

Introduction: read 1 Corinthians 15:1-19

- Last year became evident that we were having foundation problems in our house; this was seen by what happened above
 - For us, it was something that was detected and could be fixed; in other cases, it is left undetected and becomes catastrophic
 - There are certain truths about Christianity that, if denied or tampered with, becomes catastrophic to the entire Christian faith; not everything we believe or practice is so (and we must learn to figure out the difference), but some are
 - This is the time of the year, and specifically the day that many within the larger scope of the Christian church, and specifically those who follow the liturgical church calendar, have remembered and celebrated the resurrection of Christ as the most important of the Christian celebrations

 - While we are *not bound by Scripture* to do so, and in one sense celebrate the resurrection of Christ every Lord's Day, I want to point out three reasons that this is an appropriate time for us to center in on this truth (knowing that some have wrestled with whether it is right as you seek to be faithful to Scripture as well as the division within even the Reformed Churches)
 - First, it is always legitimate to preach any truth of Scripture; (example of Christmas conversation w/GU)
 - Second, it is a particular reminder of the *historical* (time/space) reality of the resurrection; while we celebrate it every 1st day of the week, Jesus wasn't resurrected 52 times in one year; He was resurrected once (whatever the particular date may have been), and this reminds us of this reality
 - Third, it is a part of the culture in which we live and the tradition of the church; it is an opportunity to speak about that which many are thinking, and in an increasingly secularized culture a natural bridge to speaking about Christianity rather than leaving a vacuum
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The Foundation of the Gospel

- Transition from problems and directions regarding corporate worship to another problem within the church
- **vv.1-11** some of the most clear and definitive statements about “the Gospel”
 - o **v.1-2** - preached, received, stand (by which you are saved if you hold fast...unless in vain)
- **v. 3-4** - I delivered that which you received
 - o Christ died for our sins (according to the Scriptures)
 - o He was buried
 - o He rose again the third day (according to the Scriptures)
 - o **vv.5-11** - He was seen... (Cephas, the 12, 500, James, apostles...and me [first hand witness which drove him in ministry])

A Serious Error

- **v.12** – Some saying (within the church at Corinth) that there is no resurrection of people; this is tied in with the 2nd coming of Christ
- Likely and influence of philosophical thought that believed nature eternal and corrupt, and so death is the release of the soul/spirit from the prison house of the material body

The Consequences of an Idea

- If this is true, then certain things will follow – if there is no resurrection, then...
 - o Christ is not risen – there is an organic unity between the reality of Christ's resurrection of the dead
 - o Christian preaching is empty – it is a bunch of talk about nothing
 - o Christian faith is in empty – it is a bunch of belief about nothing
 - o The apostles are false witnesses (no option for “spiritualized” liberal Christianity) – charlatans and liars
 - o Christians are still in their sins – empty faith and hope do not change the reality of our sinfulness
 - o Christians who have died have perished – they have come to nothing, like animals
 - o Christians are of all people most pitiable (hope is only temporal, and in the end futile) – at least those who are humanists have a right perspective, and live in hope of a better world now

On the Contrary

- v.20 – But now Christ IS risen...
 - o There is a resurrection of the dead (both righteous and unrighteous)
 - o Christian preaching is vital – there is no message more essential
 - o Christian faith is rich – it is not belief of itself, but in the reality of the Gospel which is true
 - o The witness of the resurrection is a true witness (whether by the apostles or us)
 - o Christians are not in their sins – we have been forgiven, redeemed from the guilt of sin and the sentence of eternal death
 - o Christians who have died have not perished – they will be seen again, perfected and glorified
 - o Christians are of all people to be admired – regarded with pleasure, wonder, and approval

- We have the tremendous story to bring to the world

“If There is No Resurrection” – 1 Corinthians 15:12-19

- This is the kind of truth that should be the “engine” of our daily life; let’s keep secondary matters in their place and driven by this; If these things are true and foundational, then let us frequently remember them and find excitement in them
- These are the foundations of our faith; when particularly engaging those who are not Christians, let us be careful not get caught up with secondary matters
- Let us live in faith, hope and love in our risen Lord
- If you are not a Christian, do you see what is at stake? Do you see the simplicity of the Gospel? The reality of the 2nd coming of Christ. If He was resurrected, then He is coming again. This is the Christian’s hope. Is it yours?