

1 Corinthians 15:3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,
4 and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,

V.11 Whether then *it was* I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

12 Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?

13 But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised;

14 and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain.

15 Moreover we are even found *to be* false witnesses of God, because we testified against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised.

16 For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised;

17 and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins.

18 Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.

19 If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.

20 But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep.

21 For since by a man *came* death, by a man also *came* the resurrection of the dead.

22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.

23 But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming,

24 then *comes* the end, when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power.

25 For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet.

26 The last enemy that will be abolished is death.

Review:

1. One thing we saw last time is that anyone who turns to Christ – He saves
 - a. He saves us b/c He loves us
 - b. He saves us to exhibit the magnitude of His grace
 - i. No one turns to Christ & Him not save them

- ii. No one is saved and then loses their salvation
- iii. Our salvation is more about Him than us
- iv. It is about His incomprehensible, unfathomable, unimaginable, unconceivable, ungraspable, inexplicable, indefinable, immeasurable, inexhaustible, indescribable grace

Ephesians 2:7 so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that **not** of yourselves, *it is* the **gift** of God;

2. Secondly – we saw how the resurrection caused Christianity to take off like a rocket and it hasn't stopped even after 2000 years
 - a. We in the west might have become lackadaisical about the living Christ – but when those who haven't heard, hear – it gives meaning to life to them!

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V.4 and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,

V.11 Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

V.12 Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?

1. "how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead"
 - a. The major religions of that day believed in a resurrection – but only of the soul, but not the body
 - i. Remember, Corinth's lacked discernment about who taught & spoke in their church – so false teaching was rampant
 - ii. Some of those at Corinth had fallen back to believing in soul resurrection only
 - b. Paul argues the truth **V.13**

V.13 But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised;

V.14 and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain.

V.15 Moreover we are even found to be false witnesses of God, because we testified against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised.

V.16 For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised;

V.17 and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins.

V.18 Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.

1. "if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless"

a. The stamp of authenticity of the Gospel is the resurrection

Acts 17:31 because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead."

b. Notice evangelism in the early Church

i. It didn't center in on the people

ii. It centered on the death, burial, resurrection of Christ

Acts 2:22 "Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know—

²³ this *Man*, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put *Him* to death.

²⁴ "But God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.

c. Without the resurrection you have NOTHING!

d. Hinduism, Sikhism, Zoroastrianism – none have physical resurrection

i. Islam believes that Mohammad is as great as Jesus – but Mohammad didn't come back from dead

ii. Gautama Buddha – didn't come back from the dead

iii. George Patton believed in reincarnation – didn't come back

iv. If you have something new to say – fine – raise the dead & I'll listen!

- v. Apostle Paul did have something new to say & he did raise the dead

V.19 If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.

- 1. "If we have hoped in Christ in this life only"
 - a. If a religion is only good for this life – it has no real value – b/c we all end up dying

Ecclesiastes 9:4 ^(if no life after death) For whoever is joined with all the living, there is hope; surely a live dog is better than a dead lion.

⁵ For the living know they will die; but the dead do not know anything, nor have they any longer a reward, for their memory is forgotten.

V.20 But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep.

- 1. "the first fruits of those who are asleep"
 - a. The "First Fruits" was a Levitical offering in O.T.

Exodus 23:19 "You shall bring the choice first fruits of your soil into the house of the LORD your God.
"You are not to boil a young goat in the milk of its mother.

Leviticus 23:20 'The priest shall then wave them with the bread of the **first fruits** for a wave offering with two lambs before the LORD; they are to be holy to the LORD for the priest.

Numbers 18:12 "All the best of the fresh oil and all the best of the fresh wine and of the grain, the first fruits of those which they give to the LORD, I give them to you.

Deuteronomy 18:4 "You shall give him the first fruits of your grain, your new wine, and your oil, and the first shearing of your sheep.

- b. The "First Fruit" was offered right before harvest time – no harvesting was to be done until First Fruit offering was made
 - i. It was more complicated than we can go into here

- ii. Basically it was the offering of their best produce & was a sign that the whole harvest belonged to God & that they were trusting Him for a good harvest
- c. When Christ rose from the dead – His resurrection became God’s promise to us that we could trust Him to raise us from the dead also

V.21 For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead.

V.22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.

- 1. “For since by a man came death”
 - a. One of the most verifiable truths is that death came thru Adam to all men

Hebrews 9:27 And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this *comes* judgment,

- 2. “by a man also came the resurrection...in Christ all...made alive”
 - a. The resurrection is the verifiable proof that – those **in** Christ will live even if they die

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies,

²⁶ and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?"

V.23 But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming,

- 1. “those who are Christ's at His coming”
 - a. The word “coming” is *παρουσία* – the word is used for coming of royalty – it means the person of royalty themselves will be present (not a representative)
 - i. The word is used of Christ coming for His Church,
 - ii. Used for His 2nd coming
 - iii. Used for the coming of the antichrist (b/c the world will consider him royalty)
 - iv. The context determines what it has reference to
 - b. The word implies great fanfare, radiance, splendor
 - i. It was used of a Roman emperor’s arrival

- c. Here it has reference to Christ coming for the Church
- d. It will be the most glorious thing you have ever experienced
 - i. **#1.**We will for the first time see Him as He is
 - 1 John 3:2** Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.
 - ii. **#2.**We will behold His glory at that time – it will be the greatest experience you have ever had!
 - 1. Even Christ is excited about that time coming
 - John 17:24** "Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.
 - iii. **#3.**If you are in fellowship w/ Him when He appears – there won't be any encumbrance or impediment (such as doubt or sin) between the two of you
 - 1. Even though Thomas was weak in the faith – Look how Christ received him
 - John 20:25** So the other disciples were saying to him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."
 - ²⁶ After eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus *came, the doors having been shut, and stood in their midst and said, "Peace *be* with you."
 - ²⁷ Then He *said to Thomas, "Reach here with your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand and put it into My side; and do not be unbelieving, but believing."
 - ²⁸ Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"

- e. The closest thing we can compare that day to is when the disciples were on the Mount of Transfiguration

Matthew 17:2 And He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light.

⁵ While he was still speaking, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud said, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!"

- i. It you will think about "that" day it will cause you to live a pure life

1 John 3:3 And everyone who has this hope *fixed* on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

- f. The world will miss out on all of this – but we won't!
 g. When He comes back to earth as King – it will be a glorious thing for the believers – horrible for the lost
 h. When the antichrist comes to take power it will be a glorious time (for a little while)

V.23 x But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming,

2. "But each in his own order"

- a. "order" (τάγμα) – means a body of soldiers, band, troop or class
 i. This is referring to categories of those resurrected – think of a parade!
 ii. It actually starts w/ the resurrection of Christ Himself

V.23 "...Christ the first fruits..."

- iii. This isn't referring to just the resurrection of the Church –
 iv. It also refers to all that belong to Christ – i.e. the O.T. saints & tribulation saints

- b. The Reformers recovered many biblical truths & we owe them a great debt

- v. But eschatology wasn't something they understood – They couldn't see Israel becoming a nation again

- vi. Without that understanding you are not going to have any prophecy right
- c. They didn't understand "each in his own order"
- d. They believed in a general resurrection – which many believe today
- e. But there is no such thing as a "general resurrection" (everyone is resurrected at the same time)
 - i. Daniel (b/c he was O.T. prophet) had very limited understanding of resurrection
 - Daniel 12:2** "Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace *and* everlasting contempt.
 - ii. What he said is true – but he couldn't see the whole picture
 - iii. There is really a 1000 years in this verse
- f. But Daniel also couldn't see but 490 years until the end of time
- vii. Nothing was as clear to O.T. prophets as it is today
- g. We will look at the order of the resurrection later in this chapter

V.24 then comes the end, when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power.

1. "then comes the end when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father"

- a. This phrase is more sudden/direct than that
 - i. There is no verb in the phrase – literally – "then the end!"
 - ii. The world order changes at the rapture
- b. Christ started the process of taking this world back again at the cross
- c. But God has allowed opposition to His Kingdom to exist to this day
- d. When Satan offered the kingdoms of this world to Christ – Christ didn't say it was an illegitimate offer

Matthew 4:8 Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and *showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory;

⁹ and he said to Him, "All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me."

¹⁰ Then Jesus *said to him, "Go, Satan! For it is

written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'

- e. The kingdoms of this world are Satan's at the moment
- f. But Christ will take them back

V.24 x then comes the end, when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when *He has abolished all rule and all authority and power.*

- 2. "when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power"
 - a. This would be all forms of rule, authority & power against God
 - b. The terms "rule, authority & power" are abstract terms also used for demonic & supernatural realm

Ephesians 6:12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers^(authorities), against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.

V.25 For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet.

V.26 The last enemy that will be abolished is death.

- 1. Where is our glory?
- 2. Man continually looks for glory in this life
- 3. It certainly isn't in our bodies – they flourish for a short time & begin to fade
- 4. It can't be in circumstances for they never stay the same for any extended period
- 5. It is in -the resurrection

Colossians 3:4 When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

2 Corinthians 4:16-17 (NASB) ¹⁶ Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.

¹⁷ For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison,

Philippians 3:21 (NASB) who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

