

The Resurrection of Christ

2004 FFPC Easter Convention

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Bible Text: 1 Corinthians 15:12-22

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And while you are turning there let us notice that in this great chapter we have the seven major feasts that were observed by the people of God under the ceremonial system and each one of them points us to Christ and to a certain feature or aspect of the work of our Lord Jesus Christ on behalf of his own people.

And we notice, for example, in verse five the reference to the feast of the Passover. The Passover brings us to the cross. We are told by Paul that Christ our passover is crucified or sacrificed for us.¹ The Passover points us to our Savior's death, to the shedding of his blood, to the great redemptive work that he accomplished when he gave himself without spot unto God and he suffered, the just for the unjust that he might bring us to God. We have Christ crucified, therefore, in the Passover.

Then in verse six we read of the feast of Unleavened Bread which actually followed on from the Passover and that feast would certainly point us to Christ buried. Unleavened bread signifies the concept of freedom from corruption and that is a fact that inseparably connected with the very burial of our Lord Jesus Christ. When we notice—and we will see this a little later in more detail—when we notice concerning his burial that he saw no corruption, the incorruptibility of the humanity of Christ is in view when we think about the feast of Unleavened Bread.

And then we come to verse 10 which I said earlier contains this word first fruits. And verse 10 says:

Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest: And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it.²

Now this feast that is in view here is called the feast of the First Fruits. It involved the offering of the first sheaf of the harvest unto the Lord. It was lifted up by the priest. It

¹ See 1 Corinthians 5:7.

² Leviticus 23:10-11.

was lifted up as a wave offering actually and was waved before the Lord. And that first sheaf was the signal of the fact that the Lord would give the full harvest.

And yet it is, in a very clear way as we think about these verses and especially the very order of these feasts, it is in a very clear way a portrayal of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. You have Christ crucified in the Passover. You have Christ buried with regard to the feast of Unleavened Bread. You have Christ rising again now when you come to the feast of First Fruits.

We are actually told there in verse 11 that the sheaf was presented, “on the morrow after the sabbath,”³ which is actually the first day of the week, taking the New Testament system. And it was on that very day that this sheaf of this first fruits was lifted up and was presented to the Lord as a harbinger of the whole harvest that was yet to come. And in that we are shown our Savior’s rising again from the dead on that blessed first day of the week. And in his resurrection—as, again, we will see as we go through this message today—we have the harbinger and indeed the guarantee of the final great harvest, the gathering of the whole company of the redeemed because Christ is the first fruits from the dead.

Now with this introductory remarks we will go right to our text today and we want to look at this subject of Christ the first fruits. Having shown you the origin of the term and the significance of it to some degree here, we come to the text itself today, 1 Corinthians 15 and verse 20, “But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.”⁴

No I want us to think, first of all, about the singularity of this term as applied to Christ. We find here in this verse that it is applied to the Lord Jesus Christ only. He is called Christ, the first fruits in verse 23. And then in our text it says he became the first fruits of them that slept. He alone is the first fruits with regard to the resurrection.

Now in the Scripture, of course, the term first fruits is used in other places and in other ways. For example, it is employed with regard to God’s people on a number of occasions. The believer is spoken of under this term with regard to the new birth, with regard to regeneration. In James chapter one and verse 18 it says, “Of his own will,” that is of God’s will, “begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his [people].”⁵

Or Romans 8 and verse 23 says that God’s people have the first fruits of the Spirit.

And we could go to other verses that tie in with this, but you will find it used in Scripture concerning the believer with regard to regeneration. You will find it used of God’s people with regard to redemption.

³ Leviticus 23:11.

⁴ 1 Corinthians 15:20.

⁵ James 1:18.

In Revelation chapter 14 and verse four it speaks there of the Lord's people who are redeemed from among men and are the first fruits and they are the first fruits in the sense that they have been redeemed away from men, separated from the rest of humanity and they are, therefore, for the Lord. They are for the Lamb while the rest of men perish. And therefore they are the first fruits in that sense.

So it is true that the term is used of believers in those areas. But here we find that it is only used of the Lord Jesus Christ with regard to the doctrine of the resurrection.

Now it does not mean, of course, that the Lord was ever the first to rise from the dead. We all know that if we know our Bibles at all. In the Old Testament there were a few who rose from the dead. The widow of Zarephath and the Shunammite woman, their sons were raised from the dead. We think also in the New Testament of the people whom the Lord himself raised. So it does not mean that the Lord as the first actually to rise.

But what it does mean is that he was the first to rise from the dead with an incorruptible body, never to be subject to death again. That is its significance with regard to our Lord Jesus Christ in his resurrection.

We rejoice today that he is risen and we rejoice that he is the first fruits in that sense, the first to rise with an incorruptible body. We think of Acts 26 and verse 23. For the apostle Paul is testifying and he relates there his own testimony in that great chapter and is called to preach and in ministry that he carried out that he says in verse 23 that, among other things, he would say this or did say this, "That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead."⁶ And, again, we understand that to be a reference to the Lord's resurrection as the first to rise with an incorruptible body. This is the meaning of this term as it is used here of our Savior.

Now there is a lot in that for us to think about and a lot for us to consider and far too much, of course, to cover in one message. But just let me remind you of a few thoughts here as we see that the Lord was the first to rise. And this is the meaning of the term, the first to rise from the dead with an incorruptible body.

That means that even in death the Lord's humanity was incorruptible. In Acts two verse 31 we pick out a few words there that are very striking and are very appropriate and they are these. "Neither did his flesh see corruption."⁷ And the word "flesh" there would refer to the humanity of the Lord. And I believe the Lord's total humanity including the body and the blood of our Lord for that matter, because the blood of Jesus Christ is an integral and inseparable part of the Lord's true humanity. And that is why in the Free Church we believe that the precious blood did not perish because it is part of the Lord's real true incorruptible humanity. And I firmly believe that the blood of the Lord was resurrected just like the body of the Lord because the blood cannot corrupt. For the humanity of Christ saw no corruption.

⁶ Acts 26:23.

⁷ See Acts 2:31.

Why? And the answer is very simple. Because of the inseparable union between our Lord's two natures, his deity and his humanity. The Lord's humanity never existed except in union, yea, my friend, in intimate and inseparable union with his true deity. And, therefore, even when his body was dead and he was laid in the grave his humanity was not severed from his deity and therefore it saw no corruption in the tomb and that is a great feature of the gospel that brings hope and brings comfort and brings consolation to the hearts and the minds of the people of God even as they think of their own death and their own decay in the tomb.

You remember, my friend, that your joy unto Jesus Christ in the victory of not only the cross, but the victory of the resurrection and, therefore, while your body will turn to dust if you die before the Lord comes back—and we will all decompose in the tomb—yet by virtue of the fact that the Lord's humanity saw no corruption for it was always in existence with his deity, so our humanity, one day, will be delivered from the very bondage of corruption because we had as a Savior a perfect man who could see no corruption, a perfect man who was impeccably sinless. And it is the impeccable nature of Christ and the impeccable humanity of Christ because his two natures are joined together indissolubly that resulted in his seeing no corruption and resulted, therefore, in his being raised from the dead with an incorruptible body. That is why he is the first fruits from the dead in that sense. He had an incorruptible humanity. Therefore his body arose. He arose in victory over the grave.

And, of course, as well, his rising with an incorruptible body signifies that in his death he had made satisfaction to the law. That is the triumphant and victorious note and truth that comes forth from this fact that he is the first fruits from the dead because he was the first to rise with an incorruptible body and from that we deduce this truth as well that he, in his death, had satisfied the law.

You see, along with the perfection of the person of Christ there is always a perfection of the work of Christ. The two go together. We have a perfect Christ, a sinless Christ, a Christ with an incorruptible humanity and it is in view in these wonderful words: He is the first fruits from the dead. And, therefore, we know beyond all doubt that the work that that incorruptible Christ performed is a work that has satisfied the law. It is therefore a perfect work.

You look with at Hebrews chapter 13 and the verse 20 and notice how it speaks there of the Lord's resurrection in these terms, Hebrews 13 verse 20.

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus,
that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting
covenant, Make you perfect in every good work....⁸

And so on and so forth.

⁸ Hebrews 10:13-14.

The words I want you to notice are in verse 20 where we read here one of the great titles of God, “the God of peace,”⁹ a title that is used by the apostle Paul only in New Testament Scriptures, a name that signifies that he is the God of peace because Christ has made peace. Christ has satisfied him. Christ has quenched his wrath having fully and completely honored the law, having for his people and on behalf of his people fulfilled that law both in his life and in his death. And because of all that wonderful work of appeasing God’s law, God’s justice, God’s righteous demands, he is now the God of peace.

And it goes on to say here that he brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ.¹⁰ And notice how or on what basis he was brought again from the dead, “through the blood of the everlasting covenant.”¹¹

Why is there the emphasis here on Christ’s being raised from the dead through the blood? What does it mean? It simply signifies what I am saying here that our Lord Jesus Christ had made that perfect satisfaction unto God through the shedding of his blood and as a consequence of the shedding of the blood and God being appeased and satisfied, the Lord brought him forth.

Now the term there, “Brought again from the dead,”¹² that verb is a verb that has a legal sense to it. For example, in Acts chapter 16 where it refers to Paul and Silas being in prison and they were imprisoned unjustly, of course, but they were imprisoned by the magistrates and the magistrates we are told at Paul’s determined stand that he was not going to leave that prison unless the very men that had put him in there came and brought him out. And that is the verb that is used, Acts 16:39. “And they came and besought them, and brought them out.”¹³

It is the same verb. It has that legal sense to it. The magistrates who incarcerated them now released them. And let us remember in a very real sense our Lord Jesus Christ became a prisoner. He was rendered guilty on behalf of his people. He went to the cross as a guilty one. We sang the hymn, “Oh, Christ, what burdens bowed they head? Our load was laid on thee.”

He went to the cross and he was accounted guilty and he suffered in our place and then he went in to death. And yet, my dear friend, he could not remain in death. He could not be held under its power because the legal transaction has been done. Justice is satisfied and the justice that had been satisfied, therefore, required that the prisoner come forth. And therefore Jesus Christ is brought forth as the first fruits from the dead to signify that he had made satisfaction to the law.

⁹ Hebrews 13:20.

¹⁰ See Hebrews 13:20.

¹¹ Hebrews 13:20.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Acts 16:39.

The penalty of the law is death and Christ could not be held under death indefinitely because Christ had made satisfaction. And therefore, he came forth with that incorruptible body and that glorious transaction that brought him forth to signal that the work was done and that justice was satisfied.

Remember, Paul's great words at the end of the Romans four, "Delivered for our offences, and was raised again [because of] our justification."¹⁴ Raised again because justice was satisfied and the justification of his people was secured. And on that basis he was raised again and therefore as the first fruits from the dead he came forth to signal that the work was done, that the law was satisfied, that there is for the child of God a perfect and a full freedom from all of the bondage and the guilt of sin and the condemnation of the law. And it is into that triumph and that victory that we step by faith and in which we rejoice with all our souls as we gather here this morning and as we think of our blessed Savior, the first fruits from the dead coming forth to signify all of the work finished and completed.

But move on quickly with me because as we get into the very heart of this text, having looked at how the term is used of Christ alone to signify that he was the first to rise from the dead with an incorruptible body, let us notice, then, that his being the first fruits from the dead is the guarantee of the resurrection of his people.

It says here that he is "Risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept."¹⁵

I have already touched in this and intimated it to you in earlier remarks that his being the first fruits from the dead is inseparably connected with our resurrection. Indeed, it is for the sake of our resurrection that he is the first fruits from the dead.

Now this means that our resurrection, the resurrection of the saints that is yet before us, will take place when our Savior comes, is based on the truth of representation.

Look with me here at verses 21 and 22 that follow on from our text. It says in verse 21:

For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.¹⁶

Now in those verses you are reading of this truth of representation. Go back to verse 21 and it says there, "by man"¹⁷ and, of course, that is Adam. "by man came death."¹⁸ That is amplified in verse 22. "In Adam all die."¹⁹

¹⁴ Romans 4:25.

¹⁵ 1 Corinthians 15:20.

¹⁶ 1 Corinthians 15:21-22.

¹⁷ 1 Corinthians 15:21.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ 1 Corinthians 15:22.

Now there is a clear statement of the representative position of Adam, the first man. It is in Adam that all die. And what a very striking term that is. In Adam all die. Do you notice what it is actually saying? It is saying that the whole human race was in union with Adam. That is the sense of the term.

We all know today, if we know the Bible and the gospel at all, that the term in Christ means union with Christ. And since that is true the term “in Adam” means union with Adam.

There are many of God’s people who perhaps because they are ill taught or whatever the reason is, don’t understand that. Indeed, would reject it and oppose it. That we were in Adam, that he represented us, that when he sinned we sinned and that when he fell we fell. And he speaks now of the whole human race. And yet there is a very simple way to say it.

It says here, “In Adam all die.”²⁰ Are you subject to death? Yes, you are. Why? Because Adam was your representative and when Adam sinned and fell you sinned and fell and, therefore, death has passed upon all men, as Romans 5:12 says. “By one man sin came into the world and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”²¹

And the term there or the phrase or the clause there, “For all have sinned,”²² that refers to Adam’s first sin. All sinned in Adam because Adam was the representative of all men. And yet it goes on to say here in verse 21, again, “man came also the resurrection of the dead.”²³ And that is, then, enlarged on in verse 22, “In Christ shall all be made alive.”²⁴

And understand that clearly. It is not saying that all the members of the human race will share in this glorious resurrection of which Christ is the first fruits. Rather, it is saying, very clearly, that it is only when we are in Christ that we will be made alive. Well, do you see the truth of representation again? Christ is called the last Adam. He is the second man from heaven. The Lord Jesus Christ came, thank God, to do what the first Adam failed to do. But more than that, he came to undo what the first Adam did. And, therefore, it is Christ and through Christ that there is the resurrection from the dead, but only will it be enjoyed and will be experienced when you are in Christ because the truth of resurrection, the truth of joining with Christ and sharing with Christ who is the first fruits from the dead, sharing with him in his resurrection will only be experienced by those for whom he is the representative.

And, my friend, you can only be in Christ through faith in Jesus Christ, through resting your soul in Jesus Christ. And then through that step of faith and going to him and casting yourself upon him and entering in to him, you will have this glorious prospect of

²⁰ 1 Corinthians 15:22.

²¹ See Romans 5:12.

²² Romans 5:12.

²³ 1 Corinthians 15:21.

²⁴ 1 Corinthians 15:22.

enjoying that glorious transaction when the Savior will come and all those who are in him shall be made alive.

And as our representative, therefore, the Lord has procured our resurrection and has done so by his entire redemptive work. Look with me, then, at verse 21 again. For it says, “By man came also the resurrection of the dead.”²⁵

Now the word “man” here, of course, refers to Jesus Christ. But that expression, “by man came the resurrection of the dead” is a presentation of the whole work of Jesus Christ in order to bring about this resurrection from the dead. And, therefore, we are seeing here, again, that he did take our humanity. This is an inseparable part of the whole subject of the resurrection.

Why is there a resurrection for those who are saved? Why will they rise with these incorruptible bodies? Because there was one who became man, who took their humanity. We have already touched on that as we talked about the union between the humanity and the deity. But what a glorious fact this is that the Lord Jesus Christ did become man. Because, let me remind you, it is man who sinned. It is man who needs to be saved. And the only way that that can happen is when there is someone who is found to be a sinless man, a perfect man and that can only be when God becomes man and therefore by man there is resurrection from the dead because Christ took our humanity. And in that humanity he did all that was essential to bring about this deliverance from death and its sting and its corruption and its power. He died by offering up himself in the flesh. That humanity that he took was offered up unto God. And on that God man there was laid all the sin of all those who will ever trust in him and for whom he is the representative. And under that awful load he died, he suffered, he endured the wrath of God. He was then buried for his people because he is identified with them in every feature of the curse that came through sin. And therefore he must be buried.

And yet as we have already seen, that was just but a step toward the great deliverance that came when he rose bodily from the grave in triumph and in victory over the grave, over sin, over death, over its power, over its great effects. How did this all come about? Because our Lord Jesus Christ is the representative man who, as I said, came to undo all that Adam had done and reverse the curse and remove the sting.

And as we look down this very chapter you will find that that is what is in view when you go on down to those verses in verse 51 and onwards where it talks about the Lord and his coming and the great change that will take place and the removal of the corruption and the transformation.

And it says there in verse 55 the great cry of challenge, even:

²⁵ 1 Corinthians 15:21.

O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.²⁶

Are we not reading here of the great truth that the Lord, indeed, has done everything essential to remove the sting? Yes, the child of God must die and will die like all other men. But what a difference there is in the death of the Christian from the death of the unregenerate man because in the death of the believer there is no sting. That is why the New Testament describes the believer's death under certain terms and in various ways to bring out that fact, that there is no sting in the believer's death, that Christ by becoming man has removed the sting.

We think, for example, of the fact that death is described for the believer as a departure. Paul says in 2 Timothy four, "The time of my departure is at hand."²⁷ He says in Philippians his desire was to depart and to be with Christ.²⁸ And those terms that he uses, this particular word "depart" is a nautical term, a term that has to do with the sailing boat and the time when the boat leaves the quay side and slips away out on to the ocean to make its journey. That is the sense of that word.

And when the believer comes to die, what is it? It is for that Christian's ties to this earth to be loosed and the bands are broken and the ropes that, as it were, hold us down, are all untied and the soul of the believer simply departs and slips away to be with the Lord forevermore. It is a departure.

It is also described as a decease. In fact, that very word is used of our Lord's death itself in Luke nine and verse 31. "His decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem."²⁹

And one of the men who heard that was the apostle Peter. For Peter was on the mount that day when Moses and Elijah appeared and spake of his decease. And years later when the apostle was writing his second epistle—you will find this in 2 Peter chapter one—he refers there to his own decease.³⁰ And the word "decease" simply means a going out. It is the very word that gives us the word in our English Bibles, "exodus." The exodus of the children of Israel out of Egypt as recorded in the book that bears that name, that title comes from that very word.

And, therefore, what is the death of the Christian? It is a departure. It is the untying of the ropes. But it is also an Exodus, a going out.

And, ah, my friends, how did the Lord go out of this world? He went out in triumph. He went out in victory. His last cry from the cross signaled that. "Father, into thy hands I

²⁶ 1 Corinthians 15:55-57.

²⁷ 2 Timothy 4:6.

²⁸ See Philippians 1:23.

²⁹ Luke 9:31.

³⁰ See 2 Peter 1:15.

commend my spirit.”³¹ Then he gave up the ghost. That was Christ’s exodus. And that very term is taken and applied to the child of God regarding his or her death. And there are many other terms that could also be noted here, but we will not mention any more right now.

I am simply showing you, brethren and sisters, that our Savior, the first fruits from the dead, has come, has done the work that had to be done to guarantee our deliverance from the power of death. He took our humanity. He suffered in our place. He rose himself and therefore there is for the child of God no fear in death. And the believer here today needs to grasp that. If there is one thing the devil wants to make believers, he wants to make them afraid. And certainly in the area of death the devil may come and does come and instill great fear into the hearts of even some of the saints of God.

And how is there victory over that fear? By coming and looking at what the Savior has done.

Think of Hebrews 2:14 where it says, “Forasmuch then as the children,” that is, God’s children, God’s people, “are partakers of flesh and blood,” which simply means they are human beings, “he likewise himself took part in the same,” or partook of the same. He took the same nature, our humanity. For what reason? “That by means of death he might destroy him that had the power of death and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.”³²

There is no sting in death. For the child of God there is no fear. There is no need to dread it because Christ, the first fruits from the dead, has come and has taken away the sting.

There may be some sitting here right now and for you death is a great and terrible matter. And in your heart there is a terror concerning it because you know not Christ. You know not the Savior. And, dear sinner, you must come to this blessed person who dealt with death and triumphed over it, and rest your soul with him and then know that same victory that the believer has in and through Jesus Christ.

And then, as we close today, may I show you this final thought, that what Christ the first fruits has secured for his people will only be experienced at his coming again.

Verse 23 says, “But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming.”³³

Notice here that the Lord, as the first fruits, has already experienced his glory. He is in heaven and he is there in his glorified humanity. Now keep that in mind. The Lord took our humanity permanently. When he arose from the grave and ascended into heaven it was in that same body that the Lord gave him, that was prepared for him at the incarnation in which he dwelt as the God man, in which he died, in which he was buried

³¹ Luke 23:46.

³² See Hebrews 2:14-15.

³³ 1 Corinthians 15:23.

and in which he rose. And he ascended in that body to glory. But he has taken our humanity and he has elevated it, never again to be subject to death.

Look at Romans chapter six verse nine. It says:

Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.³⁴

And those verses are saying, among other things, that our Lord's humanity is no longer subject to death. It was at that one time when he yielded himself to death and voluntarily suffered death. But, thank God, when he arose as the first fruits he arose never again to be subject to death.

And, therefore, the Lord is the head in a very real sense of a new race, a new humanity, same humanity, but simply delivered.

Do you understand, dear believer, that what we have in Christ today and what we will have in Christ throughout eternity is actually far, far more superior than to what Adam had or what Adam was. It is beyond what Adam was and Adam was a perfect man. Yet Adam fell. And when we are brought into union with Christ and Christ our first fruits is risen from the dead in victory and in his glorified humanity is now reigning at the right hand of God and we are already joined to him, there will come the day at his blessed return when his people will enter into that experience of having a humanity that will never again be subject to death and corruption and all the ravages that sin has brought in the human race. We will be beyond that forever. And surely there is no greater comfort for the suffering sick, ill child of God than that great truth.

I have often said this in preaching that many will go to visit a sick person. And very often that visitor doesn't know what to say. Some one is ill, seriously ill, the body wracked with pain, disease that is eating its way through the body. There is suffering. There is no quality of life. There is no hope with regard to recovery. What do you say to that individual? What comfort do you give?

You give them the comfort of the gospel, that the gospel contains the great prospect of a body that will be absolutely free, a humanity that will be completely without corruption, pain, suffering, disease.

I can't go to any sick person and say, "The Lord is going to heal you and you will never suffer again." I can't say that in this world. We know the Lord can touch people and raise them up. My friend, eventually we all succumb. We all must lie down and through one means or another death will take us.

³⁴ Romans 6:9-10.

But, oh, dear brother or sister, when you visit the sick person, tell them about this. This is the comfort that is in this great truth, the great fact that when the Lord returns in all his glory there is going to be a complete reversal of all that the fall and that sin has done.

Isn't that what Paul is teaching in Romans chapter eight where he refers to the bondage of corruption and its being overcome and defeated when our Savior returns. And what we are seeing here is that what the Lord and what the Lord has done for his people signals that the reversal of the curse and the reversal of the effects of the fall and the reversal of death and the power of death. It is all reversed in Christ. It is all removed in Christ. And the full enjoyment of that is going to come, as we are shown here in our text today, at his coming. "Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming."³⁵

Then the people of God, on the basis of the victory of the cross and the victory of the resurrection and on the basis of their union with Christ in all that victory are going to have a body like unto his glorious body, are going to have a final, complete deliverance, a reversal of all that was known here. But it is only for those who are Christ's.

Because, dear sinner, what the believer will enjoy through Christ the first fruits, what the believer will experience through union with that Christ you will never know if you die as you are now living. Rather, you will know and you will taste the very opposite. You will taste of the wrath of God. You will taste of the sufferings and the torments of the damned both in soul and in body. And just as the Christian's body will be raised and reunited with his soul and will be with Christ in that glorious form forever, so your body will rise and be reunited with your soul. But a resurrection unto damnation. What shall it be for you? It is going to be one or the other.

You need to search your heart today. You need to see where you stand with the Lord. You need to make sure, my friend, that you are in Christ because right now you are in Adam if you are not in Christ. You are in Adam as you live. You are in Adam when you die. It simply means that you will be under the curse of God forever.

But there is deliverance and this Lord's Day is not an inappropriate time at all for a sinner like you to hasten at once to Christ to come to the Savior and trust him and rest in him, in Christ the first fruits from the dead and be accounted among those who are his at his coming. May you come to him today. May God take his Word and speak to your soul. May God save your soul this day for his own glory.

Mr. Cairns will come now, please, and bring the meeting to a close.

Alan Cairns:

We are going to sing one verse of the hymn 309.

Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling,
Calling for you and for me;

³⁵ Ibid.

See, on the portals He's waiting and watching,
Watching for you and for me.

Very simple words, words of entreaty. It is not a man who says come. It is Jesus Christ himself who says come. What an invitation that is, 309. I said one verse. We'll make it two. Verses one and three, one and three. We will stand together as we sing.

Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling,
Calling for you and for me;
See, on the portals He's waiting and watching,
Watching for you and for me.

Come home, come home;
Ye who are weary, come home;
Earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling,
Calling, "O sinner, come home!"

Time is now fleeting, the moments are passing,
Passing from you and from me;
Shadows are gathering, death-beds are coming,
Coming for you and for me.

Come home, come home;
Ye who are weary, come home;
Earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling,
Calling, "O sinner, come home!"

Let's bow together in prayer. Let us all pray.

Our heads are bowed. Let's just take a moment before we close with prayer. The great English preacher, great revival preacher once said, "It is a solemn thing to live. It is a solemn thing to die. But the two, dying the more solemn. Dying is the ebb of time. Dying is the flow of eternity."

You have heard God's Word this morning, a word of death and resurrection. If you are not saved, the gospel message is addressed to sinners. Jesus said, "I didn't come to call righteous people. I came to call sinners to repentance."³⁶

If in your heart today and your conscience God has worked to give you a knowledge of your sin and to work in your heart to point you to the Savior, then heed the call.

If you would like to talk with the preacher he is here as your servant for Christ's sake and any of us are here to help you understand the gospel. Don't go away rejecting Christ.

³⁶ See Matthew 9:13, Mark 2:17, Luke 5:32.

Father in heaven, how we thank thee that Christ is risen indeed, the first fruits of them that slept. We thank thee for the guarantee that there is in his rising from the dead. Thank God, not one believer will ever see eternal hell, not one believer will ever be left a step short of the perfect glories of the redeemed. Our Father, we pray that thou would encourage they people and edify thy saints. We pray that thou wilt do what thou hast said in thy Word and use the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. Grant that those who came to this meeting in Adam will by thy grace be brought into Christ and into life eternal by faith in him. Give fruit for the preaching of thy Word, lasting fruit, fruit that will glorify Christ for all eternity.

Part us now with thy blessing. Keep us in thy fear, the beginning of all knowledge and wisdom. Be the abiding portion of all thy believing people both now and evermore in Jesus' name. Amen.