

First Importance 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

¹² Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? ¹³ But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. ¹⁴ And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. ¹⁵ 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. ¹⁶ For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. ¹⁷ And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. ¹⁸ Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. ¹⁹ If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.

²⁰ But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

David Garland:

“While graveyards remind one about the brevity of life, the resurrection ensures the brevity of death.”

³ For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures

¹⁵ Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, ² and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.

#1: The Gospel Is Christological (3-4)

³ For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures

#2: The Gospel Is Biblical (3-4)

³ For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures

#3: The Gospel Is Historical (3-8)

³ For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁵ and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. ⁶ Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. ⁷ Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. ⁸ Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.

#4: The Gospel Is Doctrinal (15:3)

³ For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures

#5: The Gospel Is Personal (15:1-11)

Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, ² and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.

³ For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures,

¹¹ Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

#6: The Gospel Is Practical (15:9-10; 12-58)

Effect #1: Humility (9-10)

9 For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.

John Newton said, "I am not what I ought to be, I am not what I want to be, I am not what I hope to be in another world; but still I am not what I once used to be, and by the grace of God I am what I am."

Effect #2: Hard Work (10; 58)

10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.

"Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain" (15:58).

Effect #3: Harmony (11)

¹¹ Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

Effect #4: Hope (12-58)

¹⁹ If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. ²⁰ But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

Joni Eareckson Tada

"I can't wait for the day when I'm given my brand new glorified body. I'm going to stand up, stretch, dance, kick, do a aerobics, comb my own hair, blow my own nose, and what is so poignant is that I'll finally be able to wipe my own tears, but I won't need to, because the Bible tells us in the book of Revelation that God will personally wipe away every tear."

"I can still hardly believe it. I, with shriveled, bent fingers, atrophied muscles, gnarled knees, and no feeling from the shoulders down, will one day have a new body, light, bright, and clothed in Righteousness-powerful and dazzling. Can you imagine the hope this gives someone who is spinal-cord injured like me? Or someone who has cerebral palsy, is brain-injured, or has multiple sclerosis? Imagine the hope this gives someone who is manic depressive. No other religion, no other philosophy promises new bodies, hearts, and minds. Only in the message of Christ do hurting people find such incredible hope!"