 10. Stephen at his stoning
      - 11. Paul, on road to Damascus
      - 12. John the Revelator on Patmos
    - Many of the 500 were still alive when Paul wrote Corinthians
      - Paul says – "Go ask for yourselves what they saw."
    - Luke 24:48 – "And you are witnesses of these things."
      - Jesus, to His disciples, on resurrection day (after Emmaus)
- **3. Biblical evidence:** Jesus' death, burial, & resurrection fulfilled the OT prophecies
  - 1 Cor 15:3, 4 – "For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins **according to the Scriptures**, (4) and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day **according to the Scriptures**."
    - His death & resurrection was fulfilled, according to the Scriptures
  - Luke 24:25 – 27 – "Then He said to them, 'O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! (26) Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?' (27) And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself."
    - Jesus with 2 disciples on road to Emmaus
    - Bible study, given by Jesus Himself about Himself