

Essential Theology

Things of First Importance

1 Corinthians 15:3-8; Selected Scriptures

1. Christ Died For Our Sins (1 Cor 15:3)

A. Jesus Lived to Die (Mark 9:31-32)

It has been God's plan, from before the world was created (Gen 3:15; Rev 13:8), to save for Himself a people for His name (Acts 15:14; cf. Gal 3:25ff) on the basis of faith in Him alone (Rom 4:4-5). Jesus made it clear to His disciples that He had to suffer and die in order to fulfill the will of God.

B. Jesus was Crucified and Died (John 10:17-18; 19:30; Isa 53:4-8, 10-11)

The cruel death of Jesus at the hands of the Jews and the Romans was not an unexpected and unfortunate incident; it was the predetermined and preordained plan of God (Acts 2:22-23). The moment (John 7:30; cf. Mark 14:41), manner (Ps 22:16-17, Deut 21:23; cf. Matt 27:35; Gal 3:13), and meaning of His death (Isa 53:4-11; 1 Pet 2:24; 2 Cor 5:21) was a matter of careful and intentional design.

C. Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life (John 11:25)

All who have ever trusted in God have looked forward to dwelling with Him forever (Heb 11:10; Job 19:25-26). Jesus described this reality as the joy of your master (Matt 25:21, 23), Abraham's bosom (Luke 16:22), paradise (Luke 23:43), and as a massive mansion with a room prepared for every individual believer (John 14:1-6).

2. Christ Was Buried and Rose on the Third Day (1 Cor 15:4)

A. Jesus Was Buried (Jonah 1:17; Matt 12:39-40)

The unique circumstances of Jesus' burial (Isa 53:9) were prophesied in the Old Testament. Furthermore, Jesus indicated the specific amount of time that would transpire between His death and resurrection (Matt 12:38 cf. Mark 8:31; John 2:19).

B. Jesus Rose from the Grave (Matt 28:5-6)

The bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ was prophesied (Psalm 16:10-11) in the Old Testament and affirmed as an indispensable part of the Christian faith in the New Testament (1 Cor 15:14).

3. Christ Appeared to Many (1 Cor 15:5-6)

After His resurrection, Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene (John 20:14), to Peter (Luke 24:34), to two disciples leaving Jerusalem and going to Emmaus (Luke 24:13), to ten of the apostles (John 20:19), and hundreds more (1 Cor 15:6).

4. Christ Demands You Respond Rightly (John 20:28; Rom 10:9-10)

It is not merely enough to know that Jesus died on the cross and rose again from the grave. In addition to the hundreds who saw Him after of His resurrection, there were several soldiers and Jewish leaders who knew this what had happened and sought to cover it up (Matt 28:11-15). Believing the truth about who Jesus is and the truth of His Jesus' life, death, and resurrection is not sufficient (James 2:19). You must believe these things, but you must also respond in repentance (Acts 17:30), pleading for God's mercy instead of His just judgment (Luke 5:32; 18:13). And you must understand that God's mercy is extended to you based solely on His grace in response only to your faith in Him (Rom 3:21-25; 4:4-5; Eph 2:8,9).

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