

IMPACT

I **M**ust **P**ersonally **A**cknowledge **C**hrist **T**oday
Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; in *all your ways acknowledge Him* and He shall direct your path.
Proverbs 3:5-6

Passage: I Corinthians 15:14 “And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching in vain, and your faith is also in vain. 15:19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.”

A critical consideration for all who profess to believe the gospel is found in I Corinthians 15:1-4 “Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, *if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.*” A clearer rendering would be “if you hold fast what I preached to you, unless your faith is worthless or unless you believed without effect.”¹ Paul was warning against a non-saving intellectual belief like that of the demons.² It was vain, useless, of no effect and described a non-saving belief that is all talk with no substance. Our holding fast or perseverance in the faith is the result of, as well as the evidence of, Christ holding onto us in salvation.³ **BEWARE** that you are not content with the smoke of religion without the fire of a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Don’t be deceived by religious smoke that burns the eyes and fills the nostrils, but ends in death. It is only the living, growing fire of entrusting your eternal soul to Christ that will warm you when the frigid winds of doubt, discouragement and disillusionment blow across your mind.

The resurrection of Christ is critical to the credibility of the Gospel in particular. 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 according to the Scriptures...*” Without His resurrection, the Gospel is powerless.⁴

The resurrection of Christ is critical to the credibility of the Scriptures as a whole. If we cannot believe the Scriptural account of the resurrection which is mentioned more than 100 times in the N.T., then all Scripture is brought into question. His virgin birth and His complete fulfillment of the Law gained no advantage

for us. We could have no confidence that His death on the cross atoned for our sins and exhausted God’s wrath that we deserve. We could not know of His ascension into Heaven to intercede as our Advocate with God. We would have no assurance that He will one day return for His own as He promised.

The resurrection of Christ is critical to the credibility of His claims. Lord Darling (former Chief Justice of England) wrote, “The crux of the problem of whether Jesus was, or was not, what he proclaimed himself to be, must surely depend upon the truth or otherwise of the resurrection. On that greatest point we are not merely asked to have faith. In its favor as a living truth there exists such overwhelming evidence, positive and negative, factual and circumstantial, that no intelligent jury in the world could fail to bring a verdict that the resurrection story is true.” Scriptures declare that we are known by our words.⁵ Christ’s repeated declaration that He would rise from the dead was delusional, diabolical or divine—He was either God the Son or a fraud.⁶

The Resurrection of Jesus, Part I

The resurrection of Christ is critical to the credibility of our hope. His resurrection guarantees the resurrection of all who place saving faith in Him.⁷

Among the “many infallible proofs” for the resurrection were over 500 eye witnesses who declared that they had seen the risen Christ on different occasions during a span of 40 days.⁸ In the words of former US Supreme Court Justice William J. Brennan, there is “nothing more convincing [to a jury] than a live human being who takes the stand, points a finger at the defendant, and says ‘That’s the one!’” The names of specific people are given who confessed Christ *in a hostile environment*.⁹ The post-resurrection lives of the apostles included suffering and scorn as part of God’s plan to show that there was no earthly advantage for them to proclaim Christ’s resurrection.⁹ They simply told the truth!
[More in our next IMPACT]

1 J. MacArthur 2 James 2:19-20 3 John 10:27-28 4 I Cor.15:3-4; Romans 10:9-10; 4:20-25 5 Matt.12:34 6 Matt.12:40; 17:9, 22-23; 20:18-19; 26:31-32; 27:62-66 7 Matt.12:20-23; Col.1:13-18; I Thess.4:13-18; I Peter 1:3-5 8 Acts 1:1-3; I Cor.15:3-8 9 I Cor.4:9-13