



Who Will Rise From the Dead? 1 Corinthians 15:13-20, 51-58

“But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.” (1 Corinthians 15:20—ESV).

Paul reminded the Corinthians of the facts that saved them if they held firmly to the good news that Christ had died for their sins, was buried, and rose from the dead on the third day according to the Scriptures. Paul gave two reasons to believe that Christ had risen. First, Christ’s death and resurrection had occurred exactly as the Hebrew Scriptures had foretold hundreds of years before Jesus was born as the Messiah. Second, many people had seen the risen Christ; including all the apostles, Peter, James, more than five hundred at one time, and so had Paul himself. After Paul heard the risen Christ commission him as an apostle, and after his blindness was miraculously healed by one of Jesus’ followers, Paul quit persecuting the church to obey his risen Lord and become His apostle through many persecutions and sufferings. In doing so, Paul could also heal the sick and perform many signs even as Jesus and His first disciples did. Paul also listed two important results of Christ’s death and resurrection for us. First, our loving and forgiving God could now justly and mercifully forgive us, sinners, who believed in Christ, because Christ died for our sins according to the teachings and prophecies in the Hebrew Scriptures. Second, Christ’s resurrection proved that everyone would live again after they died; physical death is not the end of existence. Paul preached this fact to the Athenians when he declared that because Christ had risen from the dead, we have assurance that God will judge the world in righteousness, and many believed him (Acts 17:29-31). Through Christ’s resurrection God has shown that, despite all appearances in this world, justice will be served after death, because “all will be made alive in Christ” (1 Corinthians 15:22). There will be a future Day of Judgment and separation; however, “God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life” (John 3:16). The question for us is, “Do we *truly* believe in Him?”