

Good morning! This Sunday, Christians all over the world will celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ in the celebration we call Easter. As my friend Rev. Herbert Cottoms likes to say, “The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing.” When it comes to the Christian faith, the physical resurrection of Jesus is The Main Thing. Easter is the turning point in all human history. We read yesterday that the resurrection was one of the most witnessed events in the ancient world. After He left His grave, Jesus was seen by the disciples and then for 40 days, He stayed around to teach on the Kingdom of God. I’d like to have those notes, wouldn’t you? At the end of this six-week teaching series, Jesus was seen by 500 people at once! OK, so we know it is a fact---but what does that mean for us today? This morning, let’s jump back into the Paul’s narrative and read it together:

But tell me this—since we preach that Christ rose from the dead, why are some of you saying there will be no resurrection of the dead? For if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised either. And if Christ has not been raised, then all our preaching is useless, and your faith is useless. And we apostles would all be lying about God—for we have said that God raised Christ from the grave. But that can’t be true if there is no resurrection of the dead. And if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless and you are still guilty of your sins. In that case, all who have died believing in Christ are lost! And if our hope in Christ is only for this life, we are more to be pitied than anyone in the world. But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead. He is the first of a great harvest of all who have died.

1 Cor. 15:12-20

It is interesting to note that even then, some people were beginning to doubt that Jesus’ resurrection ever happened. We know this because Paul asks, “Why are some of you saying there will be no resurrection of the dead?” Then he presents the significance of the resurrection for us. Let’s consider them together:

- *For if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised either.* If Jesus wasn’t resurrected, He is still in the grave.

- *And if Christ has not been raised, then all our preaching is useless, and your faith is useless.* If Jesus wasn't resurrected, our faith is completely baseless and therefore useless.
- *And we apostles would all be lying about God—for we have said that God raised Christ from the grave.* If Jesus wasn't resurrected, the apostles were all liars, because that was their main message.
- *In that case, all who have died believing in Christ are lost!* If Jesus wasn't resurrected we are still lost in our sins---and so are the rest of the billions of followers of Jesus who have ever lived.
- *And if our hope in Christ is only for this life, we are more to be pitied than anyone in the world.* If Jesus wasn't resurrected, we are pitiful creatures, deceived by a lie, and without hope.

But now Paul tells us the Good News, saying that “*Christ has been raised from the dead. He is the first of a great harvest of all who have died.*” Not only has Christ died and been raised to new life, but we also will be raised with Him! The physical resurrection of Jesus matters and the resurrection of (*Your Name Here*) matters too. It doesn't just matter to you, it also matters to God, who made a way for us to have eternal life with Him through the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This Sunday---and every day---celebrate the resurrection. Jesus was dead but He is alive. Christ is risen...He is risen indeed!