

EASTER DEVOTION

“Through Death to Life – The Great crossover”

I Corinthians 15:12-23

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The sequence of the Events:

1. **(a). (Matt. 28:2-4 Account** – Mary Magdalene and other Mary to see the tomb - Earthquake rolled away told them He is resurrected, they left to tell Peter and John (Jn. 20:1ff) - Guards fled to talk about the event (Matt 28:11)) **(b). Mark 16:1-2 Account** – it took place early on the Sunday Morning - **Mary Magdalene, Mary-the mother of James and Salome** came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun) **(c). Luke 24: 1 Account** - no names. **(d). John 20: 1 Account** – Mary Magdalene, when it was yet dark came to see the sepulchre and the stone taken away.
2. A little later **Mary Magdalene, Mary**, mother of James, and **Salome** arrived (Mk. 16:1); **Mary** returned to tell **Peter and John** (Jn. 20:1ff); the **other Mary and Salome met angel** (Matt. 28:5).
3. Two angels informed the women (Lk. 24:1ff; cf. Mk 16:5,6)
4. Peter and John came quickly followed by Mary (John 20:2-4). All except Mary returned.
5. **Mary wept (Jn. 20:2ff). She saw two angels, then met Jesus (Jn. 20:14; Mk. 16:9)**
6. All returned and informed the other disciples. Some regarded it as an idle tale (Matt. 24:11). Mark 16:8 & 11 – they kept quiet.
7. Jesus appeared to Peter on the same day (Lk. 24:34; I Cor. 15:5).
8. The same evening the two disciples to Emmaus met Jesus (Mk. 16:12). A little later, He appeared to all the disciples except Thomas (Lk.24:36-43; Jn. 20:19-24; cf Mk. 16:14).

9. A week later He appeared to the disciples including Thomas (Jn. 21:1-28)
10. Appeared to 7 disciples at sea – **Tiberia Zeihlat** (Jn. 21:1-23). He then appeared to **500** of His disciples (I Cor. 15:6).
11. Outside the Gospels, in I Cor. 15:8, He appeared to Paul (**I Cor. 15:8**)

The fact of Resurrection

1. The existence of the Christian Church is founded on the fact of the Resurrection.
2. The existence of the New Testament as a Scripture written down by the Apostles was based on the fact of the Resurrection.\
3. The existence of the **empty tomb** is another proof of the Resurrection.
4. Paul's conversion is a very strong proof of Jesus' resurrection.
5. The early Christians shifted the day of the **weekly worship** from the last day of the week, Saturday, which was the Jewish Sabbath, to the first day of the week as '**The Lord's Day**.' This change was based on the fact of the Resurrection.
6. The observation of the Lord's Supper by the Early Christians is another strong proof of Resurrection.
7. The Testimony of the Holy Spirit and its appearance on the Day of Pentecost also signified the fact of the Resurrection.

Paul points out five consequences of not believing in the resurrection in vs. 12-19:

- (1) If Christ has not been raised, in regard to Christ (15:13, 16): The Easter story is a lie.
- (2) If Christ has not been raised, in regard to gospel preaching (15:14a): It is useless.
- (3) If Christ has not been raised, in regard to gospel preachers (15:15): They are all liars.

(4) If Christ has not been raised, in regard to living believers (15:14b, **17**, 19, 29–31)

- a. Our trust in God is empty, worthless, and hopeless (15:14b).
- b. We are still in our sin (15:17).
- c. We are the most miserable of all creatures (**15:19**).

If there were no Resurrection, the pagans would be right. The “foolishness of the Cross” (1:18) Paul and the apostles who had suffered for the gospel (4:9-13) could only be pitied/shame. Those who lived for the pleasure of the moment would be right and the sacrifices of Christians would only be cruel, self-inflicted jokes (cf. 15:32).

(5) If Christ has not been raised from the dead, in regard to departed believers (15:18): They are forever dead, never to rise again.

Christ is the first fruit vs. 20:

“First Fruits” here is a symbolic use of the dedication of the entire harvest to God. So, the resurrection of Christ indicates the resurrection of all who are in him. The word “first fruits” suggest three things:

(1) Christ was the first to rise from the dead. Others such as Lazarus, the daughter of Jairus etc., had been brought from death to life, but it is assumed that they died again. **Christ was the first to rise never to die again.**

(2) His resurrection is a guarantee all the people in the world will be resurrected. Some to life and some to death (Rev. 20:5ff). **(3 levels of enjoyment)**

Vs. 21-22: The thought of Christ as the second Adam is more fully developed in Romans Ch. 5. **Adam’s sin brought physical as well as spiritual death.** Adam’s sin also brought disaster not only to **himself** but also on all his posterity. But if Adam’s sin far-reaching

consequences, so had **Christ's resurrection**. It concerned not only Him, but also all those who believe in Him. As death came through Adam, so also life came through Jesus Christ

Vs. 23: Christ's resurrection secures that of His people, but the two events do not occur at the same time. There is a power order for each. Christ as the first fruit is raised first and the believers are to be raised when He comes (literally: at His coming), Paul uses the word *Parousia*, which means 'Coming' or 'Presence.' Christians used this word as a technical term for the **Second Coming** of our Lord.

Significance/Crossover:

(1) **V. 17:** Forgiveness from our sins. The reverse of the apostle's affirmation would be this: If Jesus was raised; sins will be forgiven when we obey the Gospel (Acts 22:16, I Cor. 15:56-57).

(2). **VV. 16, 18:** Gift of Eternal life.

(3). **VV. 21, 23:** Proves that physical death is not the termination of human existence (I Tim. 6:13).

Assurance of resurrection to all the people who believes in Him at His glorious coming.

(4). **V. 14:** Preaching the Good News till He comes.

May the Lord bless you and have a joyous Easter!