

## The Message of Acts #2: Resurrection

### What does the book of Acts itself show as “the message of the gospel”?

1. repentance from sins
2. the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth – that HE is the Christ, the Messiah, the chosen of God, and there is salvation in his name ONLY
3. **That this Jesus of Nazareth was raised from the dead**
4. that the kingdom of God is coming, and has come to those who believe
5. that we are to be water baptized
6. that we are to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit

### A few of the major references in Acts to resurrection:

1:22	must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection
2:24	Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death ...
2:31-33	He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ ...
3:15	And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead ...
3:26	Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus ...
4:10	Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole.
17:31	Because he hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

Some people wonder whether it is really necessary to believe that Jesus was quite literally raised from the dead. To be frank, their beliefs and way of life would not change either way. So, does it really matter? I Cor. 15 gives the answer.

### 1 Cor. 15 is THE chapter on Resurrection (of Christ and also of us)

- A. **The gospel** - 1-11
  - a. 1-4 What is it? That Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose the third day
  - b. 5-11 Even with differences in ministry, the resurrection is always preached
- B. **The problem**: some in Corinth were denying the resurrection of the dead – 1:12  
This is probably related to the controversy between the “fundamentalist” Pharisees and the “modernist” Sadducees (Pharisees held to resurrection, Sadducees rejected it).
- C. **Implications** – 13-19
  - a. 13 If there is no resurrection, then Christ is still dead, and
  - b. 14-15 our preaching is vain (empty, useless) and we are made liars
  - c. 16-17 your faith is vain (a meaningless profession)
  - d. 17 you are still in your sins
  - e. 18 those who have died as Christians have actually perished, and are eternally lost
  - f. 19 If we only have hope in this life, with no reality of blessedness in the next, we are of all men most miserable. Why go through the troubles and persecutions?
- D. **Christ’s resurrection is a central part of God’s ultimate plan** – 20-28
  - a. 20-23 Christ is the firstfruits from the dead. That means the full harvest is to follow.
  - b. 24-28 Ultimate submission of all things, including death, to God

**E. Practical objections to the denial of resurrection – 29-34**

- a. 29 Why would people be baptized for the dead (presumably, those who were martyred before even having the opportunity of being baptized)
- b. 30-32 Why would we go through the persecutions and daily sufferings? If this life is all there is, we might as well just “eat, drink, and be merry”
- c. 33-34 Warnings: evil communications corrupt good manners – If you listen and do not rebuke the heresies in the church, you will become corrupted yourself. So wake up – shamefully, not everyone in the church at Corinth was speaking from a knowledge of God.

**F. Answering the argument of the heretics – 35-44 (v.35 – “How are the dead raised, and with what body?” (since the bodies decay)**

- a. 36-37 analogy of sowing seed and reaping grain
- b. 39 the analogy of different kinds of flesh
- c. 40-41 the analogy of celestial and terrestrial bodies
- d. 36-38 the analogy of sown grain
- e. 42-44 so is the resurrection of our bodies. They are sown as corruptible, natural, weak, and dishonourable, but raised incorruptible, spiritual, strong and glorious

**G. Christ as the “Last Adam” – 45-49**

- a. 22 In Adam all die, in Christ all are made alive
- b. 45 Adam was made a “living soul”; Christ is a “quickening spirit” (he gives life)
- c. 46-49 Everything in its order
  - i. 46 First the natural, then the spiritual
  - ii. 47 The first man (Adam) was “of the earth”; the second man is “the Lord from heaven”
  - iii. 48-49 Right now we are earthy (we live in natural, corruptible bodies of flesh), later we shall bear the image of the heavenly, in spiritual and incorruptible bodies.

**H. Ultimate victory over death – 50-57**

- a. 50 Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. These bodies of flesh are incapable of entering and enjoying the heavenly pleasures of God’s holy presence.
- b. 51-52 The “Rapture”. Those who are still alive when Christ returns will NOT die, but will be transformed directly and instantaneously into our spiritual bodies. This will be at the same time as the dead are raised and given their spiritual bodies.
- c. 53-57 The resurrection of the believers is when we experience the ultimate victory over death. We trade corruption for incorruptibility, mortality for immortality. So then the sting of death has been done away. Our deaths are not the final end to all hopes and dreams and affections, as it is for the unbelievers. We have this victory over death “through our Lord Jesus Christ”

**I. Practical conclusion – 58**

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”