The Battle for the Resurrection Part 2: Why the Resurrection of Christ Matters!

Today’s lesson comes from chapter 2 (pp. 30-39).

Does it really matter if Christ rose from the dead in the same body in which He died? Yes, this is crucial!

If Jesus Christ did not rise from the dead there is no salvation.

**Romans 10:9-10** “that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.”

**1 Thess. 4:14** “For if we believe that Jesus died and rose from the dead, so also God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep through Jesus.”

**1 Corinthians 15:14-19** “and if Christ has not been raised, then *our preaching is in vain*, your *faith also is in vain*. Moreover, *we are even found to be false witnesses of God*, because we testified against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, then not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, *your faith is worthless*; *you are still in your sins*. Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If we have hoped in Christ only in this life, *we are of all people most to be pitied.*

***The Resurrection Body of Christ***

 Orthodox Christianity has always taught that Jesus Christ arose from the dead in the same physical body that He died and that His body is immortal. This means that Christ died once, but will His body will never taste death again. Even to this day the resurrected Christ is till a material body.

 It the early days of Christianity all the way through the reformation the belief in a physical, bodily resurrection of Christ was accepted as being a fundamental belief. Anyone who did not believe in the physical resurrection of Christ was not considered to be a Christian. However, over time newer teachings have infiltrated the church. This started with the Gnosticism which taught that Jesus was here on earth, but He only seemed to be physical. He was a spirit so His resurrection was only spiritual. This teaching began when the Apostle John was alive because he wrote against it in his epistles. To teach against the physical, bodily resurrection of Christ is a false gospel and something we must guard ourselves against.

**1 John 4:1-6** “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: *every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God;* this is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming, and now it is already in the world. You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world. They are from the world, therefore they speak as from the world, and the world listens to them. We are from God. The one who knows God listens to us; the one who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.”

Other arguments as to why the physical resurrection of Christ is important:

* If there is no physical resurrection, then there is no continuity between the pre and post resurrected body of Christ. The same Jesus that went into the tomb is the same Jesus who walked out of the tomb on Sunday morning. If it was not Him, then His resurrection is not that amazing,

and God just replaced Him with another body. This does make sense because the disciples recognized Him immediately when He appeared among them in the upper room.

* If there is no resurrection of Christ’s physical body then the teaching of Scripture is in error, making the entirety of Scripture open to being wrong regarding everything else that it teaches.
* If Christ did not rise from the dead in a physical body, then our own resurrection is seriously in jeopardy. There is no way that we will be able to arise to overcome death when God calls us. The victory Jesus has over death has removed its sting (1 Cor. 15:55). There is no hope for anyone who places their trust in Christ is He is not raised (1 Cor. 15:17 and 18).
* Jesus is also a liar if He did not resurrect. When He arose He appeared to the disciples and told them to touch Him (Luke 24:39). He told Thomas to touch His wounds (John 20:27). If all of this is a lie, then Jesus misled His disciples.
* If Christ did not rise from the dead, then all His claims to be God are false (John 8:58; 10:30). It is impossible to confirm that He really did rise from the dead if it is not the same body as before. He said that His resurrection would be a sign to prove who He is (Matt. 12:39-40). The disciples themselves claimed to be eyewitnesses to the resurrection (Acts 1:3, 2:22-36; 4:2,10; 13:32-41; 17:1-4, 22-31). It is impossible to verify that He arose from the dead unless it is the same physical body as the body placed in the grave three days before.

What we have learned is that the Bible is very clear regarding the resurrection. Jesus Christ rose from the dead in a physical body, the same body that the disciples knew for three years and the same one that was flogged, crucified, and placed in the tomb three days earlier. This fact is clearly taught in Scripture and has been repeated by the Apostles as well as the leaders of the church throughout the centuries. To deny the resurrection of Christ means that person is NOT a Christian. This is a primary doctrine and as believers in Christ all of us are commissioned to share this good news with all of creation.