

Who Will Rise From the Dead?

International Bible Lesson

1 Corinthians 15:1-11, 20-22

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“But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept” (1 Corinthians 15:20—KJV).

“But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died” (1 Corinthians 15:20—NRSV).

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 had risen 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 Paul himself. Paul had even quit persecuting the church to obey his risen Lord and become His apostle. Paul also listed two important results of Christ’s death and resurrection. First, our loving and merciful God could now justly forgive sinners who believed in Christ, because Christ had died for our sins. Second, Christ’s resurrection proved that everyone would live again after they died; physical death is not the end of existence. Paul had 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 (Acts 17:29-31). Through Christ’s resurrection God has shown that, in spite of 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).

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Thinking Further

1. Describe two reasons that Paul gives for believing in the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

2. What does Christ’s death mean and mean to you?

3. What does Christ’s resurrection mean and mean to you?

4. After the good news is proclaimed, what does a true believer do? What is the result?

5. Besides himself, who does Paul list by name of those who saw the risen Lord? Why do you think he names them by name?