

Reading:

1 Corinthians 15:1-5, 12-20

Introduction

What makes Christianity distinct and unique from all other religions? There are a number of factors such as:

- a) It is the only religion where God comes down to where man is, whereas in all other religions man has to reach up to God. (1 Jn. 4:14)
- b) It is the only religion where God provided in totality the way of full redemption. (Heb. 5:9; 10:14)
- c) It is the only religion when God came down and lived among men a life of sinless perfection. (2 Pet. 1:17)
- d) It is the only religion where its leader died and rose again from the dead, for in all other religions the leaders are dead.
 - i) Buddha - died 1483 BC
 - ii) Mohammed - died 632 AD
 - iii) Confucius - died 479 AD
 - iv) Jesus Christ - rose from the dead, he is alive, conquered the grave
 - v) Listen to His words: "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, Behold, I am alive forevermore." (Rev. 1:18)

Evidences of the Resurrection

1) The Vacated Tomb

- a) While I understand what is meant when folk speak of the "empty tomb", yet I am thankful that the tomb was not emptied but vacated! The grave clothes and the napkin were still there. (Jn. 20:7)
- b) Put a guard on the tomb. (Matt. 27:64-65)
- c) Roman seal on the tomb. (Matt. 27:66)

2) Extent of Testimony (Witness)

- a) They saw him. (Mk. 16:9, 11)
- b) Heard his voice. (Jn. 20:18-20, 25-29)
- c) 500 witnesses testified they saw Christ after He rose. (1 Cor. 15:6)
- d) Stephen saw Him. (Acts 7:55)
- e) Paul saw Him. (Acts 9:5)
- f) John saw Him. (Rev. 1:13-18)

3) Eloquent Transformation

- a) Changed lives:
 - i) Before the death and resurrection of the Lord and the coming of the Holy Spirit, they were a group of men who, when the soldiers came to take Jesus, they all fled away. Then Peter denied the Lord. However, after the Spirit came they were men of boldness who not only proclaimed Jesus as the Christ in Jerusalem, but in all the countryside.
 1. "They went forth, and preached every where", for they had met the living Saviour, He was alive. (Mk. 16:20)
 2. "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus." (Acts 4:13)
 3. "And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word." (Acts 4:29)
 4. "And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness." (Acts 4:31)

Differences the Resurrection Makes in Our Lives

What affect does the resurrection have on us?

- a) It answers the question of our natural concerns of: “What about those who are alive when the Lord comes?” and “What about those saints who have died when the Lord comes?” The Holy Spirit caused Paul to write on both these concerns:
- i) 1 Cor. 15:51 answers the concern of those who are alive: “Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed”
 - ii) 1 Thess. 4:13-18 answers the concern of those who have died: “If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep, in Jesus will God bring with Him”

b) Answers the Question of “Loneliness”

- i) Because the Lord lives in “the power of an endless life” (Heb. 7:16) and is “the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Heb. 13:8), thus “alive forever more” (Rev. 1:18). We can be assured of His promise: “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee” (Heb. 13:5). This is a very interesting verse for if we read it in reverse, the truth is still the same, “thee, forsake nor leave thee, never, will I”.
- ii) In 1945 Rogers and Hammerstein wrote the musical “Carousel”. In it there is a beautiful song which in part conveys the truth of Christ always being with us and the strengthening comfort it brings.

When you walk through a storm, hold your head up high
And don't be afraid of the dark
At the end of the storm, there's a golden sky
And the sweet silver song of the lark.

Walk on, through the wind, Walk on, through the rain
Though your dreams be tossed and blown
Walk on, walk on, with hope in your heart
And you'll never walk alone, you'll never walk alone.

- iii) It would seem that the writer had been reading the prophecy of Isaiah who wrote: “When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee” (Isa. 43:2).
- c) Answers the Question of “Weakness”
- i) When the Lord arose from the dead it was totally different from any other resurrection, for by entering death the Lord had entered the strong man’s house, and had bound him (Matt. 12:29; Mk. 3:27), and in resurrection utterly defeated both he and all his hordes. It was a mighty triumph and by it the words of Isaiah were fulfilled: “He will swallow up death in victory” (Isa. 25:8). He destroyed him that had the power of death (Heb. 2:14), and in resurrection triumphed over them openly (Col. 2:15).
 - ii) What is so special about the resurrection of the Lord? Others had been raised from the dead before Him:
 1. In what way can He be spoken of as the “firstborn from the dead”? (Col. 1:18)
 - (a) It simply means He was the first to rise from the dead having conquered death and being perfectly without sin and sinless in all activity. Death had no claims upon Him. (Heb. 7:16; Rev. 1:18)
 2. What makes His resurrection superior to all others? By it there is given:
 - (a) The assurance all will be judged and that death does not nullify that fact. (Acts 17:31; Rev. 20:12-13)

- (b) The assurance of His Kingship, the sure mercies of David (Acts 13:34) and unilateral Lordship (Rom. 14:9)
- (c) The assurance of universal judgeship (Acts 17:31)
- (d) The Proving that Jesus is the Son of God (Rom. 1:2-4)
- (e) The foundation for our justification (Rom. 4:25). He is able to give life to untold millions.
- (f) Fidelity to the message we preach (1 Cor. 15:14-20)
- (g) The assurance that our faith is not vain or without foundation (1 Cor. 15:17)
- (h) The enablement of God to quicken us spiritually (Eph. 1:19-20)
- (i) Being sinless, He had and has a body that will never know corruption (Acts 2:27; Heb. 7:26)
- (j) The pledge that ultimately Satan will be defeated (Heb.2:14)

. . . . This is a development of thoughts after listening to another speaker

**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.
John 16:13**

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