

# 1 Corinthians 15:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.

## Analysis

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**And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain** (εἰ δὲ Χριστὸς οὐκ ἐγήγερται, κενὸν ἄρα τὸ κήρυγμα ἡμῶν)—The word *kenon* (κενόν, "empty, void") appears twice. Paul's entire ministry—*kērygma* (κήρυγμα, "proclamation")—rests on resurrection. If false, apostolic preaching is *kenon*, devoid of content and power. Christianity is not moral philosophy or religious feeling—it's proclamation of historical event.

**And your faith is also vain** (κενὴ καὶ ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν)—The Corinthians' *pistis* (πίστις, "faith, trust") would be *kenē*, empty. Faith is only as good as its object. Faith in a dead messiah is delusion. Paul stakes everything on historical fact—resurrection is not symbol or metaphor but event. Without it, Christianity collapses into meaningless mythology.

## Historical Context

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Paul wrote in an era of religious pluralism—mystery religions, emperor worship, philosophical schools all competed. Yet Paul doesn't say 'all religions lead to God' or 'Christianity offers superior ethics.' He claims unique historical event: God raised Jesus from death. This falsifiable claim made Christianity vulnerable to disproof—but also evidentially verifiable.

## Related Passages

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**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

## Study Questions

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1. How does Christianity's dependence on historical facts distinguish it from religions based on timeless truths or myths?
2. What would Paul say to those who claim 'Jesus rose in my heart' while denying physical resurrection?
3. Why is Christianity more vulnerable than other religions—and how is this vulnerability actually a strength?

## Interlinear Text

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εἰ	δὲ	Χριστὸς	οὐκ	ἐγήγερται	κενὴ	ἄρα	τὸ	κήρυγμα
if	And	Christ	not	be	vain	then	G3588	preaching
G1487	G1161	G5547	G3756	G1453	G2756	G686		G2782
ἡμῶν	κενὴ	δὲ	καὶ	ἡ	πίστις	ὑμῶν·		
is our	vain	And	also	G3588	faith	your		
G2257	G2756	G1161	G2532		G4102	G5216		

## Additional Cross-References

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**1 Corinthians 15:17** (Faith): And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.

**1 Thessalonians 4:14** (Faith): For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

**Acts 17:31** (Resurrection): Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

**Matthew 15:9** (Parallel theme): But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

**James 2:20** (Faith): But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

**Galatians 2:2** (Parallel theme): And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain.

**Isaiah 49:4** (Parallel theme): Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain: yet surely my judgment is with the LORD, and my work with my God.

**1 Corinthians 15:2** (Faith): By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.