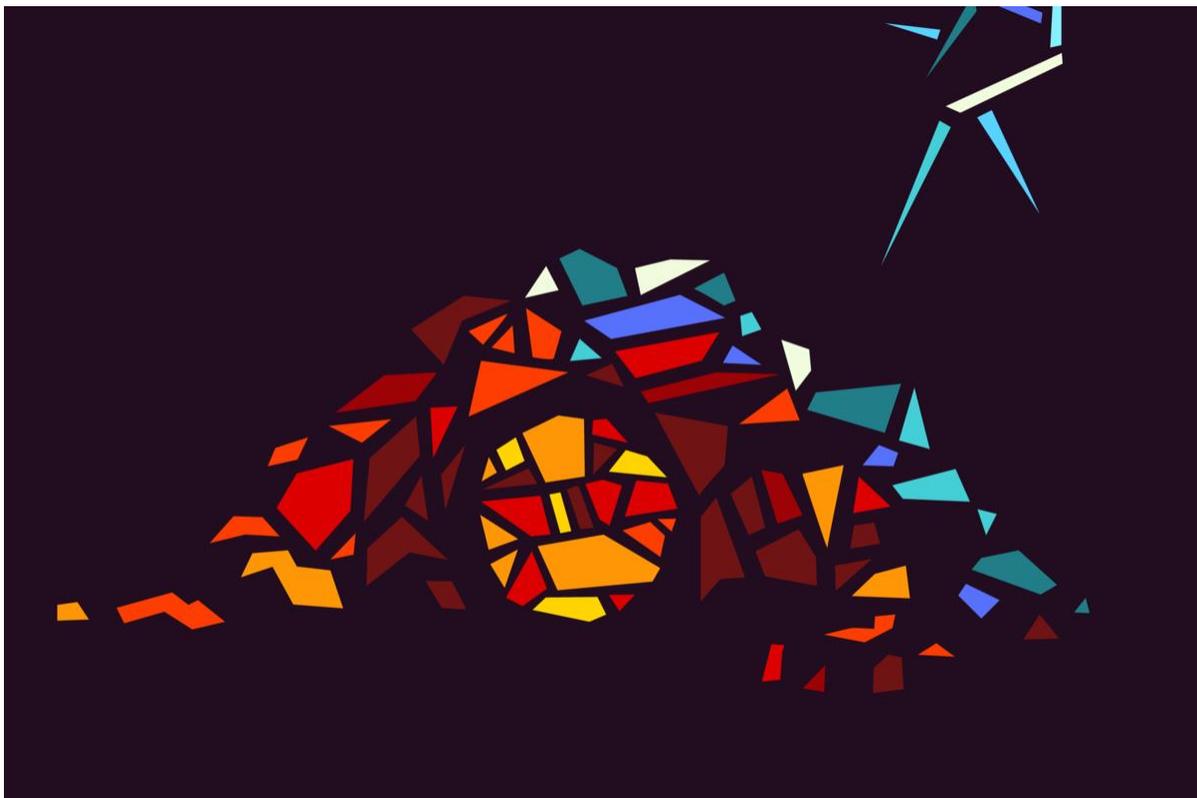




# The Bodily Resurrection

Key Doctrines for Starting and Finishing Strong  
LESSON 7



*"The resurrection of Christ is the commencement of His reign."*  
JOHN CALVIN

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In this lesson, we will study two essential subjects:

- **What is the importance of the resurrection of Christ?**
- **What are the Different Aspects of Salvation?**

## Are the following statements true or false? (circle one)

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- A person can be saved without believing in the bodily resurrection of Christ. T F
- Only Christianity proclaims a risen Savior for its founder. T F

Be on the lookout for the answers to these questions as we study the Word of God.

## The Importance of the Bodily Resurrection of Christ

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All but four of the major world religions are based on mere philosophical propositions. Of the four that are based on personalities, rather than a philosophical system, only Christianity claims an empty tomb for its founder. Read what some scholars have said in regards to the importance of the resurrection:

- Wilbur Smith: "The original accounts of Buddha never ascribe to him any such things as resurrection; in fact, in the earliest accounts of his death, namely, the Mahaparinibbana Sutta, we read that when Buddha died it was 'with that utter passing away in which nothing whatever remains behind.'"
- Professor Childers: "Mohammed died June 8, 632 A.D., at the age of sixty-one, at Medina, where his tomb is annually visited by thousands of devout Mohammedans. All the millions and millions of Jews, Buddhists, and Mohammedans agree that their founders have never come up out of the dust of the earth in resurrection."
- Theodosius Harnack: "Christianity stands or falls with the resurrection."
- H.P. Liddon: "Faith in the resurrection is the very keystone of the arch of the Christian faith, and, when it is removed, all must inevitably crumble into ruin."
- Josh McDowell: "A student at the University of Uruguay said to me, 'Professor McDowell, why can't you refute Christianity?' I answered, 'For a very simple reason, I am not able to explain away an event in history...the resurrection of Jesus Christ.'"

ILLUSTRATED: Any attempt to illustrate the bodily resurrection of Christ would be an exercise in futility as there is NO comparison. However, in trying to understand the importance of not only the bodily resurrection of Christ—but indeed His very birth, life, and ministry—one only needs to consider His impact on the entire dating system itself. This event (the resurrection) so etched the significance of Christ into the psyche of all mankind that He has become the dividing point of history itself: B.C. (Before Christ) and A.D. (*anno domini*; in the year of our Lord).

## The Resurrection Was Predicted

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The bodily resurrection was not an afterthought by the Lord. It was prophesied in the Old Testament and proclaimed by Jesus in the New.

- A. According to Isaiah 53:10, what will happen after the Messiah rendered Himself as a guilt offering?

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- B. What did God promise concerning His Holy One in Psalm 16:10?

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- C. No fewer than 20 times during the ministry of Christ do we see that He predicted His own death as well as His resurrection (*Matthew 16:21; 17:9, 22-23; 20:18-19; 26:32*).

- D. According to Romans 1:1-4, what message did the resurrection give?

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- E. What does the resurrection of Christ say to the world, according to Acts 17:30-31?

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Wilbur M. Smith—"If our Lord said frequently, with great definiteness and detail, that after He went up to Jerusalem He would be put to death, but on the third day He would rise again from the grave, and this prediction came to pass, then it has always seemed to me that everything else that our Lord ever said must also be true."

## Arguments Against the Resurrection of Christ

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- **Stolen Body Theory:** This theory states that Christ was not resurrected, but rather, His body was stolen to make it look like He was resurrected. However, the Roman Seal (*Matt.27:66*) and the guard (*Matt.27:65-66*) were both security precautions to secure the body of Christ.
- **Wrong Tomb Theory:** This theory says that Jesus was not raised from the dead: the disciples just went to the wrong tomb. This means that the women went to the wrong tomb (*Matt.28:1; John 20:1*), Peter and John went to the wrong tomb (*John 20:2-6*), and for 2,000 years we have all gone to the wrong tomb. Besides this, what about the grave clothes that were found in the empty tomb (*John 20:6-7*)?

- Swoon Theory: This theory says that Jesus didn't really die; He just fainted from all of the beatings. As He laid there in that tomb, the moist air revived Him and He just moved the stone and walked away. First, of all no one ever survived crucifixion. The Roman soldier testified that Jesus was already dead when he went to break His legs (*John 19:31-34*). Second, if Jesus were alive when they put Him in the tomb (and He was not), He would have had to move, by Himself, a one-and-a-half ton rock that was placed at the opening of the tomb to prevent thievery or disturbance (*Mark 16:1-4*).

## Evidences for the Bodily Resurrection of Christ

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There are six facts that are hard to defend if one believes that Jesus was not resurrected from the dead.

### Fact #1: The Broken Seal

Henry Sumner Maine, a member of the Supreme Council in India and professor of Civil Law at the University of Cambridge, says,

*"The Roman seal was a mode of authentication and carried with it great authority. The Roman seal affixed thereon was meant to prevent any attempted vandalizing of the sepulcher. Anyone trying to move the stone from the tomb's entrance would have broken the seal and thus incurred the wrath of Roman law."*

### Fact #2: The Empty Tomb

Dr. Paul Maier says:

*"Where did Christianity first begin? To this the answer must be, only one spot on earth—the city of Jerusalem. But this is the very last place it could have started if Jesus' tomb remained occupied, since anyone producing a dead Jesus would have driven a wooden stake through the heart of an incipient Christianity inflamed by His supposed resurrection...What happened in Jerusalem seven weeks after the first Easter could have taken place only if Jesus' body were somehow missing from Joseph's tomb. Otherwise, the Temple establishment, in its zeal to destroy the Apostles, would simply have aborted the movement by making a brief trip over to the sepulcher of Joseph of Arimathea and unveiled exhibit A. They did not do this, because they knew the tomb was empty."*

### Fact #3: The Rolled Away Stone (*Mark 16:1-4*)

### Fact #4: The Guards at the Tomb

### Fact #5: The Grave clothes left behind (*John 20:6-7*)

Fact #6: The Eyewitnesses who saw Jesus (1 Cor.15:1-8; Acts 1:1-3)

A. What were the "convincing proofs" that Jesus gave to His disciples?

1. John 20:11-17: \_\_\_\_\_
2. John 20:20: \_\_\_\_\_
3. John 21:1-14: \_\_\_\_\_

B. What was the three-fold assurance John and the Apostles had that Jesus was risen from the dead?  
(Read 1 John 1:1-2)

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## Implications of Denying the Bodily Resurrection

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Denying the resurrection of Christ brings about some serious implications. In the church at Corinth, there were some people denying the resurrection. Paul pointed out to them that to do so implied four things that they had better reconsider. What were they? (Read 1 Cor.15:12-19)

- A. \_\_\_\_\_ are vain. The reason for this is if God ordained preaching as the vehicle to save the lost (1 Cor.1:21), its effect would be useless if the One about whom we preach were still in a Palestinian tomb. (vv.12-14)
- B. The \_\_\_\_\_ is still upon us. This implies that no matter what you do or believe, some day you will pay the price for your sins. (vv.15-17)
- C. Our \_\_\_\_\_ have perished. Every so-called man or woman of God that you know of—Charles Spurgeon, A.W. Tozer, Lottie Moon, John Calvin, and many others—are not rejoicing in heaven, but burning in the eternal flames of hell, if Christ is not risen. (v.18)
- D. We have no \_\_\_\_\_. (v.19)

## Benefits of the Bodily Resurrection

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- A. Read Romans 4:25; 5:1. We can have assurance that His death on our behalf was acceptable to God.
- B. Read Hebrews 7:25-26. We have the confidence of a heavenly High Priest and Advocate making intercession for us.
- C. Read 1 Corinthians 15:20 and Philippians 3:20-21. We can be assured that we will receive a resurrected body like our Lord's.

## Reflection:

As you consider this doctrine of the resurrection, answer these three questions:

- A. What do you know now that you did not know before?
- B. How does this doctrine make you feel right now?
- C. Is there something God would have you to do, in light of these truths?

## Closing:

**Application questions:** Being a Doer of the Word

- **2 Timothy 3:16**—*“All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching [what is right], for reproof [what is not right], for correction [how to get right], for training in righteousness [how to stay right]; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”*
  1. What did I learn (“teaching”)?
  2. Where do I fall short (“reproof”)?
  3. What do I need to do about it (“correction”)?
  4. How can I make this a consistent part of my life (“training”)?

## Answer Key:

Are the following statements true or false?

- F
- T

The Resurrection Was Predicted

- A. He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, and the good pleasure of the Lord will prosper in His hand
- B. He would not remain in the grave or undergo decay
- D. it declared Jesus as the Son of God
- E. repent; God will judge the world in righteousness through Christ

Evidences for the Bodily Resurrection of Christ

Fact #6

- A.
  1. He spoke to them
  2. He showed them His hands
  3. He broke bread with them
- B. they heard Him, saw Him, and touched Him

Implications of Denying the Bodily Resurrection

- A. Preaching and faith
- B. penalty/curse of sin
- C. brothers and sisters in Christ who have died
- D. hope

# Holy Habits Weekly Devotion



This week's memory verse: **John 20:20**—*"But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep."*

This week's holy habit: **Humility**

Jesus Christ, the living God-man, is the absolute epitome of humility. The One who created all things, rules all things, and knows all things came to serve and freely and most humbly gave His life to redeem sinners (*Matt.20:26-28*). After His victory over death through resurrection, He could have burst back onto the scene demanding acknowledgment and praise from all people living in first century Judea for being exactly the Savior Scripture proclaimed Him to be. His birth, ministry, death, and resurrection were all displays of humility—a glorious perfect display of meekness.

## DAY 1 Read Philippians 2:3.

- Consider how you are doing performing acts of service for others at home, at work, at church, etc. Are there times or ways that you are not regarding others as more important than yourself?

## DAY 2 Read 1 Peter 5:5.

- Perhaps there is an area in which you are opposing spiritual leadership, prompting, or guidance. How can you better clothe yourself with humility?

## DAY 3 Read 1 Timothy 1:12-17.

- Think of some of your achievements and material items that you have been able to acquire. It is easy to dwell on what we have done and how well we have done it. Consider exactly how God has moved in your life to make it all possible.

## DAY 4 Read Proverbs 16:32.

- When we are more knowledgeable or capable than another, it is easy to be harsh with correction or flaunt our ability. Pray that you would practice displaying humility in place of pride. Be conscientious about controlling your thoughts and your tongue and seeking forgiveness when warranted.

## DAY 5 Read Matthew 7:1-5.

- We are constantly bombarded with situations that challenge our upbringing, beliefs, sense of right/wrong, ways of doing something, etc. Reflect on some things that you see and hear that move you to make quick or blanket judgments. Pray that you would see the log in your own eye, and speak to others in love with humility.

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