

March 31, 2021

Effects of False Teaching, Part II

In **I Corinthians 15:12**, Paul identifies the false teaching when he says, “how say same among you that there is no resurrection from the dead?” There are at least six effects of such false teaching. We considered the first three last week. If there is no resurrection, then first, Christ is not risen, second, our preaching is in vain, and third, our faith is in vain. This week we will consider the next three effects recorded in **I Corinthians 15:15-19**.

Fourth, if there is no resurrection, “we are found false witnesses of God.” The Greek word for witnesses means a spurious witness or bearer of untrue testimony. The word spurious means not genuine, not proceeding from a true source, counterfeit. Our witness is our testimony or attestation of a fact. If Christ is not risen from the dead, yet we preach Christ’s resurrection, then our testimony is false, and we are liars. The greater implication is not only are we liars, but if Christ is not risen, God is also a liar, for our witness and our testimony is of God. Conversely, if God cannot lie, **Hebrews 6:18**, then the resurrection of Christ must be true, and our witness is true as well.

Fifth, if Christ is not risen, “ye are yet in your sins.” Without the resurrection, there can be no forgiveness of sin. It is true that Christ died for our sins and shed His blood to cleanse us from our sin, but without the resurrection, we are not saved from the penalty of our sin. What is the penalty for sin? Death is eternal separation from God. What is the opposite of death? Eternal life implies victory over death. If Christ was not victorious over death, we could not be victorious over death. What benefit would we receive if Christ died for our sin, but failed to provide eternal life? We would still be subject to eternal death in hell and the lake of fire. Read **I Peter 1:3-4** – What is our lively or living hope? Eternal life in heaven, an inheritance that is incorruptible. According to verse 3, by what do we have this hope?

Sixth, if Christ is not risen, those who have “fallen asleep in Christ are perished.” Sleep speaks of death. If Christ is not risen, those who have died in Christ, were not saved, but have perished in hell along with those outside of Christ. In **I Thessalonians 4:13-18**, Paul gives a detailed account of the rapture. This passage is a parallel passage to **I Corinthians 15:51-54**. The sorrow of those without Christ is great because they have no hope. But for those who are in Christ our sorrow, although real, is different, because we have the hope of a resurrection, wherefore, we have comfort in our time of sorrow. Have you ever witnessed the difference between a funeral or memorial service for a saved person in comparison to a service for an unsaved person? How were they different? Paul then concludes in **I Corinthians 15:19**, if our hope in Christ does not go beyond the grave, then “we are of all men most miserable.” What does hopelessness in this life lead to? Do you know people who are miserable because they have no hope? How can you be an effective witness to share with them the hope that is available through Christ?