

TITLE: **WHAT IF JESUS DIDN'T RISE?**

TEXT: I CORINTHIANS 15:12-20; 58

INTRODUCTION: (1) FOR MANY PEOPLE IN OUR WORLD TODAY, THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST FROM THE DEAD IS JUST A FOOTNOTE, SOMETHING TO BE CONSIDERED, SOMETHING EVEN FASCINATING AND TO OTHERS SOMETHING EVEN IMPORTANT.

*AND OF COURSE THERE ARE THOSE WHO **OUTRIGHT REJECT CHRIST'S RESURRECTION AND** WOULD EVEN GO AS FAR AS TO SAY IT IS A LIE, THAT IT NEVER HAPPENED, THAT THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST WAS A FABRICATION BY THE EARLY FOLLOWERS OF JESUS AND THAT LIE HAS BEEN PROPAGATED FOR 2,000 YEARS NOW.

** HOWEVER, FOR TRUE FOLLOWERS OF JESUS CHRIST, WE KNOW FROM THE EVIDENCE AND AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE, THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS IS A REALITY AND NOT JUST A FOOTNOTE OR SOMETHING FASCINATING, OR JUST NOTEWORTHY.

*** IN FACT **IT'S** AN ESSENTIAL CARDINAL DOCTRINE OF CHRISTIANITY, A MAIN ISSUE, A HIGH POINT TRUTH.

**** FOR EVERYTHING IN THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST, EVERYTHING CONNECTED TO OUR SALVATION, EVERY PROMISE THAT WE HOLD IN TIME AND ETERNITY IS LINKED AND CONNECTED TO THE RESURRECTION.

(2) AND PLEASE UNDERSTAND THIS: WHAT HAPPENED TO JESUS BEFORE HIS DEATH AS BAD AS IT WAS, IS NOT NEARLY AS IMPORTANT AS WHAT HAPPENED TO OUR LORD AFTER HIS DEATH.

* THAT HE WAS SCOURGED IS A FACT. THAT JESUS SUFFERED REJECTION, SCORN, INDIGNITY, MOCKERY, INSULT AND SLANDER AND THEN DIED ARE ALL FACTS.

** BUT WHAT IS FAR MORE IMPORTANT THAN WHAT HAPPENED BEFORE JESUS DIED IS WHAT HAPPENED AFTER.

*** AND POSSIBLY, THE WORLD MAY BE A LITTLE MORE OPEN TO LOOKING AT THE CROSS THAN THE EMPTY TOMB, MOST LIKELY BECAUSE THEY **DON'T** UNDERSTAND THE IMPLICATION.

**** BUT THE RESURRECTION HAS MASSIVE IMPLICATIONS, FOR EVERYBODY DIES. BUT ONLY ONE HAD THE POWER TO RAISE HIMSELF FROM THE DEAD.

(3) AND IT IS EVEN OBVIOUS TO OUR ENEMY, THE DEVIL, THAT THE RESURRECTION IS CRITICAL.

*** AND THAT'S WHY THE RESURRECTION OF**
JESUS CHRIST IS THE CORNERSTONE WITHOUT
WHICH THE BUILDING COLLAPSES. IT IS THE
LINCHPIN THAT HOLDS EVERYTHING TOGETHER.

** AND NO DOUBT, THAT IS WHY THE
RESURRECTION IS OFTEN MOCKED, DENIED,
SCORNED AND SOMETIMES JUST IGNORED, AS IF
IT WERE NOT OF SUCH IMPORTANCE TO
WARRANT A DEEP THOUGHTFUL
CONSIDERATION.

*** SO THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST IS
ABSOLUTELY CRITICAL.

**** **AND THAT'S WHY** THE MESSAGE OF
SCRIPTURE HAS ALWAYS BEEN A MESSAGE OF
RESURRECTION HOPE, A MESSAGE THAT
COMMUNICATES BECAUSE CHRIST CONQUERED
DEATH, DEATH IS NOT THE END FOR THOSE WHO
BELONG TO GOD.

***** FOR THE TRUE BELIEVER, DEATH HAS NEVER BEEN AN END, BUT RATHER A DOORWAY THAT LEADS TO AN ETERNITY WITH GOD IN HEAVEN.

**** **AND THAT'S WHY THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST IS THE SINGLE GREATEST EVENT IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD.**

(4) AND TO DENY THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST IS TO DESTROY THE ENTIRE BASIS OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH, AND WHAT WE DECLARE ABOUT CHRIST.

* FOR YOU SEE THE CHRISTIAN FAITH IS NOT BASED PRIMARILY ON THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS OR THE LIFE OF JESUS, OR THE COMPASSION OF JESUS OR THE MIRACLES OF JESUS OR THE DEATH OF JESUS.

** THE CHRISTIAN FAITH IS BASED ON ALL OF THESE, CULMINATING IN THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST FROM THE DEAD.

*** AND IF THERE IS NO RESURRECTION, ALL THESE OTHER FACTORS ARE USELESS, THEY ARE VALUELESS, OF NO WORTH!! I **DON'T HAVE AN** EASTER MESSAGE AND WE DO NOT HAVE ANYTHING TO CELEBRATE TODAY.

(5) WELL THE APOSTLE PAUL REALIZED THIS AND IS INSPIRED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT TO WRITE I CORINTHIANS CHAPTER 15 WHICH IS THE LONGEST CHAPTER IN THIS BOOK OF ERRORS CORRECTED.

* I CORINTHIANS 15 IS DEVOTED TO DEALING WITH THE ERROR THAT WAS SAYING THAT THERE IS NO RESURRECTION.

** AND THIS CHAPTER WAS WRITTEN TO TRY AND PROVE TO THE CHRISTIAN THAT BECAUSE JESUS LITERALLY ROSE FROM THE DEAD, THEY TOO WOULD LITERALLY, PHYSICALLY, BODILY AND PERSONALLY RISE FROM THE DEAD.

- **FOR YOU SEE THEY WEREN'T DENYING THAT** CHRIST AROSE FROM THE DEAD. WHAT THEY WERE DENYING WAS THE BODILY RESURRECTION OF THE SAINTS. THIS IS WHERE THEY HAD THEIR HANG UP.

(6) AND WHAT HAD HAPPENED WAS THAT THE CORINTHIANS ALLOWED THEMSELVES TO BE VICTIMIZED BY THE PHILOSOPHY OF THEIR DAY AND PROBABLY FROM TWO SPECIFIC CIRCLES.

* NUMBER 1 FROM GREEK PHILOSOPHY AND GREEK PHILOSOPHY TAUGHT A CONCEPT CALLED DUALISM, A CONCEPT GENERALLY ATTRIBUTED TO PLATO.

** AND PHILOSOPHICAL DUALISM CONSIDERED EVERYTHING SPIRITUAL TO BE INTRINSICALLY GOOD AND EVERYTHING PHYSICAL TO BE INTRINSICALLY EVIL. AND TO ANYONE HOLDING THAT VIEW THE IDEA OF A RESURRECTED BODY WAS DISGUSTING.

*** THE BODY AND FLESH WERE BAD AND THE SOUL AND THE SPIRITUAL WERE GOOD.

**** AND FOR THEM THE VERY REASON FOR GOING TO AN AFTERLIFE WAS TO ESCAPE ALL THINGS PHYSICAL. THEY CONSIDERED THE BODY A TOMB, OR A CORPSE, TO WHICH, IN THIS LIFE, THEIR SOULS WERE SHACKLED.

- AND FOR THOSE GREEKS, THEIR BODIES WERE THE LAST THING THEY WOULD WANT TO TAKE ALONG TO THE NEXT LIFE. THEY BELIEVED IN THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL BUT STRONGLY OPPOSED THE IDEA OF A RESURRECTION OF THE BODY. SO THIS CARRIED OVER INTO THE CHURCH AND THIS IS THE FIRST AREA OF INFLUENCE.

(8) NOW PROBABLY THE SECOND AREA OF INFLUENCE ALONG THESE LINES WAS A JEWISH SECT CALLED THE SADDUCEES. AND THEY DID NOT BELIEVE IN BODILY RESURRECTION.

* AND ACCORDING TO ACTS 23:8, THE SADDUCEES DID NOT BELIEVE IN ANGELS OR THE RESURRECTION. SO THEY TOO MAY HAVE INFLUENCED THE CORINTHIANS IN NOT BELIEVING IN THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY.

(8) SO IN I CORINTHIANS 15 PAUL TRIES TO CORRECT THEIR WRONG DOCTRINE ON THE RESURRECTION.

* AND BY THE WAY, LET ME ADD AN IMPORTANT FOOTNOTE HERE. I CORINTHIANS IS THE FIRST WRITTEN ACCOUNT OF THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST EVER RECORDED IN SCRIPTURE. I CORINTHIANS WAS WRITTEN BEFORE ANY OF THE GOSPELS, THAT IS IF YOU BELIEVE IN THE LATER DATE FOR MATTHEW WHICH MANY CONSERVATIVE SCHOLARS HOLD TO. SO WE HAVE A FIRST HERE.

** NOW WITH THAT IN MIND, WE ARE GOING TO STUDY THROUGH I CORINTHIANS 15:12-20 AND CLOSE WITH I CORINTHIANS 15:58.

***** AND I'VE TITLED OUR STUDY TODAY, WHAT IF JESUS DIDN'T RISE, QUESTION MARK.**

****** AND UNDER THAT THEME WE'LL LOOK AT 3** MAIN POINTS. NO. 1 THE CHALLENGE OF PAUL TO SOME OF THE CORINTHIANS IN SAYING THERE IS NO RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD IN V. 12.

********* NO. 2 THE CONSEQUENCES OF NO RESURRECTION IN VV. 13-19, AND PAUL WILL TALK ABOUT THEOLOGICAL CONSEQUENCES IN VV. 13-15 AND PERSONAL CONSEQUENCES IN VV. 16-19.

(9) AND THEN NO. 3 THE CURE FOR ALL OF THE DEBATE AND QUESTIONS, THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST, V. 20.

*** AND THEN I'LL CONCLUDE WITH V. 58 AS A** CHALLENGE IN MY WRAP UP.

** AND WITH THAT OUTLINE AS OUR PATH TO FOLLOW, LOOK AT V. 12 PLEASE OF I CORINTHIANS 15 WHERE **WE'LL SEE OUR FIRST POINT**, THE CHALLENGE BY PAUL.

I. THE CHALLENGE, (READ V. 12)

A. NOW IN V. 12, PAUL IS CHALLENGING THE CORINTHIANS BY POINTING OUT AN INCONSISTENCY IN THEIR BELIEFS.

* AND IT IS THIS: IF THEY TRULY BELIEVED WHAT HE HAD PREACHED TO THEM, THAT CHRIST HAD BEEN RAISED FROM THE DEAD, HOW COULD SOME SAY THAT THERE WAS NO SUCH THING AS RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD?

**** AND PAUL'S CHALLENGE IS LOGIC.**

*** FOR PAUL REMINDED THEM THAT THEY RECEIVED, STOOD ON, AND WERE BEING SAVED BY THE GOSPEL, WHICH IS THE GOOD NEWS OF THE DEATH, BURIAL AND RESURRECTION OF CHRIST, AND PAUL GAVE ALL THE WITNESSES AND EVIDENCES OF PEOPLE WHO SAW THE RISEN CHRIST IN I CORINTHIANS 15:1-10. (QUOTE TIME PERMITTING)

1. NOW WITH ALL OF THAT EVIDENCE IN I CORINTHIANS 15:1-10 AND THE CORINTHIAN'S BELIEF IN THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST, **PAUL'S CHALLENGE IN LOGIC IS, THEN HOW** COULD THEY ACCEPT THE PHILOSOPHICAL TEACHING THAT THERE WAS NO SUCH THING AS BODILY RESURRECTION?

* FOR YOU SEE THE TWO RESURRECTIONS, **CHRIST'S AND THE BELIEVER'S, STAND OR FALL** TOGETHER, THERE COULD NOT BE ONE WITHOUT THE OTHER, YOU CANNOT SEPARATE THE TWO.

** IF CHRIST AROSE (AND THEY BELIEVED THAT) THEN ONE DAY THEY WILL RISE IS HIS LOGIC AND ARGUMENT AND CHALLENGE.

*** THE RESURRECTION FACTOR OF CHRIST IS THE KEY TO OUR RESURRECTION AS FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST. IT IS THE KEY ELEMENT OR COMPONENT, THE SUBSTANCE AND TRUTH THAT LEADS TO THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD.

**** AND IN VV. 13-19 THE APOSTLE PAUL DEMONSTRATES THAT RESURRECTION IS NOT ONLY POSSIBLE, BUT ESSENTIAL TO THE FAITH AND WHAT CONSEQUENCES THERE WOULD BE IF THERE WERE NO RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD FOR PEOPLE.

2. AND THAT WILL BE OUR SEGUE INTO OUR 2'D POINT TODAY, THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE BELIEF THAT THERE IS NO RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD, LOOK AT V. 13 PLEASE AS WE WILL START TO LOOK AT THESE CONSEQUENCES - BOTH THEOLOGICAL AND PERSONAL.

II. THE CONSEQUENCES, (READ V. 13)

A. NOW PAUL IS SIMPLY SAYING HERE THAT TO DENY THAT BELIEVERS WHO HAVE DIED WILL RISE FROM THE DEAD IS TO DENY THAT JESUS AROSE FROM THE DEAD.

*** IN OTHER WORDS: IF DEAD MEN DON'T RISE, GUESS WHAT? CHRIST DIDN'T RISE.**

**** AND AS I'VE ALREADY MADE THE POINT IN** VV. 1-10 OF THIS CHAPTER, WE SEE THAT THE CORINTHIANS ALREADY BELIEVED THAT CHRIST ROSE FROM THE DEAD.

*** AND WITHOUT THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST, THE GOOD NEWS BECOMES BAD NEWS AND THEY WERE NOT SAVED.

**** AND AS A MATTER OF FACT A PERSON HAS TO BELIEVE IN THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST TO BE SAVED, FOR SALVATION IS PREDICATED ON BELIEF IN THE RESURRECTION, ROMANS 10:9.

***** SO A PART OF TRULY BELIEVING IN CHRIST IS TO BELIEVE THAT HE AROSE FROM THE DEAD.

B. AND IN V. 13 PAUL'S POINT IS THIS: IF YOU PHILOSOPHERS AT CORINTH SAY DEAD MEN DON'T RISE, THEN JESUS DIDN'T RISE AND I DON'T THINK YOU WANT TO SAY THAT! FOR YOU SEE THEY DIDN'T REALIZE THE RAMIFICATIONS. HE'S USING PURE LOGIC ON THEM.

* SO THE FIRST DEVASTATING IMPACT OF NOT BELIEVING IN BODILY RESURRECTION IS THAT **CHRIST DIDN'T RISE. NOW THE 2'D** CONSEQUENCE IS FOUND IN V. 14A, AND IT IS THAT ALL GOSPEL PREACHING IS USELESS. LOOK AT V. 14A.

C. READ V. 14A.

1. NOW FOLKS IF CHRIST DIDN'T RISE FROM THE DEAD THEN ALL GOSPEL PREACHING IS EMPTY, USELESS JABBER. IT'S JUST A BUNCH OF HOT AIR. A WASTE OF TIME.

* AND UNFORTUNATELY THERE ARE THOSE IN POST MODERN CHURCHES, IN POST MODERNITY THAT BELIEVE THAT PREACHING IS OUTDATED, THAT IS IRRELEVANT. **THEY DON'T TALK ABOUT** PREACHING BUT HAVING A CONVERSATION AND DIALOGUE. SO PREACHING IS VAIN AND WITHOUT THE RESURRECTION PREACHING IS **VAIN IS PAUL'S POINT.**

** I MEAN EVERY MESSAGE YOU HAVE EVER HEARD OR READ, ALL THE CHRISTIAN BOOKS **YOU HAVE READ, ALL THE CD'S AND RADIO** BROADCASTS YOU HAVE EVER LISTENED TO, OR PODCASTS THAT YOU HAVE WATCHED, WOULD HAVE BEEN A TOTAL WASTE OF TIME HAD JESUS NOT RISEN FROM THE DEAD.

*** AND DO YOU REALIZE THAT IF CHRIST IS DEAD THAT THE GUTS HAVE BEEN TORN OUT OF THE APOSTLES MESSAGE, FOR YOU SEE THE THEME OF THEIR PREACHING WAS THE RESURRECTION.

**** IN FACT, THE RESURRECTION IS MENTIONED 104 TIMES IN THE N.T. AND IT IS THE MOST PROFOUND AND PROMINENT POINT IN ALL THE APOSTOLIC PREACHING IN THE BOOK OF ACTS.

***** AND BELOVED, UNLESS OUR LORD CONQUERED SIN AND DEATH BY HIS RESURRECTION, THERE IS NO GOSPEL TO PROCLAIM WHICH LEADS TO ANOTHER CONSEQUENCE FOUND IN V. 14B AND THAT IS OUR FAITH IS IN VAIN. LOOK AT V. 14B.

D. READ V. 14B.

1. NOW JUST AS NO RESURRECTION WOULD MAKE PREACHING CHRIST MEANINGLESS, IT WOULD ALSO MAKE FAITH IN HIM WORTHLESS.

* FAITH IN SUCH A GOSPEL WOULD BE VAIN, AND THE WORD VAIN RIGHT HERE LITERALLY MEANS: EMPTY, FRUITLESS, VOID OF EFFECT, TO NO PURPOSE.

** AND DO YOU REALIZE THAT IF THERE WERE NO RESURRECTION, THE HALL OF FAME IN HEBREWS 11 WOULD BE THE HALL OF SHAME, THE HALL OF THE FOOLISH.

*** I MEAN ABEL WHO BELIEVED GOD WOULD BE A FOOL, NOAH WOULD HAVE BEEN A **FOOL'S** FOOL WASTING 120 YEARS BUILDING A DUMB BOAT IN A MONUMENTAL ACT OF WORTHLESS FAITH.

**** AND ALL OF THOSE PEOPLE WHO, THROUGH FAITH, HELD ON TO GOD WERE STUPID IF THE **DEAD DON'T RISE, I MEAN ALL THE MARTYRS** DIED FOR NOTHING AND ALL BELIEVERS BELIEVED FOR NOTHING. OUR FAITH WOULD BE IN VAIN.

2. NOW LET ME PAUSE HERE FOR A MOMENT. DO YOU SEE THE ARGUMENT THAT PAUL IS BUILDING ON HERE? HE IS TRYING TO SHOW THE CORINTHIANS HOW ILLOGICAL IT IS NOT TO BELIEVE IN THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD.

* FOR IF THERE IS NO RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD, CHRIST DID NOT RISE, OUR PREACHING IS WORTHLESS AND YOUR FAITH IS WORTHLESS. HE IS TRYING TO SHOW THEM HOW ABSURD THEIR THINKING WAS.

** BELOVED, R. C. SPROUL SAID THIS ABOUT THE RESURRECTION IN A SERMON I HEARD A WHILE BACK AT A **LIGONIER CONFERENCE**. **"THE RESURRECTION IS GOD'S APOLOGIA, GOD'S APOLOGETIC, GOD'S VALIDATION OF HIS ACCEPTANCE OF CHRIST'S ATONEMENT."**

*** AND WHAT SPROUL WAS SAYING IS IT IS **GOD'S ACCEPTANCE AND CONFIRMATION** AND PROOF AND DEFENSE THAT **CHRIST'S DEATH** WAS EFFICACIOUS OR EFFICIENT OR SUCCESSFUL TO TAKE AWAY THE SINS OF PEOPLE HE WILL SAVE BY SOVEREIGN GRACE AND GOD IS SATISFIED.

**** SO AGAIN, THE RESURRECTION IS ESSENTIAL **IS PAUL'S ARGUMENT.** AND MOVING ON, THE ARGUMENT CONTINUES IN V. 15. LOOK AT V. 15 PLEASE.

E. READ V. 15.

1. NOW IF THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD, THEN EVERY PERSON WHO CLAIMED TO HAVE WITNESSED THE RISEN CHRIST AND EVERY PERSON WHO PREACHED THE RISEN CHRIST WAS A LIAR, INCLUDING PAUL AND THE OTHER APOSTLES (FOR PAUL SAYS WE TWICE IN V. 15).

*** PAUL IS SAYING WE'RE A BUNCH OF FALSE** PROPHETS, A BUNCH OF DECEIVERS WHO KNOWINGLY ARE LEADING PEOPLE ASTRAY.

** AND THAT MEANS THAT NOT ONLY PAUL AND THE OTHER APOSTLES WERE FALSE PROPHETS, BUT ALSO MEN LIKE SPURGEON, EDWARDS, LUTHER, AND WHITFIELD WERE A BUNCH OF PHONIES AND FRAUDS GIVING FALSE TESTIMONY ABOUT GOD.

*** IN FACT, ALL WITNESSES AND PREACHERS WOULD BE LIARS.

**** AND FOLKS TO PREACH THE WORD OF GOD IS A GREAT RESPONSIBILITY AND ANYONE WHO MISHANDLES IT IS IN LINE FOR GREAT JUDGMENT. AND WHAT A CRUEL AND SCARY THING IT WOULD BE TO GET BEHIND A PULPIT OR ANYWHERE AND KNOWINGLY LIE ABOUT THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

2. AND PAUL IS LIT. SAYING WE WOULD BE A BUNCH OF LIARS IF THE DEAD RISE NOT, AND THAT WOULD BE RIDICULOUS. YOU SAY WHY?

* BECAUSE 11 OF THE 12 APOSTLES WERE MARTYRED AND PEOPLE DO NOT DIE TO **PRESERVE A LIE, PAUL DIED A MARTYR'S DEATH,** TO HIM CHRISTIANITY WAS SOMETHING TO LIVE FOR AND SOMETHING TO DIE FOR, CHRISTIANITY WAS REAL AND WORTH DYING FOR, WORTH GETTING HIS HEAD CUT OFF FOR.

** NOW MOVING ON, PAUL RE-EMPHASIZES, HE REITERATES A POINT IN HIS ARGUMENT THAT HE MADE IN V. 13. LOOK AT V. 16 PLEASE.

F. READ V. 16.

1. NOW IN V. 16 PAUL RESTATES THE MAJOR PREMISE OF HIS ARGUMENT, **"FOR IF THE DEAD RISE NOT, THEN IS NOT CHRIST RAISED."**

* AND THIS SUMS UP WHAT HE JUST SAID AND ALSO INTRODUCES WHAT HE IS ABOUT TO SAY, HE IS GOING TO TALK ABOUT 3 LAST CONSEQUENCES THAT ARE VERY PERSONAL, 3 THINGS THAT WILL ACTUALLY HAPPEN TO US IF THERE IS NO RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD, AND LOOK AT V. 17 PLEASE **WHERE WE'LL SEE OUR** NEXT TWO ARGUMENTS AND THAT IS OUR FAITH IS WORTHLESS AND ALL PEOPLE WOULD STILL BE IN THEIR SINS.

G. READ V. 17.

1. NOW V. 17A REPEATS AND AFFIRMS WHAT WAS SAID IN V. 14B THAT OUR FAITH IS VAIN IF CHRIST DID NOT RISE FROM THE DEAD, **IT'S** WORTHLESS. AND THE EMPHASIS OF REPETITION CEMENTS, CRYSTALLIZES HIS POINT.

* AND THEN IN V. 17B, WITHOUT THE **RESURRECTION CHRIST'S CRUCIFIXION CAN'T** TAKE AWAY OUR SIN, FOR IF HE **DIDN'T** CONQUER DEATH, SIN WON. IT KILLED AND HELD HIM DEAD. SO THERE ARE THE BONES OF JESUS SOMEWHERE AND THERE IS NO VICTORY OVER SIN, DEATH AND HELL.

** **AND WITHOUT THE RESURRECTION THERE'S** NO RECONCILIATION, NO JUSTIFICATION, NO REDEMPTION, NO REGENERATION, NO SALVATION, NO LIFE, EVERY BELIEVER IS STILL DEAD IN TRESPASSES AND SINS.

*** AND ACCORDING TO ROMANS 6:23 THE WAGES OF SINS IS WHAT? DEATH. AND IF **CHRIST DIDN'T PAY THE PRICE THEN WE'LL** HAVE TO PAY FOR OUR OWN SIN AND BECAUSE OF THAT WE WOULD BE FOREVER DAMNED!!

2. AND CAN YOU IMAGINE THE GUILT ALL OF US **WOULD HAVE TO BEAR. WE'D HAVE NO HOPE** TODAY!! (CAN YOU IMAGINE HAVING TO CARRY THAT LOAD AROUND? THE LOAD OF SIN)

*** NOW FOLKS LET ME STOP PAUL'S ARGUMENT** HERE FOR A MOMENT SO WE CAN GO BACK TO HOPE. (FROM DESPAIR TO HOPE)

3. CHRIST DID RISE FROM THE DEAD AND BECAUSE OF THAT PEOPLE CAN BE FORGIVEN.

*** AND NO ONE IS TOO BAD TO BE SAVED, WE'RE ALL SINNERS AND STAND GUILTY BEFORE A HOLY GOD. AND IF YOU DON'T KNOW CHRIST THIS MORNING, THIS IS YOUR ONLY HOPE, CHRIST'S DEATH AND RESURRECTION IS OUR HOPE AND OUR SALVATION, ROMANS 4:25. (QUOTE IT)**

**** AND THE WORD DELIVERED IN ROMANS 4:25 IS A JUDICIAL TERM, REFERRING TO THE COMMITMENT OF A CRIMINAL TO HIS PUNISHMENT.**

***** AND JESUS WAS DELIVERED UP TO SERVE THE SENTENCE OF DEATH THAT OUR SINS DESERVE AND HE WAS RAISED UP TO PROVIDE THE JUSTIFICATION BEFORE GOD THAT WE COULD NOT ATTAIN IN OUR OWN POWER OR MERIT - SO THAT WE WOULD BE DECLARED RIGHTEOUS.**

**** AND I WONDER THIS MORNING, IF YOU **DON'T KNOW CHRIST, AREN'T YOU TIRED OF BEARING YOUR OWN SIN? AREN'T YOU TIRED OF BEARING THE GUILT OF SIN? AREN'T YOU TIRED OF HAVING NO PEACE AND REAL PURPOSE?**

***** IF SO LET ME CALL YOU TO TRULY REPENT OF YOUR SINS AND BELIEVE ON CHRIST TODAY **SO YOU WON'T REMAIN IN YOUR SINS, THAT YOU CAN BE FORGIVEN.** NOW QUICKLY LET ME **GIVE YOU PAUL'S LAST TWO ARGUMENTS IN VV. 18&19.** AND LOOK AT V. 18 FIRST PLEASE.

H. READ V. 18.

1. NOW IN V. 18 PAUL POINTS OUT IF THERE IS NO RESURRECTION, THEN THOSE ALSO WHO HAVE DIED IN CHRIST ARE LIT. IN TORMENT IN HELL, **THEY'VE PERISHED IN THAT SENSE.**

* AND WHAT A TERRIBLE THOUGHT!! I MEAN THIS IS EXTREME. FOR IF THERE IS NO RESURRECTION THEN EVERY LOVED ONE OF OURS WHO HAS GONE ON BEFORE US, WHO KNEW CHRIST IS BURNING IN HELL. THIS IS THE CONTEXT.

** SO THE ALTERNATIVE TO LIFE AFTER DEATH IS GRIM.

*** AND I THINK THIS REALLY GETS THEIR ATTENTION. FOR IF YOU KNOW THE PAIN OF LOSING A LOVED ONE, AND MOST OF YOU DO, AND THEN NEVER HAVING ANY HOPE OF SEEING THEM AGAIN IS A BURDEN THAT MOST OF US **COULD NOT BEAR!! THAT'S OUR COMFORT!!**
I THESSALONIANS 4:18.

**** BUT WE HAVE NO COMFORT IF THERE IS NO RESURRECTION. WHAT A TERRIBLE THING.

- AND MOVING ON PAUL GIVES HIS LAST CONSEQUENCE IN V. 19 AND IT IS CHRISTIANS **ARE THE WORLD'S MOST PITIFUL PEOPLE IF THE DEAD DON'T RISE. LOOK AT V. 19 PLEASE.**

I. READ V. 19.

1. NOW V. 19 MEANS THIS: IF IN THIS LIFE WE HAVE PUT OUR TRUST TOTALLY IN CHRIST, AND **IF WHAT WE'VE HOPED ABOUT CHRIST ISN'T TRUE, THEN WE'RE A PITIFUL MISERABLE BUNCH.**

* FOR WE ARE LEFT WITH NOTHING, THE END IS NAUSEA. AND FOR THE ENEMIES OF CHRIST LOOKING AT US, **THEY SHOULDN'T** BE MAD AT US, BUT PITY US!

**** I MEAN WE'VE WASTED OUR LIVES SO LET'S** EAT DRINK AND BE MERRY FOR THIS IS IT, AND TOMORROW WE DIE.

2. AND BELOVED TO HAVE HOPED IN CHRIST IN THIS LIFE, ONLY WOULD BE TO TEACH, PREACH, SUFFER, SACRIFICE AND WORK ENTIRELY FOR NOTHING, FOR ZIP, NADA.

*** BUT AREN'T YOU GLAD THAT PAUL DOESN'T STOP RIGHT THERE? THAT V. 19 DOESN'T END IT ALL AND WE ALL GO HOME WITHOUT HOPE?**

**** FOR LOOK AT V. 20A PLEASE WHERE WE'LL QUICKLY SEE OUR LAST POINT TODAY, THE CURE FOR ALL OF THIS.**

III. THE CURE, (READ V. 20)

1. NOW V. 20 BEGINS WITH TWO BIG WORDS, BUT NOW CHRIST HAS BEEN RAISED FROM THE DEAD. WHAT BLESSED WORDS, WHAT HOPE KINDLING WORDS, WORDS OF VICTORY, WORDS OF COMFORT.

* BELOVED WE GO FROM WHAT IF, TO BUT NOW, AND ALL THE LATTER IS UNTRUE, CHRIST DID RISE FROM THE DEAD AND OUR FAITH IS NOT IN VAIN. HALLELUJAH CHRIST AROSE.

** SO WE ARE NOT TO BE PITIED, WE ARE NOT IN OUR SINS, OUR LOVED ONES IN CHRIST ARE NOT IN HELL, AND OUR PREACHING IS NOT USELESS, IT IS PROFITABLE, WE ARE A PEOPLE TO BE ENVIED. WHY? BECAUSE JESUS CHRIST ROSE VICTORIOUSLY FROM THE DEAD – A FACT!

AND AS I WRAP THINGS UP TODAY, I WANT TO GO DOWN TO V. 58 IN APPLICATION.

* READ V. 58.

** NOW HERE WE HAVE THE GREAT THEREFORE OF THIS CHAPTER. THEREFORE BECAUSE CHRIST ROSE FROM THE DEAD, THEREFORE ONE DAY WE WILL RISE FROM THE DEAD.

*** AND BECAUSE OF THAT, THEREFORE, SO THEN BE STEAD FAST AND IMMOVABLE.

*** **DON'T BE MOVED AWAY FROM GOD'S WILL.**

1. FOR WITHIN HIS WILL WE ARE ALWAYS ABOUNDING IN HIS WORK, FOR HIS WORK DONE FOR HIM WILL NEVER BE IN VAIN.

* GORDON CLARK GIVES A HELPFUL **PARAPHRASE OF THIS VERSE: "THEREFORE WE SHOULD MORTIFY EMOTION, BE STEADFAST, UNCHANGEABLE, NOT ERRATIC AND SCATTERBRAINED, EASILY DISCOURAGED, AND SHOULD MULTIPLY OUR GOOD WORKS IN THE KNOWLEDGE THAT THE LORD WILL MAKE THEM PROFITABLE."**

** AND BELOVED WHEN OUR HOPE IS IN THE RESURRECTED CHRIST, OUR RESURRECTION IS CERTAIN, SO LIVE IN A WAY THAT ALL YOU DO IS FOR HIM.

*** ALWAYS ABOUNDING IN HIS WORK AS A PRIORITY, LIVING FOR THE ETERNAL, FOR OUR RESURRECTION WILL COME, THIS LIFE IS TEMPORAL, AND OUR WORK IS NEVER IN VAIN FOR THE LORD.

**** BELOVED, BECAUSE JESUS ROSE FROM THE DEAD, WE WILL RISE FROM THE DEAD AND RECEIVE AN INCORRUPTIBLE BODY JUST LIKE JESUS CHRIST.

(2) THEREFORE AS TRUE FOLLOWERS OF JESUS, WORK FOR OUR RISEN LORD, SERVE OUR RISEN LORD, WORSHIP OUR RISEN LORD, FOR OUR LABOR, SERVICE AND WORSHIP ARE NEVER IN VAIN FOR OUR LORD. JESUS IS ALIVE, MAY WE **WORK FOR HIM BECAUSE HE LIVES. (LET'S PRAY)**