



Why Does It Matter That Jesus Rose From The Dead?

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Why does it matter that Jesus rose from the dead? Much is made of Jesus' resurrection from the dead by those who profess to follow Jesus. But, why? As we will see throughout this study, the resurrection of Jesus Christ is absolutely crucial to everything that Christians profess to believe in and hope for. If Jesus did not raise from the dead, then the entire system of Christianity is hopeless! Therefore, let's study this lesson in order to learn about the significance of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

It Forever Demonstrated That Jesus Is The Christ

The fact that Jesus rose from the dead verifies the truth that Jesus truly is the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus claimed to be the Son of God and the Messiah (the promised One) throughout His life on this earth. Jesus not only claimed these things, but He performed many miracles to demonstrate that this was absolutely true. Yet, Jesus' resurrection from the dead was the greatest evidence that was ever offered to prove that He was exactly who He claimed to be – the Son of God and the Messiah!

First, the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead fulfilled Old Testament prophecy. It has been said that there are over 300 Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah. Only Jesus has fulfilled every single one! Therefore, the fulfillment of these prophecies demonstrates that He truly is the Son of God.

Included in these many Old Testament prophecies is the prophecy that the Messiah would raise from the dead. When Peter was preaching to Jews on the Day of Pentecost (after Jesus had ascended to Heaven), consider what he said in Acts 2:25-28: "For David says concerning Him: 'I foresaw the Lord always before my face, For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken. Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad; Moreover my flesh also will rest in hope. For You will not leave my soul in Hades, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of joy in Your presence.'" "

This is a quotation from Psalm 16:8-11. Peter's follow-up to this quotation was to demonstrate that David could not have been talking about himself. The people there knew that David had died and was buried – and his tomb was with them to that day. Instead, Peter demonstrated that David (being a prophet) was speaking about the resurrection of Jesus Christ! And, Jesus' tomb was also with them, except that Jesus' tomb was empty! Certainly, as Peter indicates in Acts 2:32, Jesus had been raised from the dead – as some were even eyewitnesses to.

Therefore, the fact that Jesus Christ fulfilled this prophecy was another in a line of hundreds of fulfilled Old Testament prophecies that had been made concerning the Messiah. And, this one was the most powerful one of all! Certainly, the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecy made concerning His resurrection has proven Jesus to be the Christ!

Second, the resurrection of Jesus Christ fulfilled Jesus' own prophecy. Consider Mark 8:31. "And He [Jesus] began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again." The fact that Jesus could even foretell these events proved there was something special about Him. And, then you consider the fact that everything happened according to what He said!

Third, through the fulfillment of these promises and through the great demonstration of God's power, God forever declares that Jesus Christ is His Son. Consider a few passages. Hebrews 1:5 says, "For to which of the angels did [God] ever say: 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You'?" As the Hebrew writer demonstrates Jesus' superiority to the angels, He says that there was a time when Jesus was declared to be the Son of God. This passage is a quotation from Psalm 2:7. But, what time does this passage specifically reference?

Consider Acts 13:30-33. "But God raised Him from the dead. He was seen for many days by those who came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are His witnesses to the people. And we declare to you glad tidings—that promise which was made to the fathers. God has fulfilled this for us their children, in that He has raised up Jesus. As it is also written in the second Psalm: 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.'" Notice the use of the same passage from the Psalms referenced by the Hebrew writer. But, in this passage, Paul uses this quotation specifically in reference to prove the connection between the resurrection of Jesus Christ and proving Jesus to be the Christ.

Consider Romans 1:3-4 also. Paul said, "concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." Again, the apostle Paul connects the resurrection of Jesus Christ with the declaration that Jesus was the Son of God.

Now, although Jesus was the Son of God (and claimed to be such) prior to His resurrection, these passages indicate that the resurrection of Christ forever demonstrated this fact beyond a shadow of a doubt. Though Jesus had performed many miracles during His life to prove that He

was the Son of God (see John 20:30-31), the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead was the greatest evidence of them all!

Our Hope Is Rooted In Jesus' Resurrection

Yes, Jesus' claim to be the Son of God would have been empty if He had not risen from the dead! But, not only is Jesus' resurrection significant because it proves that He is the Son of God, it also is vitally important to our hope of life beyond this earth!

First, the Scriptures teach that we are saved by Jesus' life. Consider some of Paul's points in Romans chapters 4 and 5. Romans 4:25 teaches that Jesus was "delivered because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification." That is, Jesus Christ was raised from the dead in order that He might complete God's plan of redemption and offer a way for mankind to be justified of their sins. Without the resurrection of Christ, this justification would not have been possible!

Continue, then, on into chapter 5. Paul says that God demonstrates His love toward us in that Jesus Christ died for us even while we were still sinners (verses 6-8). Consider verses 9-11. "Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation."

Every part of what Jesus Christ accomplished through His death, burial, and resurrection was necessary to bring about the salvation from sin. Particularly, consider the fact that those who will be saved will be "saved by His life" – since a dead person cannot save anyone (because he/she could not even save himself/herself). However, since Jesus does continue to live and was victorious over death, Hebrews 7:25 says that "He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them."

Second, Jesus' resurrection provides the hope of a future resurrection. 1 Corinthians 15 is a chapter dedicated to the subject of the resurrection. And, Paul demonstrates that a future resurrection from the dead hinges on the fact that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead. So, he begins by providing evidence that Jesus Christ did, in fact, raise from the dead (showing that more than 500 people saw the resurrected Christ at one time).

Particularly, verses 12-19 demonstrate the connection between Jesus' resurrection and the future resurrection from the dead. "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.”

It was not at all accurate to preach the resurrection of Jesus Christ and then deny the resurrection of His followers (as some in Corinth had evidently been teaching). If there is truly no resurrection from the dead for mankind, then Jesus Christ is not risen. And, if that is true, then the apostles were false witnesses for claiming that Jesus rose from the dead!

Then, if this would all be true, consider Paul’s conclusions about putting our trust in Christ for salvation. He said that our faith would be worthless! He said that those who have died in Christ have perished. And, he said that the life of a Christian would be the most pitiable life of all. There would be absolutely no benefit to living a dedicated life for God and Christ – if Jesus did not raise from the dead.

However, since Jesus did raise from the dead (as Paul demonstrated), the opposite of all these points is true. The faith of a Christian is the most valuable thing in this world. Those who die in Christ will be eternally rewarded. And, the life of a Christian is full of joy, peace, and hope! Ultimately, this is because Jesus Christ has provided the victory over sin and death through His death, burial, and resurrection. Therefore, those who put their trust in Him will take part of the resurrection of life whenever Jesus returns (see 1 Corinthians 15:50-58 and John 5:28-29)!

Conclusion

It does matter that Jesus Christ rose from the dead! If Jesus did not raise from the dead, there is no hope. If Jesus did not raise from the dead, there is no future resurrection. If Jesus did not raise from the dead, Christianity is a system of lies. Because, if Jesus did not raise from the dead, Jesus Christ was not the Son of God. However, since Jesus did raise from the dead, Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God – and believing, we can have life in His name!

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