

The Resurrection of the Dead

We have been discussing the “elementary teachings” of Christ and “going on to maturity”. (Heb. 6:1-3). The reason that most have not gone on to maturity is because they have never been taught the elementary doctrines and without them, we cannot go on to maturity as Christians. Today, I would like to introduce the fifth of these elementary doctrines, the “resurrection of the dead”.

We live in a time when even theologians are questioning whether Jesus was actually resurrected from the dead. If we don't believe in His resurrection, we cannot proclaim to be a believer in Him. 1 Corinthians 15:12-14 says, “...how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? If there is no resurrection..., then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith.”

This questioning of the resurrection is “humanism”, where the only value of being a Christian is that of a lifestyle being based on Jesus' teaching, not on His person. Though it may result in a more peaceful and humane society because of His standard to “love your neighbor as yourself”, it does not answer the issue of His resurrection.

His resurrection is not just another philosophy or belief structure, and those who see it this way will very quickly turn to a coming global religion when it is offered because there is nothing distinct or essentially valuable about being a Christian. Yet, to be a Christian is to know the truth, “a person, the Lord, Jesus, the Christ”. His claim was, “I am the way” and His resurrection is the validation of who He is and what He said about Himself. That resurrection stands as the proof of what we believe to be true, about life in the present, and in the life to come. We are thus, not merely placing our hope in a belief, but in the guarantee of His resurrection, which guarantees our resurrection in the end of days.

In the days immediately ahead of us, the definition of God will be paramount in preparing us to maintain what we believe in the midst of a growing storm of criticism about who Jesus is and what He proclaimed. There is a need for a very strict definition of who God is – He is the God and Father of the Lord, Jesus, the Christ.

Today, everyone is talking about “God”, and He is being defined as “Buddha”, “Allah”, or some other god. Yet, God has not changed who He is and will not be reinterpreted by our own mosaic of beliefs about Him. It is not enough to believe in Him, but we must believe in the One He sent to represent Himself. And, if we believe in Him, the Lord, Jesus, the Christ, we are left with only one conclusion – He is “the way” and the validity of His declaration is His resurrection from the dead.