

# WEEK TWENTY-FIVE

## The Biggest "If"

Dr. Tom Malone

"But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen." - I Cor. 15:13

Now in this passage that I read, Paul said, 'But if there is no resurrection then seven other facts hold to be true' - the greatest if" in human language.

Let me mention to you how some people try to explain away the resurrection. There is, first of all, what theologians call the swoon theory.

Some say, "They took Him down from the cross before He died and placed Him in a coma. He didn't have to rise from the dead because He never died. He was merely in a coma."

Now anyone who is honest and intelligent, whether he believes all the Bible or not, would know that this could not be true. For six hours He was nailed to the cross. A spear opened up His body until blood and water gathered in a crimson pool beneath the cross. The Roman soldier came

and saw that Jesus was dead, so he did not execute the Roman law to break the legs. The swoon theory, they say!

Then there is a theory called the hallucination theory. They said, "All these who say they saw Him after He rose from the dead were having nightmares, hallucinations, a series of visions."

Now, let me ask you something. The Bible says that He was seen by as few as one and by as many as five hundred. Could five hundred people have the same nightmare at the same time and tell the same story of it? "After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once..." (I Cor. 15:6). Paul said, "Five hundred brethren saw Him at once, and most of them are still alive and still witnesses that Jesus came forth from the grave."

Then there is the kidnap theory: "Now you put these Roman soldiers here because these Christians will probably try to kidnap Him. They are going to seal His body and then say that He rose

from the grave." No, that did not happen. An earthquake came; two angels come; Roman soldiers fell to the ground as though they were dead; Jesus walked out of the grave with the keys of death and Hell at His side and said, "I am alive for evermore." It is an attested fact of human history that Jesus 'Christ arose from the dead.

It is said that the British Archaeological Society made a chemical analysis of the dirt found in the Garden Tomb when it was excavated. A little over a hundred years ago, and their analysis was that no human body had ever decayed there. Jesus lay in the tomb in the cold grip of death; but, thank God, on the morning of the resurrection, He asked forth with His feet upon the neck of death and said, "I am alive for evermore."

"But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen." - I Cor. 15:13

# THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST: A LIVING SAVIOUR

# THE GOSPEL RECORD

Gerald Collins wrote: "In a profound sense, Christianity with the resurrection is not simply Christianity without its final chapter. It is not Christianity at all."

"The Lord Jesus Christ remained in the world forty days after His resurrection. During this interval He appeared to His disciples on numerous occasions – ten are recorded. Five of these appearances took place on the first day of the week and the other five throughout the forty days. Actually, in the Gospel records more is recorded of these forty days than of the first thirty years of His life – from His birth to the time He began His ministry. More is recorded of the death, resurrection, and post-resurrection ministry than is recorded of the entire life of Jesus." ~ J. Vernon McGee

The resurrection was not a "Top Secret" event. In fact, Jesus was careful to foretell it.

**Luke 18:31-35:**

To whom was Jesus speaking?

What did Jesus say would happen to Him in Jerusalem?

What did He say would happen on the third day?

How did the disciples respond?

John Mark was the first to write a gospel account somewhere between 50-60 A. D. It is without excuse that the higher critics attempt to remove verses 9-20 from the last chapter of Mark. Is it even plausible to believe that the first gospel record would eliminate the resurrected Christ and simply end with fearful women? If

that were true it would not be the Gospel According to Mark but merely "The Life and Times of Jesus" according to Mark.

The Apostle Paul explains what the Gospel truly is better than anyone else.

**1 Corinthians 15:1:** What is Paul declaring?

**1 Corinthians 15:3:** The first part of the Gospel declares that Christ \_\_\_\_\_ for our sins.

**1 Corinthians 15:4:** Secondly, He was \_\_\_\_\_

The third and final part is that Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ again.

The word "gospel" literally means "good news." So the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the good news of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ!

It is unfathomable to even suspect that the Holy Spirit would lead John Mark or that John Mark, even on his own, would write such an anticlimactic ending leaving the reader in doubt of the resurrection!

**Mark 16:9:** What does John declare happened on the first day of the week?

**Mark 16:11:** Did His disciples believe her report?

How sad this is when we consider the prophecy of Luke 18, discussed earlier.

**Mark 16:14:** For what did Jesus rebuke His disciples?

Matthew was the next to publish a gospel account.

**Matthew 27:63-66:** Although the disciples failed to recall His promise, who did remember that Jesus prophesied of His resurrection?

Isn't it a shame when unbelievers know more of God's Word than believers.

**Matthew 28:1:** Who does Matthew record as being at the sepulchre early Sunday morning?

What physical sign accompanied the angel's coming?

**Matthew 28:5-6:** Who proclaimed the resurrection of Jesus to the women?

What did the angel invite the women to do?

**Matthew 28:9-10:** Where did Jesus say that He would meet His disciples?

**Matthew 28:11-15:** Explain the "cover up."

The resurrection is vital to our faith in Jesus Christ. Without it, we have no victorious Savior. Without the resurrection we have no assurance that our sin debt has been paid in full. Without a firm conviction in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus we have no true Gospel of Jesus Christ and thereby no salvation.

One need not know every single doctrine of Scripture in order to be saved. There are many great truths that are not understood before salvation but are learned as one grows in Christ. However, a belief in the resurrection is a necessity for salvation.

**Romans 10:9-10:** What must be believed in order to be saved?

Without the resurrection, Jesus would simply have been a philosopher rather than a Savior. Not only would He have been a philosopher but also a liar because He promised the resurrection.

**1 Corinthians 15:20:** Of what does Paul assure us?

## APPLICATION

What is the greatest truth you have learned from God's Word today and how can you apply it to your life?

# THE GOSPEL RECORD CONTINUES

The beloved physician, Luke was third journal a gospel account under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost.

**Luke 24:5:** What question did the angels ask? \_\_\_\_\_

**Luke 24:6-8:** What did the angel remind them of? \_\_\_\_\_

Luke's report adds a couple names to the report.

**Luke 24:10:** Who does Luke report being there? \_\_\_\_\_

**Luke 24:11:** How did the disciples receive their report? \_\_\_\_\_

**Luke 24:12:** Who does Luke tell us went to the sepulchre? \_\_\_\_\_

The word furlong is translated from the word *stadion*, referring to the stadium. The length of the stadium was about one tenth of a mile.

**Luke 24:13:** How many miles was Emmaus from Jerusalem? \_\_\_\_\_

**Luke 24:18-19:** How did Cleopas describe Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_

**Luke 24:21:** What word, appearing in the past tense, indicates that they had lost faith? \_\_\_\_\_

How many days had passed since the crucifixion? \_\_\_\_\_

**Luke 24:27:** What did Jesus use to teach about Himself? \_\_\_\_\_

**Luke 24:34:** Who else did the Lord appear to? \_\_\_\_\_

Some doubt that Jesus was risen in the flesh. They falsely suppose that he only appeared in spirit form.

**Luke 24:39:** What did Jesus demonstrate? \_\_\_\_\_

**Luke 24:44:** What was fulfilled? \_\_\_\_\_

**Luke 24:45:** What caused them to understand the Scriptures? \_\_\_\_\_

This is the same way we understand the Scriptures. We ought always be mindful to ask God to open our understanding as we read!

For approximately twenty-five years, these three gospels served as the inspired record of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Then near the end of the first century, the Holy Ghost inspired John to write the final gospel. The first three are called the synoptic gospels because they each follow a similar outline of events. However, John's is distinct in that he spends more time adding new information than repeating what was already generally known.

It is worth noting that John does not refer to himself by name. He references himself as the disciple whom Jesus loved or the case to follow as the other disciple.

**John 20:1-3:** Who else accompanied Peter

to the sepulchre? \_\_\_\_\_

**John 20: 4-8:** Who was the first to enter? \_\_\_\_\_

**John 20:15:** Who did Mary think Jesus was? \_\_\_\_\_

**John 20:22:** What did Jesus give them? \_\_\_\_\_

**John 20:24:** Who was not among the Apostles? \_\_\_\_\_

**John 20:29:** Who is blessed? \_\_\_\_\_

**John 21:1** Where else did Jesus show Himself? \_\_\_\_\_

**Acts 1:3:** How does Luke begin his account of the early church? \_\_\_\_\_

Luke begins his account of the history of the early church by an assertion that the resurrection was easily proven. Many skeptics have undertaken the responsibility of undermining the resurrection, but they have all failed. One of the chief proofs of the resurrection is the commitment of His followers. They were discouraged and dismayed after the crucifixion. They were not preaching during those three dark days. It wasn't until they saw the resurrected Christ that they were emboldened to carry on for the cause of Christ.

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## APPLICATION

What is the greatest truth you have learned from God's Word today and how can you apply it to your life?

# RESURRECTION PREACHING

**Luke 24:49:** How long were the disciples told to tarry and where? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Acts 1:8:** When would they be filled with power to witness? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**John 14:26:** Who is the Comforter? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What will He do? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**John 15:26:** What will the Holy Spirit testify of? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**John 16:13:** What will the Holy Spirit guide us in? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Acts 2:1-4:** What were the signs that accompanied the filling of the Holy Ghost?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

A brief note concerning tongues is due here. This is the only passage where it can be clearly proven that anyone spoke in a language that he clearly had not known before. Some suspect that Acts 10 and 19 are also miraculous tongues events. However, other believe that they were speaking in languages unknown to the hears but know to the speakers. If that be so, then there were only three instances of speaking in tongues.

It is also worth demonstrating that these were discernible languages rather than unintelligible gibberish.

**Acts 2:6-8:** How did every man hear them?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Acts 2:9-11:** How many different regions and languages were represented? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Much more could be said on this issue.

However, we will simply assert that the modern tongues movement of the Charismatic/Pentecostal movement does not in any way resemble miraculous tongues of the second chapter of Acts.

Peter is the focus of Luke's description of that day. Although he was not alone in his preaching, he did take the lead.

As we learned in John 15:26, the Holy Spirit does not focus upon Himself but on Jesus Christ.

**Acts 2:22:** Who is the focus of Peter's preaching? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Acts 2:23-24:** What is the focus of Peter's preaching? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What was not possible? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Acts 2:27:** What would God not allow?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Acts 2:29-31:** Who prophesied of the resurrection? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Acts 2:32:** What were Peter and the others witnesses of? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Acts 2:33:** Where is Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What had His disciples received? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Acts 2:36:** What is Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Acts 2:27:** How did the people respond to Peter's Spirit filled preaching? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Acts 2:41:** What was the result of Peter's preaching on the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The Apostle Paul boldly proclaimed the resurrection of Christ in 1 Corinthians 15.

**1 Corinthians 15:6:** What was the largest group to witness the resurrected Christ?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**1 Corinthians 15:8:** Did Paul see the resurrected Christ? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Many people believe that 2 Corinthians 12:1-4 is a reference to this.

**1 Corinthians 15:12:** What was the apparent controversy? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**1 Corinthians 15:13-19:** What would be some of the negative implications if Christ was not risen from the dead?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**1 Corinthians 15:20:** What does Paul proclaim!?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**1 Corinthians 15:20-23:** How does Christ's resurrection impact believers?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**1 Corinthians 15:42:** How is the body raised? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Paul gives us hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

**Romans 6:4-5, Colossians 2:12:** What is baptism a picture of? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Colossians 3:1-4:** What should the resurrection motivate us to do? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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# THE ASCENSION

Jesus had fulfilled his earthly mission. He had not come to be a good teacher, example and role model although He was all these things.

**John 12:27:** What did Jesus say concerning the hour of His crucifixion? \_\_\_\_\_

**Luke 19:10:** Why did the Son of Man come? \_\_\_\_\_

His resurrection was the sign of victory from heaven. It established that the price of sin had been paid in full. It vindicated that He was Who He said He was. What greater sign could you conceive to prove the deity of Christ than His resurrection from the dead?

**Acts 1:3:** For how many days did He show Himself alive? \_\_\_\_\_

What types of proof did He show? \_\_\_\_\_

**Mark 16:14:** For what did Jesus rebuke the eleven? \_\_\_\_\_

**Mark 16:15:** This verse is commonly referred to as The Great Commission. What is the first word in the Great Commission? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the second word? \_\_\_\_\_

Where are we supposed to go? \_\_\_\_\_

To whom are we to preach? \_\_\_\_\_

It is unfortunate that the Great Commission has often become the Great Omission.

It is the individual responsibility of every believer to proclaim the gospel truth and as local churches to send the gospel around the world.

**Mark 16:19:** What happened Jesus commissioned them? \_\_\_\_\_

Where did He sit? \_\_\_\_\_

**Mark 16:20:** How did the Apostles show obedience to the last command from Christ? \_\_\_\_\_

**Matthew 28:16:** Where did Jesus give the Great Commission? \_\_\_\_\_

**Matthew 28:18:** What did Jesus say was given to Him? \_\_\_\_\_

The "therefore" in verse nineteen is predicated upon that answer. It is because of the power/authority given to Jesus that we are commissioned. That power is given to us as well.

**Acts 1:8:** From where do we receive the power to implement the Great Commission? \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew gives us three specific components to the Great Commission.

**Matthew 28:19:** What are we do do to all nations? \_\_\_\_\_

The Greek word translated as *teach* is *matheteuo* and signifies to enrol or enlist. We are to teach them how to be saved.

After they are saved what should we do to them? \_\_\_\_\_

**Matthew 28:20:** What should we teach them next? \_\_\_\_\_

This is discipleship. This is where we learn what Christ expects from His followers.

What promise do we have as we fulfill the Great Commission? \_\_\_\_\_

**Luke 16:7:** Why was it important for Jesus to ascend to heaven? \_\_\_\_\_

**Luke 24:47:** What two things does Luke record Jesus commanding them to preach? \_\_\_\_\_

To whom should it be preached? \_\_\_\_\_

Where were they to begin? \_\_\_\_\_

**Luke 24:49:** What did Jesus say He would send? \_\_\_\_\_

This is the promise of the Holy Ghost. We read of this also in Acts 1:8 and saw it fulfilled in Acts 2.

How long were they to tarry in Jerusalem? \_\_\_\_\_

This teaches us the foolishness of attempting anything for Christ in the flesh rather than in the Spirit.

Even before His death, burial and resurrection, Jesus taught them concerning His ascension.

**Luke 24:51:** What happened? \_\_\_\_\_

**Luke 24:52:**

Where did the disciples go? \_\_\_\_\_

**John 16:16:** Where did Jesus say He would go? \_\_\_\_\_

Within six years, according to some estimates, Stephen had the opportunity to witness the ascended Christ.

**Acts 7:55:** Where did Stephen see Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_

Isn't it fascinating that Jesus is still where we found Him in Mark 16:19? There is, however, a fascinating difference. In Mark He was seated while He is standing in Acts. I believe that He is standing to receive the first martyr who would give his life for the cause of Christ! What an honour!

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## APPLICATION

What is the greatest truth you have learned from God's Word today and how can you apply it to your life?

# THE SECOND COMING

*I Serve a Risen Savior*  
Alfred Ackley

*I serve a risen Savior,  
He's in the world today.*

*I know that He is living,  
whatever men may say.*

*I see His hand of mercy,  
I hear His voice of cheer.*

*And just the time I need Him,  
He's always near.*

*He lives, He lives,  
Christ Jesus lives today!*

*He walks with me and talks with me  
along life's narrow way.*

*He lives, He lives,  
salvation to impart!*

*You ask me how I know  
He lives?  
He lives within my  
heart.*

What a great truth in song.  
Christ Jesus is alive and we do indeed serve a risen Saviour! Not only has Jesus risen from the dead and ascended to the Father but He has also given us a promise of coming again!

Space will not permit a detailed study of the rapture and second coming of Christ. However, the following Scriptures should encourage you with a great expectation of this wonderful promise.

**Acts 1:11:** What did the angels tell the disciples would happen? \_\_\_\_\_

**Titus 2:3:** How does Paul describe His glorious appearing to Titus? \_\_\_\_\_

**2 Peter 3:9:** Why does the Lord delay His coming? \_\_\_\_\_

**2 Timothy 4:1-2:** Why are we compelled to preach the Word? \_\_\_\_\_

**Matthew 24:27:** How does Jesus describe the quickness of His coming? \_\_\_\_\_

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-17:** If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, what key truth should we also believe? \_\_\_\_\_

Who will the Lord bring with Him? \_\_\_\_\_

We know that they are with Him because of what Paul teaches elsewhere.

**2 Corinthians 5:8:** Where are we when we are absent from the body? \_\_\_\_\_

**Philippians 1:21-24:** Paul wished to depart and be where? \_\_\_\_\_

**1 Thessalonians 4:17:** What will happen to believers who are alive? \_\_\_\_\_

There is a common myth spread by those who do not believe God's word concerning the rapture. They state: "The word *rapture* does not occur in the Bible," as though that completely disproves the teaching. In the first place the absence of a word does not negate the presence of that doctrine in Scripture. The word deity does not appear

in your Bible either. Does that negate the teaching of the deity of Christ. Of course not.

In fact the word rapture derives from the Latin translation for "caught up." The word *raepitius* is the word from which we get the English rapture. So the word *rapture* is in the Bible. You just need a Latin translation to find it.

**1 Thessalonians 4:17:** Where will we meet the Lord? \_\_\_\_\_

**1 John 3:2:** What will happen when He appears? \_\_\_\_\_

**1 Corinthians 15:52:** How quickly will our transformation take place? \_\_\_\_\_

Knowledge of Christ's second coming is should be a motivating factor for all true believers.

**Romans 13:11-12:** What should we cast off? \_\_\_\_\_

What should we put on? \_\_\_\_\_

**Matthew 25:13:** Why should we watch? \_\_\_\_\_

**Luke 18:8:** What does Jesus want to find when He returns? \_\_\_\_\_

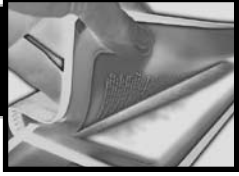
Will He find you living out your faith? What if He were to come today? He might return before you finish reading this paragraph or even this sentence. Would you be ready if He did?

As we close this study on the Life of Christ, let us ever be motivated to be ready to meet Him at His return!

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## APPLICATION

What is the greatest truth you you have learned from God's Word today and how can you apply it to your life?



# TABLE TALK



# PASTOR'S MESSAGE