*last enemy to be destroyed is death.****27****For “God has put all things in subjection under his feet.” But when it says, “all things are put in subjection,” it is plain that he is excepted who put all things in subjection under him.****28****When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all.*

**AP:** In Christ’s resurrection, we have **salvation**. In His **resurrection**, we have **hope! For in Christ**, we have a victor over death—who then promises that same victory will be passed on to each of us. For He did not simply return to life to die again, but He rose again to never die—and that promise is for us, as well. We will all of us die (assuming Christ doesn’t return first). But for the Christian, that death will be followed by heavenly life eternal—never again to die!

**CONCLUSION (vs. 50-57)**

**ENTERTAINMENT/DW – Epcot/Journey Into Imagination with Figment**

Ultimately, the Disney **“Imagineers”** realized their mistake—and they quickly restored the little purple dragon to a place of prominence. They realized that they could not remove the **“core”** of the attraction and expect it to survive any more than you could extract a heart from a body and expect it to keep on living!

But friends, let me tell you: the resurrection is no **“Figment”**. If you doubt me, remain after services today, as we’ll be reviewing the evidence and reasons for our confident belief in the resurrection. For we do not have to accept this on **“blind faith”**. And it’s a good thing, too, for the resurrection is core to our lessons we teach and preach. It’s core to the songs we sing. When we partake of the Lord’s supper: the bread reminds of His broken body, the juice of His shed blood. Even in our symbols of the cross—in its emptiness—we remember the empty tomb and the resurrected savior! The resurrection’s place in the church is in its center: as **what started the church**, **validates our preaching**, is the **source of our salvation** and our **hope**! We can no more excise it than we can our very hearts!

Paul closes out this section by bringing everything back to the resurrection—for, in it was **meaning**. In it alone was **validation**. In it alone was **salvation** and **hope**!

**1CR 15.50-57** ~ *I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.****51****Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,****52****in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.* ***53*** *For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality.****54****When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.”* ***55****“O death, where is your victory?  O death, where is your sting?”* ***56****The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.****57****But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

In truth, we see that through Christ’s resurrection do we have the hope of conquering death—the great enemy of mankind! **But how are we able to enroll in that hope? How are we to partake in that resurrection?**

**INVITATION**

**RM 6.1-4** ~ *What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?****2****By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?****3****Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?****4****We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.*

#626 [Exp-NTPE] **The Resurrection’s No Figment** 1CR 15.1-57

04/07/2025 PC **X** Pchd **BL – 04/20/2025**

**QUESTION:** What is the place of the resurrection in the Gospel?

**TRN TO 1CR 15**

**INTRODUCTION**

**ILL—Family Vacations to Florida** (we’d go every couple of years; one year, we went to the new Epcot theme park; for a kid, the part was largely boring and exhausting—but there were a couple rides I loved; my favorite starred a little purple dragon named Figment) I don’t know what it was that I loved so much about it, but I cherished my little Figment plushy for years—keeping it through middle school and high school.

But then, something happened. In the late 90s, Disney **“Imagineers”** looked at the attraction and decided it was due for a **“modernization”**. It’d been the same ride for nearly fifteen years—and it was time to update it. When it opened in 1999, it opened to the exact opposite of fanfare—the ride revisions, changing **“Journey Into Imagination”** from **“Journey into YOUR Imagination”** managed to strip out every single bit of joy from the attraction.

It blew my mind: **how can someone so completely misunderstand what makes the ride “tick”? How can someone willingly strip the very soul out of something like they did?**

**BACKGROUND (vs. 1-2)**

**JESUS CHRIST/Resurrection/Belief**

Today is a day where most recognize and reflect back upon the resurrection of Jesus. Yet, while the number of **“self-professed Christians”** who profess belief in Christ’s resurrection still remains high in America, outside her borders, we see the opposite. In some studies, less than 1/3 of professed Christians in Europe and other countries believe in its reality—rejecting it as nothing more than a story for fools and children. Many desire to treat Christianity like an aging theme park attraction—they desire to strip those **“troublesome elements”** from it and remake it in a more modern styling.

But in so doing, they are, unknowingly, making the same mistake made by the Disney **“Imagineers”**—so completely misunderstanding what makes Christianity **“tick”**—willingly stripping out its very soul!

**1CR 15.1-2** ~ *Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand,****2****and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.*

The church in Corinth struggled with an understanding of what really mattered. They were so focused on the **“show”**—praising those who could miraculously speak in tongues—in foreign languages they’d never practiced or studied—and failed to show love for one another. But another reason for their failure was a sort of hardline materialism: they struggled to believe that there was anything beyond this world—that there was any future resurrection of the dead for the faithful Christian.

**1CR 15.12-13** ~ *Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?****13****But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised.*

Paul wouldn’t have this nonsense—he would not allow for them to strip such a key concept as the resurrection of the dead from the faith. For while they might have thought it was something unimportant, he knew the truth: it was indispensable! And for evidence of this fact, he pointed to what he’d come to refer to as the **“firstfruits”** of our future resurrection **(vs. 20)**—the resurrection of Jesus Christ, Himself! And he’d point out, much to their amazement, **the resurrection’s place in the Gospel**.

**BD1: The Resurrection is What Started the Church (vs 3-11)**

**ENTERTAINMENT/Disney World – Epcot/Figment - Origin**

It’s a funny thing to think about such a strange inspiration for the character—which would end up being the inspiration for the original ride, itself. Today, there are all sorts of people who question what was the foundation of the Christian faith. Some have argued it was some shadowy or ancient council. But in **1CR 15**, we see that Paul has recorded for us an early Christian **“statement of faith”**—likely recorded in your translation formatted like a poem or hymn: the earliest extant founding document of the faith—and within these words, we see **what it was that started the church**!

**1CR 15.3-11** ~ *For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures,****4*** *that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,* ***5*** *and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.****6****Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep.****7****Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles.* ***8****Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.****9*** *For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.****10*** *But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.* ***11*** *Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.*

**EX:** Many non-Christians argue that the resurrection was a later-day myth—something that was created in the 3rd Century or later. However, from the Aramaic phrasing and verbiage of this section, it’s widely believed that this section of the writing predates even the writing of the rest of the book (commonly dated to **55 AD**—during Paul’s visit in Ephesus on his Second Missionary journey). It’s been dated back to the **40s** and even potentially as far back as the **30s**—literally only a year or two following the ministry and death of Christ.

**AP:** There’s a reason why we focus on the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. It’s literally the founding principle—the very **thing that started the church**.

**AC 2.22-24** ~*“Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know—****23****this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.****24****God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it.*

**BD2: The Resurrection is What Validates Our Preaching (vs 14-16)**

**ILL—Changes for “Journey Into YOUR Imagination”** (knew they wanted to do something different, so they scaled back Figment’s part in the show; became nothing more than a glorified cameo) They largely left the character present because it was a valuable IP—they knew that in a way, the character’s presence could serve to **validate** the ride. But instead, his presence as a cameo undermined it.

**1CR 15.14-16** ~ *And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain.****15****We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised.* ***16*** *For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised.*

**EX:** Paul pointed to the resurrection of Christ—which he tied to the ultimate resurrection of the Christian dead—and said that it was the resurrection that **validated their preaching**.

**AP:** Today, many people like to believe that we can maintain all the principles and moral teachings of Christianity without the **“unbelievable”** aspects—the miracles and specifically, the resurrection. But Paul points out that without the resurrection, the whole value of Christianity fades away. For if the apostles and prophets were lying about the resurrection, it calls into question every other thing they said.

Brethren, the same Peter who preached *But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you,****15****and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses.* **(AC 3.14-15)**also wrote: *Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully,****11****inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories.****12****It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.* **(1PT 1.10-12)** Ultimately, the resurrection of Christ is irremovable—not simply because it’s **what started the church**, but also because it **validates our preaching**!

**BD3: The Resurrection is the Source of Salvation and Hope (vs. 17-18-28)**

**ILL—Failure of “Journey Into YOUR Imagination”** (it was clear it was a failure; after talking, the biggest note was simple: where was Figment?) They realized quickly that if they wanted to have any chance of turning things around, they needed to return the little purple dragon to the center stage.

**1CR 15.17-18** ~ *And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins.****18****Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.*

**EX:** Paul had already pointed out to the Corinthians that, without the resurrection, their teachings were null-and-void. But that wasn’t all. For, as he’d demonstrate in multiple writings, the resurrection wasn’t just a nice or even key teaching: it was **the source of their salvation and hope**!

**RM 4.22-25** ~ *That is why his faith was “counted to him as righteousness.”* ***23****But the words “it was counted to him” were not written for his sake alone,****24****but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord,****25****who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.*

**AP:** Ultimately, Jesus’ death was for our sins, while His resurrection was for our salvation! Had He simply died, He’d have been no different from the scores of others who’ve died, unjustly, throughout the millennia. But the key difference between Christ and people like William Tyndale, Martin Luther King Jr, and countless others is that He didn’t just die: He conquered death!

**1CR 15.19-28** ~ *If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.* ***20****But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.****21****For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead.* ***22****For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.****23****But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ.****24****Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power.****25****For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.****26****The*