

CLAIMING HIS RESURRECTION POWER



Gary Wilkerson February 29, 2016

To remind ourselves of the radical results of the resurrection, my wife Kelly and I have learned to repeat a certain phrase to each other: “Jesus paid it all.” He finished the work, He rose again, and He has blessed us with newness of life. We are to claim His resurrection power, putting it on like a suit of clothes. “When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: ‘Death has been swallowed up in victory’” (1 Corinthians 15:54, NIV).

Paul says boldly that without Christ’s resurrection there would be no reason at all to be a Christian. There are voices in the church that say it doesn’t matter whether there was a resurrection. Some have famously written, “I would be a Christian even if it were proved that there was no resurrection. Christianity has made me a better person and it has made the world better.” Some scholars hold that Jesus’ encounters after the crucifixion were just mythical stories meant to encourage the early church.

Paul rejects all of this in the strongest possible terms. He says that if Christ wasn’t resurrected, the consequences are dire: “If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised” (1 Corinthians 15:14-15, ESV).

Paul is saying, in effect, “If you don’t believe Christ was resurrected, then stop believing in God at all. Everyone stop preaching, evangelizing and doing good works in Jesus’ name. We’ll all be better off. You would do better to get wisdom from Dr. Phil or Oprah or a pop psychologist. They have more to say than someone whose every action is based on something that never happened.”

In short, the Christian faith is not some moral code to be kept. We don’t gather on Sundays just to get solace about eternity. Christ is either risen or He is not—and if He isn’t, then our sins were never forgiven.

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