

INTRODUCTION

1. We are addressing one of the greatest subjects in all the Bible...the resurrection...the resurrection of Christ and all believers
2. And it's found in 1 Corinthians chapter 15
3. Please take God's Word and turn with me to 1 Corinthians chapter 15
4. Today we are considering verses 20-28
5. Read 1 Corinthians 15:20-28
6. In the previous 19 verses we noted the gospel according to Paul
7. He preached it, they received it as authoritative, and stood on it
8. There were some who "believed in vain" (v.2) though
9. These were the ones who said "there is no resurrection of the dead" in verse 12
10. So Paul answers their objection by mentioning seven disastrous and absurd consequences that would result if the dead were not raised
 1. Christ would not be risen
 2. Preaching of the gospel would be meaningless
 3. Faith in Christ would be worthless
 4. All witnesses to and preachers of the resurrection would be liars
 5. All men would still be in their sins
 6. All former believers would have eternally perished
 7. Christians would be the most pitiable people on earth
11. Now Paul discusses three aspects of the resurrection of the righteous

12. He discusses the Redeemer, the Redeemed and the Restoration

13. Notice first...

LESSON

I. The Redeemer (vv.20-22)

1. Paul reaffirms Christ's resurrection (v.20a)

"But now Christ has been raised from the dead"

1. Jesus Christ is the Redeemer

1. Galatians 3:13 says, "**Christ redeemed us** from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us—for it is written, “CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE.”

2. Galatians 4:4-5 says, "(4) But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth **His Son**, born of a woman, born under the Law, (5) so that He might **redeem** those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons."

3. 1 Peter 1:18-21 says, "(18) knowing that you were not **redeemed** with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, (19) but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, **the blood of Christ**. (20) For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you (21) who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God."

2. According to verses 1-2, the Corinthians already acknowledged and believed this truth of the resurrection

3. But as verse 12 mentions some didn't

4. The same is true in any church

5. Jesus affirmed that in Matthew 13:30

6. He will separate them at the harvest

2. The resurrection of Jesus is a fact

1. Romans 4:25 says "**He was raised** because of our justification"

2. Romans 8:11 says, "The **Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead**"

3. Colossians 1:18 refers to **Jesus as "the firstborn of the dead"**

4. Paul said to Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:8, "Remember **Jesus Christ, risen from the dead**, descendant of David, according to my gospel."

3. Christ is the first fruits of our resurrection (v.20b)

Paul said He is "the first fruits of those who are asleep"

1. "First fruits" is taken from Leviticus 23:10 which says, "Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'When you enter the land which I am going to give to you and reap its harvest, then you shall bring in the **sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest** to the priest.'"

2. This was "a handful of ripened grain from the harvest field before the actual harvest started. **They were a pledge, a guarantee, a foretaste of what was to follow.**" (MacDonald, William. [*Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments*](#). Ed. Arthur Farstad. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995. Print.)

3. In other words they were "a representative sample"

4. The full harvest could not be made until the first fruits was offered

5. Christ's own resurrection was the first fruits of the resurrection "harvest" of the believing dead

6. In His death and resurrection, Christ made an offering of Himself to the Father on our behalf

7. This was the first installment of the harvest

8. Note that the KJV says "and become the first fruits"

9. This is not in the original text

10. Christ did not become the first fruits at some time after His resurrection, but at the moment of His resurrection, by the very fact of His resurrection

11. His being raised made Him the first fruits of all who would be raised. (MacArthur, John F., Jr. [1 Corinthians](#). Chicago: Moody Press, 1984. Print. MacArthur New Testament Commentary.)

12. Christ's resurrection is permanent

1. In the Old and New Testament those who died and were brought back to life died again
2. Even those that Jesus raised like the son of the widow of Nain, Jairus's daughter, and Lazarus eventually died again
3. Christ resurrection was permanent, never to die again

13. The righteous dead (v.20b)

1. They are described as "those who are asleep"
2. The word "asleep" to described the righteous dead is used in 15:6, 18
3. It's also used in Matthew 27:52; Acts 7:60; 2 Peter 3:4
4. This is a euphemism for death
5. Their spirits have gone to be with the Lord (2 Cor.5:8)
6. But their remains are in the grave, awaiting recomposition and resurrection

14. Jesus' humanness was involved in His resurrection and ours (v.21)

"For since by man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead"

1. The Redeemer was 100% man and 100% God
2. It was by one man, Adam, that sin and death came affecting all men
3. It is by the man, the Lord Jesus Christ that the resurrection came
4. It was because Jesus died, was buried, and was raised as a man that he could become the first fruits of all other men who would be raised to glory
5. Remember the first fruits and the harvest were from the same crop

6. Paul captures this thought in Romans 5:12-17 when he says, "(12) Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned— (13) for until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. (14) Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come. (15) But the free gift is not like the transgression. **For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many.** (16) The gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the free gift arose from many transgressions resulting in justification. (17) **For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.**"

15. Jesus' resurrection affects all believers (v.22)

1. Just as "in Adam all die, so also **in Christ all will be made alive**"
2. Verse 45 says, "So also it is written, 'The first man, Adam, became a living soul.' The last Adam became a life-giving spirit."
3. John 5:21 says, "For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so **the Son also gives life to whom He wishes.**"

Paul moves from the Redeemer to...

II. The Redeemed (v.23)

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

1. We cannot know when Jesus will return but we can know the order
2. Christ's resurrection was first
3. Believers will follow at His coming

1. Initially will be the resurrection of the church, those believers who will have come to saving faith from Pentecost to the rapture.

“For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; **and the dead in Christ shall rise first**” (1 Thess. 4:16). They will be joined by living saints to meet the Lord in the air and ascend to heaven.

2. Next will be the resurrection of the Tribulation saints

1. Many will come to trust in Christ during the Tribulation

2. At the end of that period, however, all those who will have come to faith in Christ will be raised up to reign with Him during the Millennium (Rev. 20:4)

3. Following that will be the resurrection of Old Testament saints, promised by the prophet Daniel:

“And 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” (Dan. 12:2; cf. Isa. 26:19–20).

4. Then during the millennial Kingdom there will, of necessity, be the resurrection of those who die during that time

5. The only resurrection remaining will be that of the unrighteous, who will be raised to damnation and eternal punishment at the end of Christ’s thousand-year reign

John 5:28-29 says, "(28) Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, (29) and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment."

6. The saved will have been raised to eternal life, but the unsaved will be raised to eternal death, the second death (Rev. 21:8; cf. 2:11). (MacArthur, John F., Jr. [*1 Corinthians*](#). Chicago: Moody Press, 1984. Print. MacArthur New Testament Commentary.)

After this Paul says, "Then comes the end"

This leads to...

III. The Restoration (vv.24-28)

Paul says, "(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. (27) For HE HAS PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET. But when He says, "All things are put in subjection," it is evident that He is excepted who put all things in subjection to Him. (28) When all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, so that God may be all in all."

1. Here Paul summarizes some of the things that will happen in the last times
2. The word "Then" (eita, "after this") in verse 24 may be an interval of time between the resurrection at His coming and the establishment of His kingdom
3. The word "end" (telos) can refer to both that which is final and that which is completed, consummated, or fulfilled
4. In the final culmination of the ages, "When He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father," all things will be restored as they were originally designed and created by God to be
5. In the end it will be as it was in the beginning
6. Sin will be no more
7. God will reign supremely without enemy and without challenge
8. Christ turns over the restored world to God His Father, who sent Him to recover it
9. The culmination is this:
 1. Christ's final act will be to conquer permanently every enemy of God, every contending rule and authority and power
 2. They will be forever abolished, never to exist again, never again to oppose God or to deceive, mislead, or threaten His people or corrupt any of His creation

3. The timing of this will be during the millennial rule of Christ on earth
4. During the millennial no open rebellion will be tolerated
5. There will still be rebellion in the hearts of Christ's enemies
6. Because they will not submit to Christ willingly, He will have to "rule them with a rod of iron" according to Revelation 19:15
7. At the end of the millennial Satan will be released to deceive the nations one more time as a final insurrection against God and His kingdom (Rev.20:7-9)
8. Revelation 20:9 says, "And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and **fire came down from heaven and devoured them.**"
9. Then he will be cast alive in the lake of fire where the beast and the false prophet are (Rev.20:10)
10. The last enemy is death which will be abolished with all the other enemies
11. On the cross, Christ broke the power of Satan who "had the power of death" (Heb.2:14)
12. But Satan and death are not permanently abolished until the end of the millennium
13. Then Christ's final work having been accomplished, He delivers up the kingdom to "the God and Father"
14. When Paul says in verse 27 "for He has put all things in subjection under His feet," he is speaking of a common practice in ancient times
15. Kings and emperors were always sitting enthroned above their subjects
16. When they bowed they were literally under or lower than the sovereign's feet
17. With enemies, a king would often put his foot on the neck of the conquered king or general
18. This would symbolized the enemies total subjection
19. During the millennium, all of Christ's enemies will be put in subjection to Him "under His feet"

20. Even after all things have been put in subjection to the Son, He Himself will continue to be subject to God forever. (MacDonald, William. [*Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments*](#). Ed. Arthur Farstad. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995. Print.)

CONCLUSION

1. The Corinthians must understand that the resurrection is not an isolated event with limited repercussions
2. It is rather an integrating and culminating event in God's sovereign rule over history
3. The climax of Christ's submissive, messianic work is this total conquest over His enemies, "that God may be all in all," when His absolute rule is universally acknowledged." (Sproul, R. C., ed. [*The Reformation Study Bible: English Standard Version \(2015 Edition\)*](#). Orlando, FL: Reformation Trust, 2015. Print.)
4. Christ will continue to rule because His reign is eternal (Rev. 11:15), but He will reign in His former, full, and glorious place within the Trinity, subject to God (v. 28) in the way eternally designed for Him in full Trinitarian glory. (MacArthur, John, Jr., ed. [*The MacArthur Study Bible*](#). electronic ed. Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997. Print.)
5. So the question this morning is **do you know Him and does He know you?**
6. In Matthew 7:21-23 Jesus reminds us that "**Not everyone** who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' **will enter the kingdom of heaven...**(21)
7. These are those who say..."Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles? And then I will declare to them, '**I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness**'" (vv.22-23).
8. "I never knew you; depart from Me" are the most horrifying words one could ever hear
9. To spend your whole life thinking you knew Him only to hear Him say I never knew you is shocking to say the least

10. But this illustrates how many are deceived in thinking they are saved when they're not
11. Some of you might be in this verse
12. Peter says to make your calling and election sure
13. Paul said to examine yourselves to see whether you be in the faith
14. I pray you will do that this morning as we pray
15. Let's pray