

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RESURRECTION

1 Corinthians 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, and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day..."

In coming days you will remember Christ's death on the cross and its value to you. However, his sacrifice for your sins is a two-part act. I want you to also understand the importance of his resurrection.

You might view the resurrection only as a miracle that God used to demonstrate his power. There is a certain amount of truth to that because, as far as miracles go, nothing beats coming to life after being dead for three days. Or, you might feel the purpose of Christ's resurrection is proof that our bodies will also someday be resurrected. And, you would not be wrong because his resurrection was prophesized hundreds of years earlier and it is also prophesized – by Christ himself – for us believers. Or, you might believe that God resurrected Christ from the grave so he could have another 40 days to spend with his followers before God dramatically – very dramatically – called him back to heaven in front of his disciples. Those 40 days are well documented with scripture even noting that Jesus passed through walls, and appeared and vanished from time to time in the power of his resurrected body. So, those forty days are also very important to our faith.

However, there is an even more important purpose for the resurrection. It serves as God's stamp of approval on the sacrifice of his Son on the cross. It signifies completion of that sacrifice and acceptance of it as payment for our sins, much like a diploma is the sign of your graduation from school. It is like the receipt you receive when you purchase an item at a store. You enter the store, find the item you want, and take it to the cashier. You give money to the cashier for the item, and then the item is put in a bag and handed back to you. But, until you receive a receipt for your purchase, the item does not belong to you. Christ suffered terrible torture, he walked to the hill of his death carrying his own cross, he was nailed to that cross and lifted up to suffer a horrible and painful death, he died as payment for your sins, then his body was taken down and placed in the grave. But the act was not final until God gave him back his life three days later and he walked free. The resurrection is God's receipt for his Son's sacrifice; the receipt that we have as proof that our sins have been paid for by Christ's death. The resurrection allows us to walk free and not be held accountable for our own sins.

When you think of the resurrection it is okay to consider the miracle it represents and the evidence that you will one day be resurrected, plus the promise that you will receive your own new body someday. But, do not neglect to consider that without Christ's resurrection, you have no basis for your faith and no hope for the future. As 1 Corinthians 15:17 reads: "...if Christ is not risen your faith is futile" and "you are still in your sins." Christ's death AND resurrection are, together, the two acts that save you from hell ... if you believe and accept it.

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