

Intro.

- A. (Excerpt f/ Fox's Book of Christian Martyrs, & Jesus Freaks)
1. John the Baptizer, Stephen, James, Paul, etc. were men who died for The Truth (**Ac. 21:13; Rom. 5:7**).
 2. Down thru eons of time, men & women have found some causes in which they believed for which they were quiet willing to die.
 3. Whenever we hear of a needless untimely death (e.g., result of a drunk driver) = tragic, to die in vain.
- B. If you will recall **Rom. 5:8** goes on to tell of Jesus' willingness to die for us, even though we were sinners.
1. Death of Christ is mentioned over 175 times.
 2. Along w/ the burial & resurrection, it is *the fact* of Christianity. **1 Cor. 15:1-4**
 3. Many say, *Jesus died in vain*, & it is fair to ask, *Did He???*
 4. The answer would be → yes **IF...**

Discuss.**I. IF THE LAW IS STILL BINDING, Gal. 2:21**

- A. Galatian letter deals with this problem.
1. In **Gal. 2:16** we learn that there was no justification by the law.
 2. Paul said that a return to law of Moses means we are falling f/ grace, **Gal. 5:4**
 3. However, Bible says we are redeemed f/ the curse of the law, **Gal. 3:13, 19, 24**
- B. Sabbatarians insist that the law is still in force, & should be submitted to today.
1. However, God's Spirit testifies that the handwritten ordinances was *blotted out* by Christ, **Col. 2:14**.
 2. Paul explained to the Corinthians how Moses' Law had been *done away with* (**2 Cor. 3:7-11**)
 3. Any doctrine which makes Christ's death vain is **FALSE**.

II. IF RELIGIOUS DIVISION IS RIGHT.

- A. Many claim that division is a good thing.
1. They reason, *Taste is different...Some think with their heart, others with their head.*
 2. What our faith is doesn't matter, so long as we have "faith." We are all part of that larger C H U R C H
- B. Christ died to bring together men f/ various walks of life into one body (church), **Gal. 3:28**.
1. The way Paul expressed it to those in Ephesus is recorded in **Eph. 2:15-16**.
 2. If religious division is appropriate & acceptable, then *Christ died in vain*.

III. IF THE CHURCH IS NON-ESSENTIAL.

- A. Many advocate *religion & being spiritual...*
1. ...but they want no relationship with the church.
 2. So many good sincere religious people would say, *Surely you don't think the church has anything to do...*
- B. Keep in mind that the church owes it's existence to Christ.
1. In **Ac. 20:28** Paul said Jesus purchased it with his own blood.
 2. *Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it*, **Eph. 5:25**
 3. No wonder Jesus said the church would be His in **Mt. 16:18**.

IV. IF THERE IS NO RESURRECTION.

- A. To deny the resurrection of Jesus from the tomb outside Jerusalem is not a new idea. **Mt.22:23**
1. The Jewish sect of the Sadducees believed in neither a bodily resurrection of the dead, nor angels,
 2. Even within the early church, there were skeptics & doubters, **2 Tim. 2:17; 1 Cor. 15:22**
- B. Christ died to guarantee a resurrection.
1. *He is the resurrection & the life* (**Jn. 11:25**)
 2. *He is the firstfruits of the dead* (**1 Cor. 15:14**)
 3. *If there is no resurrection, faith & our preaching is vain*, **1 Cor. 15:14**

Concl.

V. IF I AM LOST, THEN CHRIST DIED IN VAIN!!!

- A. Christ died to save us punishment that would never have an end, everlasting torment.
 - 1. He died for all, **Heb. 2:9**
 - 2. Yet, not everyone will be saved, **Mt. 7:13f** – In fact, most people will be lost.
 - 3. Therefore, for most people, Jesus death at Calvary on that rugged old cross is **VAIN**.
- B. His death benefits me & you *ONLY IF WE OBEY CHRIST !!!*
 - 1. He is the author of eternal salvation to those who obey Him, **Heb. 5:8-9**
 - 2. We must live in such a way that His death accomplishes its Divine objectives, or it = in vain.
- C. **Gal.5:4** tells of the possibility of making Christ *of no effect* whenever
 - 1. We follow some law or practice, other than Jesus' New Testament will,
 - 2. When we *fallen from grace*, (unfaithful to God, having lost the hope Christ's resurrection affords.
 - 3. If you know what you must do to obey Christ this very moment, & you reject Him again this hour, you make his death of no effect in your life, & you will die in you sins lost & w/o hope!
- D. We stand ready to see you affirm your faith in the resurrected Savior in the most appropriate way
As you decide right now to obey the gospel as we stand together & sing.