

THE GREATEST OF ALL IF'S

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INTRODUCTION

- A. Paul devotes I Cor. 15 to a discussion of the resurrection of Christ. In vs.12-19 seven "ifs" READ I Cor. 15:12-19.
 - B. Big "if" in middle of life. Also in living of life.
 - C. But the biggest "if" is raised by Paul. "But if there is no resurrection of dead....and if Christ be not risen..."if" in this life only we have hope.
 - D. Think on it for a moment...There is no "if" on which so much depends.
 - E. Problem of Corinthians...not so much a denial of Christ's resurrection but of man's...Paul argues that they must stand or fall together.
 - F. CHAPTER IS DIVIDED IN FIVE PARTS.
 - 1. Christ is preached that he rose from dead. vs. 1-11.
 - 2. "If" there is no resurrection...then Christ was not raised. vs. 12-19.
 - 3. But Christ has been raised, and dead likewise will be raised. vs. 12-19.
 - 4. Just how will the dead be raised vs. 35-49.
 - 5. Through a resurrection, death is swallowed up in victory. vs. 50-58.
 - G. **NOW LOOK AT EACH DIVISION SEPARATELY**
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CHRIST RAISED 1-11

- A. PAUL BEGINS BY CALLING ATTENTION TO GOSPEL; vs. 1-4.
 - 1. Our reception of it.
 - 2. Our regard for it.
 - 3. Our remission through it.
 - 4. Our reflection upon it.
 - 5. Our refuge in it.
 - B. GOSPEL SOMETHING IN WHICH TO STAND...on which to stand.
 - 1. Gospel by which you are saved (Greek present tense)
 - 2. Unless ye believed in vain. *Faith is not to be vain but vital.*
 - C. VERY BASIS OF GOSPEL IS **Death, Burial, and Resurrection** of Christ.
 - 1. Had there been no resurrection...been no gospel to preach.
 - 2. Their reasoning was that there was no bodily resurrection.....
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Then Is Christ Not Risen 12-19

- A. IF CHRIST NOT RAISED....**FOUR THINGS:**
 - 1. Your faith is vain.
 - a. Man would lose all confidence in God.
 - b. Confidence in God's Word would be destroyed.

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2. "Ye are yet in your sins....BECAUSE;
 - a. Christ raised for our justification, Romans 4:25.
 - b. If forgiveness goes, then peace goes...Freedom goes...Happiness goes; Heaven goes....ALL GOES.
 3. THEN THEY ALSO WHICH ARE FALLEN ASLEEP IN Christ are perished.
 4. Think what it would mean...Do away with John 14:2,3, II Tim. 4:8. Etc.
 - B. "IF IN THIS LIFE ONLY WE HAVE HOPE IN CHRIST....
 - C. IN RESURRECTION WE HAVE HOPE...THIS BRINGS REJOICING.
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But Christ Has Been Raised...

- A. READ v. 20.
 - B. First fruits....more to come....Harvest.
 - C. Jesus placed in tomb....Jews asked that Pilate make it sure. (Matt. 27:62-66) "Make sure as you can"
 1. Women asked who rolled away the stone.
 2. Why was the stone rolled away?
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How Will The Dead Be Raised?

- A. PAUL CALLS TO MIND MYSTERY OF SEED.....Buried and raised.
 1. Different...yet the same.
 2. God assures us that He "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body. (Phil 3:21).
 3. The body will be changed...but not our identity.
 4. Read vs. 43,44.
 5. He tells us "flesh and blood cannot inherit Kingdom of Heaven.
 - B. II CORINTHIANS 5:1-10.
 1. "For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved,
 2. "We have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens."
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Death Swallowed Up In Victory

A. READ vs. 55-58.

1. The grave is not the end.
2. Does not mean all will be resurrected to live with God (John 5:29).
3. Death can be a great victory for those who through obedience to Christ are ready for it....**ARE YOU?**

B. **“Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not vain in the Lord.” v. 58.**

v. 29.....Baptized to be a part of the resurrection! (But that is another lesson).