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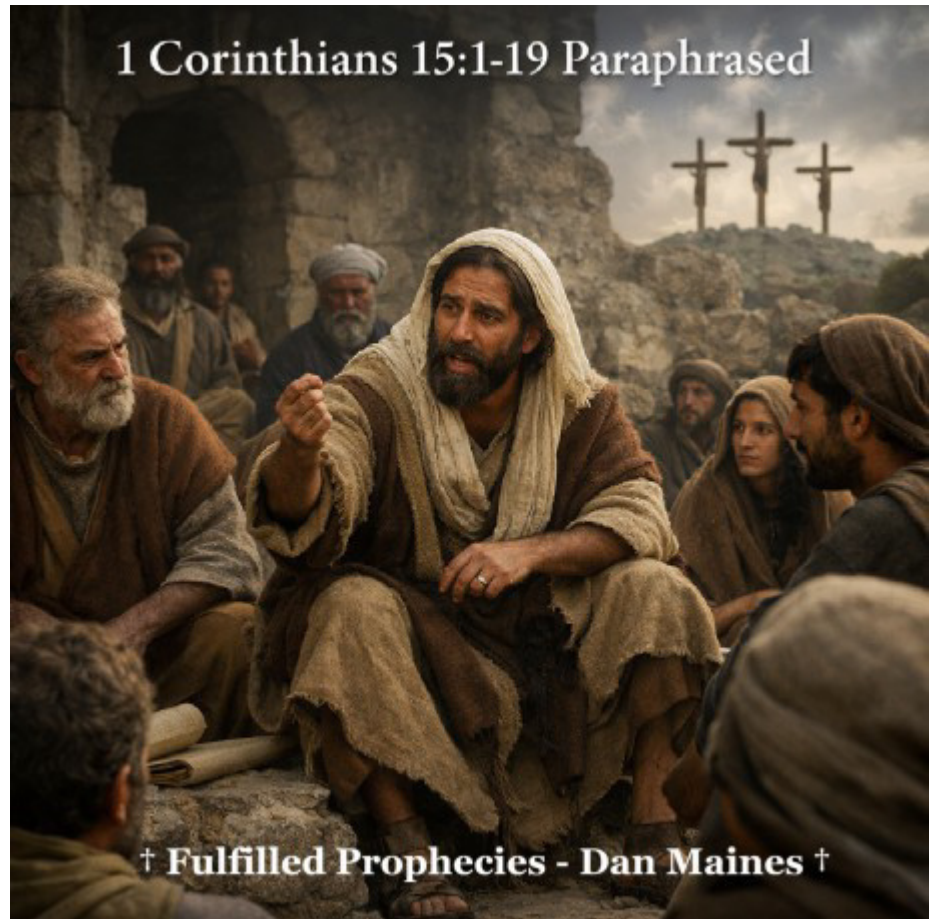
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1 Corinthians 15:1-19 Paraphrased



By Dan Maines

1 Corinthians 15:1-19 Paraphrased

Introduction

† Paul reminds the believers in Corinth about the message that saved them, the good news about Christ's death, burial, and resurrection.

† The issue in Corinth wasn't whether Christ rose, but whether the dead rise at all, so Paul begins by reminding them of the foundation they already accepted.

† From the fulfilled perspective, this chapter addresses the resurrection hope that was about to reach its covenantal

fulfillment in their generation (Matthew 24:34).

1 Corinthians 15:1

Brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the good news I preached to you, the message you accepted and the truth you are standing on.

† The gospel wasn't something new to them, it was the message they had already received and believed.

† Paul emphasizes stability, they were standing firmly on the gospel, meaning their faith was anchored in what Christ had already accomplished (Romans 5:2).

† Early writer Clement of Alexandria also wrote that the apostles delivered the same gospel everywhere, showing its consistency throughout the early church (Clement of Alexandria, Stromata).

1 Corinthians 15:2

Through this message you're being saved, if you continue holding firmly to the word I preached to you, otherwise your belief would have been empty.

† Salvation here is tied to perseverance in the gospel message that had been delivered.

† Paul's warning shows that abandoning the resurrection truth would empty their faith of its foundation (Hebrews 3:14).

† Irenaeus later emphasized that the resurrection of Christ is the center of Christian faith and hope (Irenaeus, Against Heresies).

1 Corinthians 15:3

What I first passed on to you was the most important truth I received myself, that Christ died for our sins just as the Scriptures said.

† Paul reminds them this wasn't his invention, it was the apostolic message handed down from the beginning.

† The death of Christ fulfilled the prophetic promises concerning the suffering Messiah (Isaiah 53:5).

† Justin Martyr wrote that the prophets clearly foretold the suffering and death of the Messiah centuries beforehand (Justin

Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho).

1 Corinthians 15:4

He was buried, and on the third day He was raised to life just as the Scriptures said.

† The burial confirms the reality of His death, it wasn't symbolic or imagined.

† The resurrection fulfilled prophetic patterns found in the Hebrew Scriptures (Psalm 16:10).

† Eusebius recorded that the early church unanimously proclaimed the resurrection as a historical event witnessed by many (Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History).

1 Corinthians 15:5

He appeared to Cephas, and after that He appeared to the twelve.

† Cephas is Peter, one of the first witnesses to the risen Christ.

† The appearance to the apostles confirmed that the resurrection was seen and verified by multiple witnesses (Luke 24:34).

† Tertullian later pointed to these eyewitness testimonies as proof that the resurrection wasn't a myth (Tertullian, On the Resurrection of the Flesh).

1 Corinthians 15:6

After that He appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died.

† This large group of witnesses strengthened the credibility of the resurrection account.

† Paul's statement that many were still alive meant his readers could verify the testimony themselves.

† Irenaeus wrote that the resurrection witnesses were widely known among the earliest believers (Irenaeus, Against Heresies).

1 Corinthians 15:7

Then He appeared to James, and later to all the apostles.

† James here refers to the brother of Jesus, who later became a leader in the church in Jerusalem (Acts 15:13).

† The appearances continued to confirm the resurrection through multiple credible witnesses.

† Early church historian Eusebius also recorded the leadership role of James among the first believers (Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History).

1 Corinthians 15:8

Last of all, as if to someone born at the wrong time, He appeared to me also.

† Paul describes himself as an unexpected witness because he had persecuted the church before encountering Christ.

† His encounter with the risen Christ on the road to Damascus transformed him from enemy to apostle (Acts 9:3-6).

† Clement of Alexandria wrote that Paul's conversion was one of the most powerful testimonies to the resurrection (Clement of Alexandria, Stromata).

1 Corinthians 15:9

For I'm the least of the apostles, and I'm not worthy to be called an apostle because I persecuted the church of God.

† Paul's humility reflects his awareness of his former persecution of believers.

† Despite his past, God used him powerfully to spread the gospel to the nations (Acts 26:9-18).

† Irenaeus praised Paul's transformation as evidence of God's mercy and power (Irenaeus, Against Heresies).

1 Corinthians 15:10

But by God's grace I am what I am, and His grace toward me wasn't wasted, instead I worked harder than all of them, yet it wasn't really me but God's grace working through me.

† Paul credits everything in his ministry to God's grace rather than his own effort.

† Grace didn't produce laziness, it produced diligent service in spreading the gospel (Colossians 1:29).

† Tertullian noted that Paul's tireless labor showed how grace empowers faithful ministry (Tertullian, On the Resurrection of the Flesh).

1 Corinthians 15:11

Whether it was I or they, this is the message we preached, and this is what you believed.

† Paul emphasizes unity among the apostles, the gospel message was the same everywhere.

† The consistency of the apostolic message confirmed the truth of the resurrection proclamation (Galatians 2:7-9).

† Justin Martyr also confirmed that the early churches all taught the same core gospel message (Justin Martyr, First Apology).

1 Corinthians 15:12

Now if Christ is preached as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?

† Paul exposes the contradiction in the Corinthian claim.

† If Christ rose, then the concept of resurrection cannot be denied.

† The denial likely came from Greek philosophical ideas that rejected bodily resurrection (Acts 17:32).

1 Corinthians 15:13

If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised.

† Paul uses logical reasoning to show the consequences of denying resurrection.

† Rejecting resurrection would undermine the central event of Christianity.

† Irenaeus argued strongly against groups that denied resurrection because it destroyed the gospel itself (Irenaeus, Against Heresies).

1 Corinthians 15:14

And if Christ hasn't been raised, then our preaching is useless and your faith is useless too.

† Without the resurrection, the entire Christian message would collapse.

† Faith would have no foundation if Christ remained in the grave.

† Tertullian wrote that the resurrection is the cornerstone of Christian belief (Tertullian, *On the Resurrection of the Flesh*).

1 Corinthians 15:15

Even worse, we would be found to be false witnesses about God because we testified that God raised Christ, whom He didn't raise if the dead aren't raised.

† Paul says the apostles would be liars if the resurrection were false.

† Their testimony about Christ would be completely unreliable.

† Early Christian writers repeatedly defended the apostles as trustworthy witnesses (Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*).

1 Corinthians 15:16

For if the dead aren't raised, then Christ hasn't been raised either.

† Paul repeats the argument to emphasize the unavoidable conclusion.

† Denying resurrection automatically denies Christ's resurrection.

† The logic here shows how foundational the resurrection doctrine was to the early church.

1 Corinthians 15:17

And if Christ hasn't been raised, your faith is worthless and you're still in your sins.

† The resurrection proves that Christ's sacrifice was accepted by God.

† Without it, forgiveness and redemption would remain incomplete (Romans 4:25).

† Justin Martyr explained that the resurrection demonstrated God's victory over death (Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho).

1 Corinthians 15:18

Then those who have died in Christ have perished completely.

† If resurrection were false, believers who died would have no hope.

† Paul shows how devastating that conclusion would be for the church.

† The early church consistently taught resurrection as the hope of believers (Irenaeus, Against Heresies).

1 Corinthians 15:19

If our hope in Christ applies only to this life, then we're the most miserable people of all.

† Christianity isn't about temporary comfort but eternal victory over death.

† Without resurrection hope, believers would have endured suffering for nothing.

† From the fulfilled perspective, the resurrection promise reached its covenant fulfillment with the passing of the old covenant age (Hebrews 9:26-28).

Historical References

† Clement of Alexandria affirmed the apostolic gospel as the same message preserved throughout the early church (Clement of Alexandria, Stromata).

† Irenaeus defended the resurrection as essential Christian doctrine against early denials (Irenaeus, Against Heresies).

† Tertullian wrote detailed defenses of the resurrection and the apostolic testimony (Tertullian, On the Resurrection of the Flesh).

† Justin Martyr appealed to fulfilled prophecy and eyewitness testimony to defend the resurrection (Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho).

† Eusebius preserved early historical records about the apostles and resurrection witnesses (Eusebius, Ecclesiastical

History).

How It Applies To Us Today

† The gospel we believe today is the same gospel the apostles preached in the first century.

† Our faith still stands on the historical reality of Christ's death and resurrection.

† The fulfilled perspective reminds us that God's promises are always completed exactly as He said they would be.

Q & A Appendix

Q Why does Paul begin by reminding them of the gospel they already knew?

A Because the resurrection issue in Corinth was threatening the foundation of their faith (1 Corinthians 15:1-2).

Q Why does Paul list eyewitnesses of the resurrection?

A To demonstrate that the resurrection was confirmed by many credible witnesses (1 Corinthians 15:5-8).

Q Why does Paul emphasize grace in his ministry?

A Because everything he accomplished came from God's grace working through him (1 Corinthians 15:10).

Q What happens if the resurrection is denied?

A It destroys the entire gospel message and makes faith meaningless (1 Corinthians 15:14-17).

Q Why does Paul say believers would be miserable without resurrection hope?

A Because suffering for Christ would have no purpose if death had the final word (1 Corinthians 15:19).

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

Source Index

- † 1 Corinthians 15
- † Clement of Alexandria, Stromata
- † Irenaeus, Against Heresies
- † Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho
- † Tertullian, On the Resurrection of the Flesh
- † Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History

1 Corinthians 15:1-19 Paraphrased

<https://fulfilledprophecies.com/topics/1062.html>

1 Corinthians 15:20-49 Paraphrased

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