

## **The implications of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead**

The first two Scottish missionaries sent to the New Hebrides Islands were killed and eaten by cannibals on the day they arrived. After that it proved difficult to find missionary volunteers. But even when John G. Paton agreed to go, well-meaning people in the church tried to dissuade him. One elderly man warned that he would be eaten by cannibals. Paton replied, "I confess to you, that if I can but live and die serving and honouring the Lord Jesus, it will make no difference to me whether I am eaten by cannibals or by worms; and in the Great Day my resurrection body will arise as fair as yours in the likeness of our risen Redeemer." After fifteen years of fruitful ministry, almost everyone on the island of Aniwa where Paton ministered was converted.

1 Corinthians 15: 1 – 33

### **1) A reminder of the Gospel (vs. 1 – 4)**

- We need to be reminded of things on a regular basis because we tend to forget.
  - It's not that we always forget the facts, but we forget what's important and forget our priorities in life
  - We need to be reminded to keep the main thing the main thing.
- We are told why it's important to be reminded of the Gospel
  - 1 Corinthians 15:2 By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.
  - The same Greek word used for "hold firmly" is used to retain the word in Luke 8: 15
  - Luke 8:15 But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.
  - The implication here is that you'll know that you've believed and kept the Word of God because you bear the fruit of the Gospel in your lives
- When we talk about the Gospel we mostly think about Jesus dying on the cross for our sins.
  - That is only part of the Gospel. The Gospel is that He died, He was buried, and He was raised from the dead on the third day
  - Without the resurrection there is no Gospel as a dead man can't save anyone
  - The Gospel – the Good News – is that He both died our death and rose from the dead giving us hope of eternal life

### **2) Eyewitnesses of the resurrected Christ (vs. 5 – 11)**

- In order to verify and validate something witnesses are needed.
  - John 8:17 In your own Law it is written that the testimony of two witnesses is true.
  - Besides the 12 apostles Jesus appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at the same time
  - Jesus also appeared to Mary Magdalene and some other women outside the tomb, the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, the disciples on the beach.
  - Such a vast amount of eyewitness in different places at different times is certainly enough to verify the authenticity of Jesus' resurrection from the dead.
- Paul never saw Jesus in person, but Jesus appeared to him in a supernatural way on the road to Damascus
  - If this appearance weren't real it his life wouldn't have been radically transformed from being a persecutor of the church to an upholder and proclaimer of the truth of Jesus
  - A transformed life is probably the greatest evidence that we've had an encounter with the resurrected Christ

### 3) What if He hadn't risen? (vs. 12 – 19)

- Paul states the consequences of the hypothetical case if Christ had not risen from the dead
- So, if Christ had not risen from the dead then:
  - Our preaching and faith are useless (v.14)
  - We are false witnesses (v. 15)
  - Our faith is futile and we are still in our sins (v. 17)
  - Those who have fallen asleep – died – in Christ are lost (v.18)
  - We are of all people most pitied (v. 19)
- What a sad and hopeless situation if Christ had not risen from the dead

### 4) But He indeed has risen! (vs. 20 – 28)

- However, he moves on from the hypothetical to the actual
  - 1 Corinthians 15:20 But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.
- The fact that Jesus rose from the dead implies all the converse of the consequences of if he had not risen
  - Our preaching and faith are not useless
  - We are true witnesses to the truth of His death and resurrection
  - Our faith is active and fruitful, and our sins HAVE been forgiven and removed from us
  - We have hope that those who have died in Christ are not lost, but are spending eternity in the glorious presence of God. A sure hope that we all have and look forward to
  - It is not us who have given our lives to Christ who are to be pitied, but those who invest in the temporal and / or that which is not true who are to be pitied.
- Our hope of eternal life lies in the resurrection of Christ
  - 1 Corinthians 15:21-23 For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. But each in turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him.
  - Death is not only overcome by the resurrection of Jesus, but he destroys death completely and removes from us all fear of death.
    - Hebrews 2:14-15 Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil — and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.
- Ultimately God is glorified through the resurrection of Jesus
  - 1 Corinthians 15:24-28 Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. <sup>25</sup> For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. <sup>26</sup> The last enemy to be destroyed is death. <sup>27</sup> For he “has put everything under his feet.” Now when it says that “everything” has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. <sup>28</sup> When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.
  - God will reign supremely and absolutely with no attempted rival – everything will be subjected to Him.

### 5) How shall we then live? (vs. 19 – 34)

- We live boldly for Christ without fear of repercussions to our witness
- We don't live for the pleasure and sin of this world as though Christ were not raised. We live lives dedicated to Him and his pleasure
- We are careful of the company we keep. We rather mingle with the people of God than those who will lead us astray from Christ.