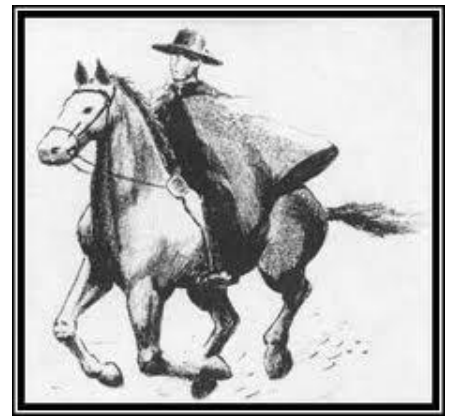


# If Christ is not risen, your faith is futile

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5:06 AM



## Points:

1. Resurrection is at the core of the Christian faith
2. Resurrection is much more than life after death
3. Resurrection is power and hope for the problems of today's people
4. We are called to be a witness of His resurrection

<b>Verses:</b>	Acts 4:1-3	Leaders disturbed that they preached the resurrection from the dead
	Acts 24:15-21	Unless it is for this one statement which I cried out...
	Acts 17:18-19, 29-32	Paul on trial at the Areopagus
	Acts 26:19-23	By a resurrection of the dead He was going to proclaim light to the people & to the nations.
	1 Cor. 15:12-26	if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile...
	Php. 3:10-11	That I may know Him in the power of His resurrection...
	Heb. 6:2	Elementary principles... of resurrection of the dead...
	Heb. 11:35	Tortured that they may receive a better resurrection...
	1 Pet. 1:3	A living hope because of...
	Acts 1:21-22	... a witness of His resurrection...
	1 Cor. 11:26	Proclaim His death until He comes

The celebration of Eucharist (gr. “*εὐχαριστία*” meaning “*grateful language to God*” used 15 times in the NT) is meant as an act of worship to a living God. It is a prompt of His painful death and of His coming, an interesting bit of a paradox.

1 Cor. 11:23-32, “*For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.” For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes. Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.”*”

Let's focus a bit on resurrection –

1. What it is. Resurrection (gr. “*ἀνάστασις*” meaning a *standing up* again, that is, literally a *resurrection* from death) appears in the NT 42 times. It was believed impossible within the pagan world, but we find implications of it within the prophets of the OT (i.e. Job & Ezekiel's vision) such that it was a “*hot button*” between Sadducees and Pharisees. (cf. Acts 23:6-9)
2. What it means. Resurrection is tied to a Jewish understanding of vindication, justification and eschatology. Paganism doesn't have much of an eschatology (final judgment & destiny). But Judaism says that God as Creator will sort out the world one day; there is a day fixed to put things right. (cf. Rom. 1:4, 2:16) There is one God, one

people of God and one future for God's world. The resurrection therefore constitutes Jesus as Messiah and through whom God will set things right; that is the shock message.

Right after Christ's death, the apostles seek to replace Judas. Acts 1:21-22, *"Therefore, of these men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from us, **one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection.**"*

1 Cor. 15:12-26, *"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? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty. 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. For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. And **if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile**; you are still in your sins! Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable. But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming. Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death."*

Destruction of death was the penultimate sign of the destruction of sin. We are no longer bound by sin, because Christ has defeated it.

Look at Paul at the Areopagus: Paul at Areopagus is a court, not a public debating point. It was there to establish true justice; at the founding Apollo himself came and said, *"when a man has died and his blood is spilled on the ground, there is no resurrection."* But we find Paul, Acts 17:18-19, *"Then certain Epicurean and Stoic philosophers encountered him. And some said, 'What does this babbler want to say?' Others said, 'He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign gods,' because he preached to them Jesus and the resurrection. And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, 'May we know what this new doctrine is of which you speak?'"*

- a. Bear in mind Socrates who was executed for this very accusation in 399BC, so this isn't just a mild statement in Athens.

Acts 17:29-32, *"Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man's devising. Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead." And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked, while others said, "We will hear you again on this matter."*

- a. An appointed Day of judgment assured by raising Jesus from the dead
- b. Mocking y Belief

### 3. What it should do. It should cause an uproar.

Acts 4:1-3, *"Now as they spoke to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them, being **greatly disturbed** that they taught the people and preached in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. And they laid hands on them, and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening."*

Acts 24:15-21, *"I have hope in God, which they themselves also accept, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust. This being so, I myself always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men. "Now after many years I came to bring alms and offerings to my nation, in the midst of which some Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, neither with a mob nor with tumult. They ought to have been here before you to object if they had anything against me. Or else let those who are here themselves say if they found any wrongdoing in me while I stood before the council, unless it is for this one statement which I cried out, standing among them, 'Concerning the resurrection of the dead I am being judged by you this day.'"*

- a. Just & unjust will be resurrected, and judged

- b. Therefore, strive to have a clean conscience

Acts 26:19-23, the last great theological statement that Paul makes in these trials. *"Because of these things, having caught me in the temple, The Jews tried to kill me. Then having obtained help from God, I stand until this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying no other things than those which the prophets and Moses said was going to happen; whether the Christ was liable to suffer, whether first by a resurrection of the dead He was going to proclaim light to the people and to the nations."*

- a. Right back to Luke 2, a light to the Gentiles.
- b. The resurrection is the key thing that sends Paul on the mission.
- c. Festus calls out in verse 24, *"Paul, you are beside yourself! Much learning is driving you mad!"* If this were true, Festus' entire worldview would be blown apart; this is the Kingdom of God facing the Kingdom of Caesar.

- 4. Eucharist. It's a great theological statement and celebration all at once.

Ph. 3:10-11, *"... that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead."*

Heb. 11:35, *"Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection."*

Therefore, ***"Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me... For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes."***