

## He is risen, yet first, He was crucified - Tony Pearce

<sup>1</sup> Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, <sup>2</sup> by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. <sup>3</sup> For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup> and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, <sup>5</sup> and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. <sup>6</sup> After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. <sup>7</sup> After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. <sup>8</sup> Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time. <sup>9</sup> For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. <sup>10</sup> But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. <sup>11</sup> Therefore, whether it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

### 1ST LETTER TO THE CORINTHIAN Chapter 15 verses 1-11

**HE IS RISEN**, then this is the most important event in the whole of history. It changes your eternal destiny, my eternal destiny, **it changes the course of history.**

Jesus truly is risen and it's the thing that we have to believe in order to have salvation. If we believe this, we have salvation and our life is changed, our eternal destiny is changed and is then determined by what we believe about Jesus and his Resurrection.

**He makes the difference between Heaven and Hell for eternity.** So, it's very important that we understand this message and that we believe it. And that's what Paul is saying to the Corinthians here: that Christ died for our sins, He was buried and rose again.

The Gospel message which is preached, that they should receive it and believe it, and act upon it. Of course, the Gospel makes it clear that it's only as we receive it that it becomes relevant and it becomes meaningful to us.

**We have to repent and believe the Gospel in order to receive it and for it to apply to our lives.**

We have free will to take it. It's the message which God gives to us. He gives us a choice to make: do we believe or do we reject it? It's a message which can't be changed, it's not my message, it's not the message of Paul, it's the message which God has given to him. **It's a message which is from the Lord and we don't have the right to change it.**

**Christ is risen! He has risen indeed!**

I'm going to talk about that and also about what it means for us, about what difference it makes to you and to me.

As we see in this letter and throughout the New Testament, **this Resurrection of Jesus is the central message of the Gospel. Without it, actually, Christianity makes no sense.**

As Paul says, if Christ is not risen, then your faith is futile, you're still in your sins.

That is, you might as well go home if Christ isn't risen. And, if you're watching on the internet, turn it off and go, and do something else because it's a waste of time.

But if Christ is risen, and

It changes your eternal destiny, my eternal destiny, **it changes the course of history.**

**It's about something which has happened, an event in history.** It's also very important that we understand that this was not just some sort of story made up. **This was something which really happened in flesh and blood, in space and time,** that **Jesus the Messiah, the Lord of glory, King of kings and Lord of lords, God who created the Heavens and the Earth became man, God amongst us, took upon Himself the form of a servant, and went to lay down His life as a sacrifice for the sin of the world.**

He submitted to the unjust trial at the hands of the Sanhedrin and the Roman governor. He who was actually the maker of Heaven and Earth submitted to the unjust rule of wicked men and went to the cross to suffer the most cruel and excruciating form of death which you could imagine.

And I use the word 'excruciating' advisedly. Do you know the origins of the word **excruciation**. It means the most horrible pain you can imagine? **'EX'** means (=) **'out of'**, **'CRUX'** means (=) **'cross'**.

### Geological and Historical Evidence for Jesus' Crucifixion Account

Geological and historical evidence to support the New Testament accounts of Jesus' crucifixion is abundant, so the intention of this writing is to share this information and to provide support for the historicity of Jesus.

At Jesus' crucifixion, Matthew (27:45-54) reported "From noon until three in the afternoon darkness came over all the land. About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' (cf., Psalm 22)...And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit. At that moment, the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook, the rocks split and the tombs broke open. The bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. They came out of the tombs after Jesus' resurrection and went into the holy city and appeared to many people. When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and all that happened, they were terrified, and exclaimed, 'Surely he was the son of God!'"

Matthew's passage includes two events that can be historically and geologically confirmed: (1) Darkness covered the land for three hours (c.f., Matthew 27:45; Mark 15:33; Luke 23:44-45) and (2) An earthquake occurred.

When we speak about something being *excruciating*, we're talking about something which was so horrible, so horrible at death, (I could actually give you a description of what it was like but I won't do that because we're in a family service) it might turn you off and it might be something almost too much to bear. But it was the most terrible form of death which someone could go through.



Mark doesn't have to tell you what He cried out in His last words, but John does. He says He cried out: **it is finished**.

When he cried out *it is finished*, He meant that the awesome transaction, the spiritual transaction for which He came into the world was finished, as God the Father laid the sin of the world upon His son Jesus Christ which was the worst sort of agony for Jesus as He bore all the guilt and all the wrath our sin deserved upon Himself, satisfying God's righteous anger against sin, **that we, who are sinners, might be set free and forgiven for our sins**, and that we might receive in place of what Jesus took, we might receive forgiveness and new life, and peace with God in Jesus Christ.

And as bad as the physical suffering was for Jesus, the worst of the suffering was actually that moment when the sin of the world was placed upon Him, when He who knew no sin, became the sin offering that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

That was what He dreaded most when He prayed in the garden and He said **Father if it is your will take this cup away from me. Nevertheless, not my will but yours be done**.

Praying that, that awful moment might be taken away. **That He was to bear the sin of the whole world, that He who knows no sin would become sin that we might become the righteousness of God in Him**.

<sup>13</sup> **But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen.**  
<sup>14</sup> **And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty...** <sup>16</sup> **For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen.** <sup>17</sup>  
**And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!**

#### 1ST LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS Chapter 15 verses 13-17

It had to happen because Jesus was fulfilling the prophecy of **Isaiah 53**, of the suffering servant, the One who would be despised and rejected of men, man of sorrows acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him.

**He was despised and we did not esteem Him, surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we esteemed Him stricken of God, afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement for our peace was upon Him and by His stripes we are healed. Or, we like sheep have gone astray, we've turned everyone to his own way and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.**

That's what happened when Christ died, when Christ died for our sins. That's what He did for you, what He did for me, what He did for all, the whole world. If we would turn to Him in repentance and receive forgiveness and eternal life.

We read how He's fulfilling the Hebrew scriptures. He was then buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. No doubt that He was dead, taken down and, as He was treated with great disrespect and dishonour in his death, He was actually treated with honour and respect in His burial. Placed in that tomb with the stone rolled over it, even with the guard put on outside to show that nothing would happen to the body while it would be there.

And that would have been the end of the story and it probably would have been the end of the remembrance of Jesus within a generation or two but for what happened on the third day. Praise God! Without the Resurrection, the crucifixion would not have had the effect which it does have.