

## HALLELUIAH! CHRIST AROSE! 1 COR. 15:3-20 (Ed O'Leary)

### INTRODUCTION.

IF YOU WERE HERE ON RESURRECTION SUNDAY BACK IN 2011 AND HAVE A VERY GOOD memory, ~ some of this sermon may sound familiar.

▶▶ Well, ~ there's a very good reason for that. ~~ This is basically a revised edition . . . .

▶▶ And my reason for doing this is simple.

▷▷ I felt that it would be good every few years to review Paul's passage in [1 Cor. 15:3-20](#), ~ which focuses on some of the basic truths of Jesus' resurrection, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ in order to remind us of these truths and to help cement them in our minds.

LET'S PRAY AND THEN WE'LL DIG IN TO 1 COR. 15:3-20 . . . .

### IN VERSES 3-4a, ~ PAUL STATES THE FACT THAT JESUS DIED AND WAS BURIED.

A FALSE THEORY APPEARED AT THE END OF THE 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY THAT ASSERTED JESUS never actually died on the cross.

▶▶ He just swooned/fainted from exhaustion, ~ pain, ~ and loss of blood. ~~ Still alive when placed in the tomb. ~~ Revived by the cool air, ~ arose, ~ and departed. ~~ Wait . . . .

▷▷ Roman soldiers, ~ who were experienced in this, ~ were convinced of his death.

▷▷ Pilate asked for assurance before releasing the body.

▷▷ And one would think Joseph & Nicodemus would have noticed Jesus breathing.

▶▶ And consider this. ~~ Jesus had had no water, ~ no food, ~ had been severely beaten, ~ had hung on a cross 6 hrs.

▷▷ Would He have looked like victorious savior on that first Resurrection Sunday?

▷▷ Are we seriously asked to believe that in His weakened condition, ~ Jesus was able to roll the stone away and fight off experienced Roman soldiers?

▷▷ And how would Jesus have known the length of time He was in the tomb, ~ and precisely the right time to come out? ¶¶ 1/6

NO, ~ JESUS DIED AND WAS BURIED. ~~ AND IT WAS FOR OUR SINS THAT HE DIED.

▶▶ Jesus, ~ the spotless, ~ sinless Son of God took upon himself the punishment for sin, ~ dying for our sins, ~ thereby opening the door to forgiveness of sins and eternal life for us.

▷▷ We just need to repent of our sins and accept the forgiveness offered by him.

▶▶ The phrase "in accordance with the Scriptures" refers to the Old Testament prophecies regarding this event, ~ such as we find in [Psalm 16](#) and [Isaiah 53](#).

▷▷ Christ's death on the cross was no accident, ~ no afterthought. ~~ It had been part of God's plan from all eternity in order to bring about the salvation of all who believe.

IN VERSE 4b, ~ PAUL STATES THE FACT THAT JESUS ROSE FROM THE DEAD.

DEATH COULD NOT HOLD HIM!

▶▶ Acts 2:24. ~~ "God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it."

WE SHOULD POINT OUT THAT JESUS ROSE PHYSICALLY FROM THE DEAD.

▶▶ Just as Jesus was physically dead and buried, ~ so He was truly raised from the dead bodily.

▶▶ To be sure, ~ Jesus rose from the dead with a resurrection body, ~ which has different properties than our earthly bodies, ~ as Paul explains later in [1 Cor. 15](#).

▶▶ But it was a body that could be seen and touched, ~ that could eat. ~~ [Lk. 24:36-43](#) . . . .

ALL SORTS OF FALSE THEORIES TO EXPLAIN AWAY THE RESURRECTION. ~~ WE JUST noted one.

▶▶ Another one states that everyone went to wrong tomb.

▷▷ Joseph of Arimathea . . . . .

▷▷ We know from [Matt. 27:61](#) that the women watched as Jesus was put in the tomb.

▷▷ Wrong tomb? ~~ Grave with guards . . . . .

▷▷ Enemies could have gone to right tomb and produced body. **⇓⇓ 2/6**

▶▶ One more false theory is that someone stole the body.

▷▷ Enemies? . . . . ~ The disciples? . . . . ~ How account for Jesus' appearances?

▷▷ Also, ~ consider this. ~ There was a Roman guard placed around the tomb. ~ Such a guard usually consisted of 16 men.

↳↳ Four soldiers would have been placed immediately in front of the tomb, ~ with the other 12 sleeping in a semicircle in front of them.

→→ The guards changed shifts every four hours.

↳↳ These soldiers were elite, ~ the most highly trained fighting force in the world.

↳↳ The penalty for failure to guard a prisoner or for falling asleep on duty was death. ~ These soldiers had every reason to stay wide awake.

→→ No one could have gotten past them to steal the body from the tomb.

**NO STOLEN BODY. ~ NO WRONG TOMB. ~ HE IS RISEN!**

**IN VERSES 5-8 of 1 COR. 15, ~ PAUL PRESENTS EYEWITNESS TESTIMONY AS evidence of the resurrection.**

**THERE IS YET ANOTHER FALSE THEORY THAT STATES THAT THE DISCIPLES NEVER saw any of the things they thought they saw.**

▶▶ The claim is that they hallucinated, ~ seeing images in their minds that corresponded with what they wanted to see. ~ **Ok, ~ let's look at the evidence.**

▶▶ According to the gospel of Luke, ~ the apostles thought the women were talking nonsense and didn't believe them when the women returned from the tomb.

▷▷ Doesn't sound like any of the apostles were looking for a risen Savior.

▶▶ It seems James became a believer after the Lord appeared to him. ~ Remember that Jesus' half brothers including James rejected Jesus.

▷▷ James' testimony is highly significant, ~ because it's the testimony of a skeptic. ~ It took the resurrection to bring him to his senses. ~ **So it was extremely doubtful . . . .**

▶▶ Paul had been a persecutor of the church. ~ Pretty safe to assume he was not looking for a risen Jesus on that first Resurrection Sunday. **⇓⇓ 3/6**

▶▶ When you examine the evidence, ~ it's highly unlikely these people were imagining something they weren't even looking for or didn't believe in.

▶▶ No one hallucinated. ~ ~ He is risen!

(1 Cor. 15:6) **GETTING BACK TO PAUL'S PRESENTATION OF eyewitness testimony as evidence of the resurrection, ~ Paul said a crowd of 500+ saw Jesus at the same time.**

▶▶ With the statement "most of whom are still alive," ~ ~ Paul was implying, ~ 77

▷▷ "If you have any doubts about the truth of the resurrection, ~ you can go to Jerusalem and ask them."

▶▶ Peter . . . .

▶▶ Pretty bold to proclaim when people still around to refute. ~ ~ Transformed disciples . . . .

**IN VERSES 12-19, ~ PAUL LISTS THE IMPLICATIONS THAT FOLLOW IF CHRIST has not been raised from the dead.**

**PRESENTS VERY BLEAK SCENARIO IF JESUS HAS NOT RISEN . . . .**

▶▶ (Vv. 14-15) "if Christ has not been raised," ~ then the apostles' preaching has no meaning at all, ~ it's worthless.

▷▷ And they would all be lying about God. ~ ~ Why? ~ ~ Because they said that God raised Christ from the grave. ~ ~ But that can't be true if Jesus didn't rise from the dead.

▶▶ (Vv. 14, 17) Twice, ~ most likely for emphasis, ~ Paul says "if Christ has not been raised," ~ then our faith, ~ that is our belief in Christ, ~ has no meaning at all, ~ it's worthless.

▷▷ If Jesus has not been raised, ~ then our belief in him is imaginary, ~ devoid of value and benefit, ~ and not based on truth.

▶▶ (Vs. 17) If Jesus has not been raised, ~ then we are still under condemnation for our sins. ~ ~ God raising him from the dead showed acceptance of Christ's sacrifice.

▷▷ If God left Jesus in the grave, ~ then the sacrifice Jesus made for our sins was not accepted, ~ and no one has received cleansing from sin.

▷▷ The condemnation for sin is death (Romans 6:23). ~ ~ To still be under condemnation means that all people will be given the ultimate penalty for their sins. 77 4/6

▶▶(Vs. 18) "if Christ has not been raised," ~ then all who die believing in Christ have no hope of eternal life and are lost in hell forever.

▷▷If Christ was never raised from the dead, ~ and if there is no hope of resurrection, ~ then rather than receiving eternal life, ~ those who die believing in Jesus are actually in a state of eternal separation from God.

▶▶(Vs. 19) And if our hope in Christ is only for this life, ~ and this is all there is, ~ then we are more to be pitied than anyone in the world.

▷▷Then believers in Jesus are nothing more than pathetic fools, ~ taken in by a colossal fraud, ~ people should feel more sorry for us than for anyone else.

WHAT A HOPELESS MESS, ~~ IF JESUS . . . .

▶▶But praise God, ~ it's not the true picture of the way things really are for believers. ~~ For Paul was presenting a purely hypothetical situation.

THE REALITY IS PRESENTED IN VERSE 20a.

PAUL CONFIDENTLY AND JOYOUSLY PROCLAIMS, ~ "BUT IN FACT CHRIST HAS BEEN raised from the dead." ~~ Christ is risen indeed!

▶▶And this means the following for all those who . . . .

▷▷We are not pathetic fools, ~ taken in by a colossal fraud, ~ and more to be pitied than anyone in the world.

▷▷When believers die, ~ we go home to be with Jesus. ~~ Absent . . . . ~~ See again . . . .

▷▷Risen. ~~ And this means Jesus' sacrifice for our sins was accepted by the Father.

↳↳This gift of love . . . . ~~ Till on that cross as Jesus died the wrath of God was . . . .

↳↳And as Paul says in Rom. 8:1, ~ "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." ~~ . . . emphasized. ~~ Paul's point: ~~ condemnation is, ~ in every sense, ~ absolutely out of the question for those in Christ Jesus. ~~ Sin?

▷▷Risen. ~~ Our belief in Jesus is not imaginary. ~~ It is full of value and substance, ~ solidly based on truth. ~~ On Christ, ~ the solid rock . . . .

▷▷And the apostles' preaching has meaning and is not a lie. ↴ 5/6

PAUL GOES ON TO SAY IN VERSE 20b THAT JESUS IS "THE FIRSTFRUITS OF those who have fallen asleep."

THE NT FREQUENTLY USES THE WORD "SLEEP" TO REFER TO THE DEATH OF BELIEVERS to emphasize that our deaths are only temporary conditions.

▶▶ "firstfruits" is a promise that more resurrections will follow. ~ Jesus' resurrection is a promise that our resurrection, ~ i.e., ~ those who belong to Jesus, ~ will definitely follow.

▷▷ 1 Cor. 15:22b-23, ~ "so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ."

▶▶ My brothers and sisters in Christ, ~ because Jesus has risen from the dead, ~ we too shall rise.

▷▷ In Jn. 6:39-40, ~ Jesus says, ~ NIV, ~ "And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all those he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. ~ ~ ¶¶

↪↪ For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day." ~ ~ "I will" . . . .

▷▷ Physical resurrection. ~ ~ Phil. 3:20-21 . . . .

CONCLUSION.

UP FROM THE GRAVE HE AROSE, ~ ¶¶

▶▶ With a mighty triumph o'er His foes ~ ~ He arose a Victor from the dark domain, ~ ~ And He lives forever with His saints to reign. ~ ~ He arose! He arose! ~ ~ Hallelujah! Christ arose!

▷▷ And that, ~ my . . . , ~ is a guarantee that we too shall rise.

LET'S PRAY . . . . 6/6