

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RESURRECTION

Introduction:

1. We All Have An Innate Desire For Life:

- a. Self-preservation: The strongest human instinct is self-preservation. It is deeply rooted in our biology and psychology, driving us to seek safety, sustenance, and survival (Ecclesiastes 3:11; Matthew 6:25-26; Proverbs 6:6-8; Genesis 3:22-23; Psalms 91:9-11¹).
- b. Inevitability of death: Despite our efforts to preserve life, death remains a universal certainty (Psalms 89:48; Ecclesiastes 7:2; Hebrews 9:27). This inescapable reality often leads to existential anxiety, as our intrinsic desire to live clashes with the knowledge of our mortality.
- c. Cultural reflections: This desire to overcome death is reflected in various cultural narratives, from the quest for immortality in ancient myths² to modern advancements in medicine aimed at extending life³. Yet, the ultimate fate remains unchanged, intensifying the search for meaning beyond death.



2. Inquiring Of Life Beyond Death:

- a. Unseen reality: The question of what lies beyond death has puzzled humanity for millennia. No one has returned from the dead to provide tangible evidence of an afterlife, leaving us in a state of uncertainty and curiosity.
- b. Biblical accounts of resurrection: Jesus raised several individuals from the dead, such as Lazarus (John 11:38-44), the widow's son at Nain (Luke 7:11-17), and Jairus' daughter (Mark 5:35-43). These acts demonstrate His power over death and offer glimpses of life beyond the grave. However, none have brought back any tangible proof.
- c. Reliable information: Christianity provides reliable information through these biblical narratives, emphasizing Jesus' resurrection as the cornerstone of faith and the promise of eternal life (1 Corinthians 15:14-15).

3. The Christian Foundation:

- a. Central tenet: Christianity is fundamentally built on the belief in Jesus' resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:14-17; Romans 10:9; Acts 2:32; 4:33). This event is not a peripheral doctrine but the cornerstone of Christian faith and hope.
- b. Eyewitness testimony: The early Christian preachers boldly proclaimed that they were *eyewitnesses* to the resurrection of Jesus (1 John 1:1; Acts 1:22; 2 Peter 1:16). Their testimonies were consistent and compelling, even in the face of persecution and martyrdom (Acts 7:59-60; 12:1-2).
- c. Validity of the message: The apostle Paul articulates the critical importance of the resurrection: "And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not" (1 Corinthians 15:14-15). This admission underscores that the entire Christian message hinges on the historical reality of the resurrection. If it did not happen, then the faith is based on a lie, making it imperative to scrutinize the evidence and implications of this pivotal event.

¹ These scriptures collectively illustrate the biblical recognition of the human drive for self-preservation, safety, and the sustenance of life.

² The epic of Gilgamesh: One of the oldest known stories, this Mesopotamian epic tells of King Gilgamesh's quest for immortality after the death of his friend Enkidu. His journey ultimately ends in the realization that eternal life is beyond human reach, highlighting the universal human desire to escape death.

³ Cryonics: Some people choose to have their bodies cryogenically preserved after death, hoping that future medical advancements will allow them to be revived and cured of currently incurable diseases.

1. Three Reason Jesus Was Raised:

The resurrection of Jesus is not merely a historical event but a foundational truth with profound implications for our faith. The resurrection serves three pivotal purposes that affirm Jesus' divine authority, guarantee the future resurrection of all humanity, and establish Him as the righteous Judge. These purposes are central to understanding the significance of Christ's victory over death and His role in the ultimate plan of salvation and judgment.

- a. To rule with ultimate power (Acts 2:30-33a; Ephesians 1:19-21). Jesus had the credentials to attain the highest position (Acts 2:36; Philippians 2:9-11; Ephesians 19-22); He has all authority (Matthew 28:18).
- b. To guarantee that all will eventually be raised (1 Corinthians 15:20-22; Acts 24:15). God does not just tell us of resurrection; He demonstrates it through Jesus.
- c. To pronounce judgment: A day appointed to judge the world in righteousness (Acts 17:31). Jesus will be the Judge (Acts 10:42); He has authority as the lawgiver: His words will judge in last day (John 12:48).

Jesus' resurrection affirms His supreme authority as the rightful ruler, guarantees the future resurrection of all people, and establishes His role as the ultimate Judge of humanity. Each of these purposes underscores the profound impact of the resurrection on our faith and future, compelling us to recognize and respond to the authority of Christ in our lives. His resurrection is not just a promise of life beyond death but a call to live under His sovereign rule and prepare for the final judgment.

2. If There Is No Resurrection:

The absence of the resurrection would have profound implications on every aspect of existence. If Christ had not been raised, His authority would be non-existent, leaving the world in a state of chaos and meaningless fate. Furthermore, the finality of death would extinguish any hope for life beyond the grave, and the absence of resurrection would render moral principles irrelevant. This section explores the consequences of a world without resurrection, highlighting how such a scenario would lead to spiritual hopelessness, ethical ambiguity, and existential despair.

- a. If there is no resurrection, then the rule of Christ does not exist; all that occurs is governed by chaos and fate. Without His oversight, guidance, or help from heaven, our prayers become meaningless. We are left entirely to our own judgment, chance, and the decisions of others. While this might initially appear adventurous or romantic, it quickly becomes disastrous when things inevitably go wrong:
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 15:17-19: "And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." This passage indicates that if Christ is not raised, faith is meaningless; implying that there would be no divine oversight or hope beyond this life.
 - 2) Romans 8:34: "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." This verse shows that Christ's resurrection and His subsequent rule are central to His intercessory role. Without the resurrection, there would be no ongoing guidance or help from heaven.
 - 3) Hebrews 7:25: "Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." If Christ had not been raised, He would not be living to intercede, making prayers and divine assistance ineffective.
- b. If there is no resurrection, human existence ends at death. Our desire for continued life goes unanswered, leaving us with no hope for a better existence or the possibility of reuniting with loved ones. There is nothing beyond the grave:
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 15:32: "If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? Let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die." Paul suggests that without the resurrection, there is no hope beyond this life, and human existence ends at death.
 - 2) 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him." This passage contrasts the hope Christians have in the resurrection with the hopelessness of those who do not believe.

- 3) John 11:25-26: “Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Believest thou this?” Jesus’ promise of eternal life is contingent upon His resurrection. Without it, there would be no promise of life after death.
 - 4) 2 Timothy 1:10: “But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” This verse highlights that Christ's resurrection brings immortality to light. Without it, death remains the end.
 - 5) Revelation 21:4: “And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.” The hope of no more death and the promise of eternal life depend on the resurrection. Without it, these promises would be void.
- c. If there is no resurrection, there are no moral imperatives. As stated in 1 Corinthians 15:32, without the hope of resurrection, the guiding principles of right and wrong lose their foundation:
- 1) Christians are accused of disinterest in or neglect of this world’s affairs. Not true. It is the reality of continued existence and judgment for actions which drives Christians to do what is right (**Acts 24:15-16**).
 - 2) How do people act when there is impunity (**Ecclesiastes 8:11**)? When natural disasters break down enforcement (**Psalms 82:3-4**)? When judgment is bought with bribe or threat (**Proverbs 17:23**)? Do we really want to live in a world where no judgment is forthcoming (**Judges 17:6; 21:25**)?
 - 3) Theft, rape, assault, cheating, lying, fornication, murder - all these things are born of disrespect for authority. Many live by the creed: We must live for today; we should live for ourselves; we can live merely for pleasure. The fruit of such a creed is clearly evident (**Romans 1:28-32; Galatians 5:19-21**).

In a world where the resurrection does not exist, the rule of Christ, the hope for an afterlife, and the foundation for moral imperatives all crumble. Without the resurrection, we are left to navigate a universe governed by chaos, where death is the end and moral guidance becomes futile. However, the resurrection of Christ affirms His supreme authority, guarantees the promise of eternal life, and upholds the moral order, providing a compelling reason to live with faith and purpose. Embracing the reality of the resurrection fundamentally reshapes our understanding of life, death, and ethical living.

3. If There Is A Resurrection:

The resurrection fundamentally transforms our understanding of life and death. If there is a resurrection, death is not the final end but a transition from the physical to the spiritual realm. This belief reshapes how we approach life and prepares us for what lies beyond. It compels us to live with a forward-looking perspective, acting in accordance with our faith while recognizing the inherent value of every human life. By understanding the resurrection, we gain a deeper appreciation for our existence and are motivated to live with purpose and responsibility.

- a. Death becomes a transition rather than an end. It serves as the portal through which all must pass, moving from the material world to the spiritual realm. Jesus and His apostles viewed death in this manner, seeing it as a temporary separation from life rather than a permanent cessation (**Philippians 1:20-24; 3:7-11**).
- b. We must act upon that conviction and prepare for the eventuality. Maturity involves anticipating future realities and acting accordingly. The dilemma is that the certainty of the resurrection will not be realized until it is too late to change its outcome. However, faith based on evidence leads to preparation for it (**Hebrews 11:1; James 2:17-18**).
- c. Human life is of infinite value. We are not merely the highest form of evolutionary life, but beings of intrinsic worth. This perspective stands in contrast to views that may devalue human life in comparison to other forms of life (**Matthew 6:26; Matthew 10:29-31**).

Illustration: Ethical Dilemmas In Scientific Advancements

The pursuit of extending and improving human life often presents complex ethical dilemmas. For instance, many life-saving medical technologies and treatments have been developed through animal experimentation. This creates a significant ethical conflict: while these advancements have the potential to save and enhance human lives, they raise questions about the value and treatment of animal life.

Scientists and ethicists frequently debate the morality of such practices. On one hand, the benefits to human health are undeniable. On the other hand, the ethical implications challenge us to consider the value of all life and the means we use to achieve medical progress. This tension highlights the profound importance we place on human life and the moral responsibilities that come with scientific innovation.

Embracing the reality of the resurrection changes everything. Death becomes a mere passage rather than an end, urging us to prepare diligently for our future beyond this life. Our actions and choices take on eternal significance as we acknowledge the immense value of human life, which stands in stark contrast to views that may diminish our worth. The ethical dilemmas we face in the pursuit of life and progress reflect the profound respect for human life and the need for moral consideration. Ultimately, the hope of resurrection calls us to live with intention and integrity, grounded in the certainty of life beyond death.

Conclusion:

1. **The Impact Of Our Choices On The Resurrection:** Your place in the resurrection is assured, but its quality is determined by your choices and actions in this life. Jesus' emphasized that while resurrection is guaranteed, the outcome of that resurrection - whether to eternal life or judgment - is shaped by our conduct and decisions. This underscores the importance of living a life that aligns with God's will to ensure a favorable eternity.

“Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation” (John 5:28-29).

2. **The Finality Of Our Choices:** There are no second chances after death. The Bible clearly indicates that our opportunity to choose and act is limited to this life. Once we pass from this world, our eternal destiny is fixed based on our earthly decisions. This reality serves as a powerful motivator to live righteously and with purpose.

“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment” (Hebrews 9:27).

3. **The Urgency Of Living Righteously:** Understanding the seriousness of God's judgment compels us to live with integrity and to persuade others to do the same. The knowledge of the ultimate accountability we face before God should drive us to live in a manner that reflects our commitment to His commandments and to share this truth with others.

“Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences” (2 Corinthians 5:9-11).

Applications:

1. **Living With Eternal Perspective (Colossians 3:2):** Understand and embrace that death is not the end but a transition to a new realm. This belief should influence how we live our daily lives, encouraging us to make choices that align with our faith and values. By viewing life through the lens of eternity, we can prioritize what truly matters, invest in relationships, and act with integrity. Regularly reflect on the certainty of the resurrection to guide your decisions and actions.
2. **Preparing For The Future (1 Thessalonians 5:8):** Act upon the conviction of the resurrection by preparing for the future both spiritually and practically. This includes deepening your relationship with God through prayer, studying Scripture, and living out your faith actively. Since the resurrection and the final judgment are certain, it is crucial to be proactive in aligning your life with God's principles, making sure your actions reflect your beliefs.
3. **Valuing Human Life And Ethical Living (Matthew 10:29-31):** Recognize the intrinsic value of human life and act accordingly in all aspects of your life. This involves treating others with respect and dignity, advocating for justice, and making ethical choices that reflect the value of every person. In a world that often struggles with moral and ethical dilemmas, let the understanding of human worth, as affirmed by the resurrection, guide your decisions and actions.

Questions:

1. What is the significance of Jesus' resurrection in terms of His authority (**Acts 2:30-33a; Matthew 28:18**)?
2. How does the resurrection of Jesus guarantee the future resurrection of all humanity (**1 Corinthians 15:20-22; Acts 24:15**)?
3. What are the implications if there is no resurrection (**1 Corinthians 15:17-19; Romans 8:34**)?
4. How should the belief in resurrection influence our daily lives (**Colossians 3:2; Hebrews 11:1**)?
5. Why is understanding the value of human life important in the context of resurrection (**Matthew 10:29-31; Matthew 6:26**)?

Based on an outline by Jim Jonas

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