

ALL THE DEAD WILL COME TO LIFE

(Every Person will be Raised to Life in a Body Fitted for Heaven or Hell)

John 5: 25-29 – Pastor Richard P. Carlson

In Cleveland, Ohio, in 1975, a mother was brutally slain. The only witnesses to the crime were her four-year old daughter, Donna, and her one-year-old son, David. Neighbors could hear the children incessantly crying so they went to the door, and found a way to get into the house. There was this 4-year-old little girl crying, “Wake up, Mommy! Wake up, Mommy!” Donna’s cries didn’t wake up her murdered mommy. Most of us would agree that those people who have died cannot hear. Isn’t that right? Wrong! When Lazarus had been dead four days, Jesus called this dead man by name, John 11:43—“Lazarus, come forth!” And he did. George Bernard Shaw had it right when he observed, “The statistics on death are quite impressive: one out of one people die.” You would think that everyone would be very concerned to prepare for what lies beyond the grave. Yet millions push death out of their minds and focus on other things that really don’t matter and that won’t matter on the day of their death. The evangelist, George Whitefield, a few centuries ago, told of seeing some criminals riding in a cart on the way to the gallows. They were arguing about who would sit on the right side of the cart, with no more concern than children arguing about who gets to sit in the front seat of the car.

Today, before we take the Lord’s Supper, we are going to look at these words of Jesus to the Pharisees. Jesus was making amazing claims about Himself, despite knowing the Pharisees were plotting to kill him—John 5:18. He was claiming to be equal with God in person, in works, in power, in judgment, in power, honor, in truth, and in raising the dead to life. God is the author of conception—He opens the womb, and He opens the tomb. Our subject today is this astounding claim by Jesus that He is the One who raises the dead and then He is the One who judges everyone who has ever lived or who will ever live. Jesus was speaking with a brutal crowd, out to kill Him. They considered Jesus a rabbi, a teacher, but a false teacher, a false prophet, a pretender, playing as if He were God’s Son, and even though they knew Jesus did many miracles, they explained them all away as miracles from hell, as they blasphemed the Holy Spirit, attributing to Satan and Beelzebub the works of Christ.

Yet they called Jesus the ultimate blasphemer without comparison, without equal, without comparison, as Jesus claimed equality with His Father, God. Now Jesus Himself brought up this astounding subject of resurrection. Jesus was claiming to give life, to bring people into existence, and then claiming to determine the nature of every person’s eternal existence. So, Jesus’ message for us today is that there are two types and times of resurrection. Jesus is first bringing up a spiritual resurrection and then secondly, He is speaking of a physical resurrection. Let’s jump into this message with these two types and times of first, spiritual resurrection, which is divided into that which now is, and that which was to come, and then they are the two types and times of physical resurrection, the resurrection to eternal life, and the resurrection to eternal judgment and damnation.

JESUS SPIRITUALLY RESURRECTS DEAD UNBELIEVERS UNDER ETERNAL JUDGMENT TO NEW LIFE, ETERNAL LIFE IN CHRIST. (I.)

Notice verses 25-27. We read, “Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son also to have life in Himself. And He has given Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man.” Spiritually speaking, there are only two categories of mankind, the spiritually alive and the spiritually dead. Hollywood speaks of people being mostly dead or half dead or alive, but God has no such categories. We are either spiritually alive or spiritually dead. There is no middle ground or in-between category. And destination wise, there is only a heaven to gain and a hell to shun. There is no such thing as purgatory—a fictional place for doing release work to work off our guilt and shame while we wait for heaven. Remember purgatory is not true. Some people get all alarmed about whether they are one of God’s elect. Jesus answered that in our last message in John 5:24, saying, “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears My word and believes Him who sent Me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.” I ask you today, “Do you believe the biblical witness to the Father sending Jesus as His eternal Son to bear you sin in His own body on the cross? Do you believe Jesus was raised from the dead by the power of God? If you’re God’s elect; know none but God’s elect believe in Christ. When we are born-again, we become God’s elect children.

A man once came to Dwight Lyman Moody, that famous evangelist and told Moody that he didn’t feel saved. D. L. Moody asked him, “Was Noah safe in the ark? The man replied, “Certainly!” Moody continued. “Well, what made him safe there in the ark, his feeling, or the ark itself? It was the ark. Our salvation and spiritual resurrection from being spiritually dead doesn’t rest on our feelings, but on Christ, our Savior. If we are truly in Christ, we are secure and protected from the storm of judgment soon to come upon our world. Our feelings need to rest on the absolutely truthful promises of God. Now look with me at these words—an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Lord, and those who hear will live.” This resurrection first pictured here in verses 25-27 is our spiritual resurrection. Now Jesus was giving brand new information, so He began His words again with “Truly, truly, verily, verily, amen and amen.” Jesus was saying, “Something has already arrived, but yet it has a future aspect to it.

Think of it—the New Testament era began when our Lord began His ministry. Jesus’ ministry and reason for coming to earth was not completed at the moment of His arrival on earth. His ministry of redemption, salvation, and sanctification could not be spoken of being finally complete until Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection. Yet Jesus was telling them all that His redemption and regeneration had begun. Jesus was already beginning in His early ministry to make people alive in Christ. Even before the cross, Jesus gave life. Back in John 3:15, Jesus said, “Whoever believes in Him, may have eternal life.” In Samaria, in Sychar, in John 4:39, we read of the whole city saying, “We know...this is indeed the Savior of the world.”

Those Sychar citizens who were spiritually dead, had the voice of their Messiah

and they believed and were given life.” For them, it was true—the hour is now here. Between Old Testament days and the cross of Jesus, Jesus was still giving spiritual life to those who believe. They believed in the true living God, that He was holy, righteous, and that they had sinned against His law, His love, and His glory. They needed mercy and grace, and they believed the Father sent Messiah, Jesus to be their Savior. Jesus had already begun to give eternal life. That’s why Jesus said, “It is now!” Way back in John 1:12, Jesus said, “As many as received Him, to them He gave the power to become the children of God, even to those who believed in His name. The death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus had not yet come, nor Pentecost. But eternal life had come; “the hour was now here,”

But Jesus spoke not only of the spiritual resurrection from the dead that was now here, but of a coming hour. He said in John 5:25, “An hour is coming when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. This hour was not a 60-minute hour, but this was a season or an era that we today, yet call the day of grace. Those in the Old Testament who believed and those believing in Jesus prior to Christ’s crucifixion, burial, resurrection, ascension, and Pentecost were looking forward to Isaiah 53 happening—looking forward to Calvary. Now, today, though those believers in the past had life eternal, we look back on Calvary today. When this coming hour arrived in its fullness, on the Day of Pentecost, 3,000 were saved on that day, and soon afterward, 5,000 more were saved, and it’s been explosive “like popcorn popping” salvation since Pentecost. Millions now have individually, one by one been spiritually raised from being dead in sin to becoming alive in Jesus Christ. All those Old Testament saints like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were also once dead in trespasses and sins, and they sacrificed lambs, waiting for the Lamb of God to come. Now as New Testament saints, Jesus is our Lion of tribe of Judah, our Lamb standing, as slain before His Father’s throne.

Nathaniel spoke on Revelation 5 at our IWD-EFFC conference. God the Father had a plan from before the foundation of the world. We read in John 5:26-27 that Jesus said, “For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son also to have life in Himself. And He has given Him all authority to execute judgment. Because He is the Son of Man. God’s intention was forever that the One who judges the world would be, and has forever become the Lamb, the slain lamb, the crucified man-Messiah, the Son of Man. The Lion of Judah who triumphs first had to die as the Lamb of God. The judging Son of God on the last day will be the same One who first became our suffering Savior, the Son of Man, the One that Daniel wrote about in Daniel 7:13, “the Son of Man who comes on the clouds of heaven, God the Father has deemed it most fitting that we as human beings will be judged by the one Who alone knows what it’s like to be human, yet without sin. We all came alive when Jesus called us from our spiritual deadness. As Paul said it in Ephesians 5: 14, “Awake, O sleeper, and rise from the dead and Christ will give you life.”

This is a resurrection miracle beyond compare. Only Christ can give us life, for He is the only Life-giver. No preacher, teacher, or witness can give you life. Dead people spiritually don’t come alive on their own, or of their own first choosing, for God first calls each of us, nor do we come alive by some ritual, some clever

scheme or through self-improvement, or through some person. One more vital truth here in John 5:26. We read, “For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son also to have life in Himself.” All over the world, especially in Africa, with 3 churches in Sweetwater Co., there is a heresy alive today-- Sabellianism, saying there is only one God, who shows up in three different forms—called Modalism. The idea is--God sometimes shows up as the Father, then later as the Son, and sometimes He shows up as the Holy Spirit. Millions believe this. It’s also called oneness Pentecostalism or the Jesus-Only Movement. A man of God, Athanasius of Alexandria—2965-373 AD, knew John 5:26 negates this heresy. If God is only sometimes Father, later Son, and later, Holy Spirit, it cannot be said that the Father gave to the Son anything, because you can only give something to someone if they exist. If there’s only one person, then there is no one to give anything to. John 5: 26 shows the Trinity to be-one God, 3 persons.

Jesus said in John 10:27-28, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of My hand.” Think of it—all of you who are redeemed. The first time you heard God’s voice was when you heard His voice calling you from spiritual deadness. When you acknowledged His voice, even as Saul on the Damascus Road, and you said, “Who are you, Lord?” that’s when you were resurrected from spiritual deadness to spiritual life that is eternal. Secondly,

JESUS PHYSICALLY RESURRECTS ALL WHO DIE TO ETERNAL LIFE OR TO ETERNAL JUDGMENT AND DAMNATION. (II.) Jesus said in John 5:28-29, “Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear His voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.” Clearly, this isn’t a spiritual resurrection, but a physical one, and it is not partly now, but this is all future, and John 5:27 tells us Jesus will execute all judgment to the dead, who die in the Lord or who die without Christ. Who will Jesus raise to physical life? All who have ever had life, from Methuselah, who lived 969 years to every baby that miscarries from the moment of life at conception.

All in the tombs, the sea, cremated, buried, ashes scattered—every life will live again and take a new body, newly resurrected physical form. This resurrection will be in two parts, either the first or second resurrection. In the first resurrection, God will join spirits, who are out of the presence of God, or He will call those who are living in glory in the presence of God. The same voice that wakes the spiritually dead will pierce the clods of dirt and the waters of the world. Dirt, dust, and the dead will bring every long-forgotten soul into the world of new life in the visible world—into a new form that will either live forever with Jesus, or which will burn forever in hell. John McArthur in one sentence said it well, “God will in a moment re-create every human being who has ever lived and join that created form suitable for heaven or hell with the spirit of that person who is already in the presence of God or out of His presence.” Jesus’ power is beyond comprehension. This will include David’s first son through immorality by Bathsheba, Billy Graham, Golda Meir, the apostle Paul, Adam and Eve, Queen Elizabeth who recently died,

Napoleon, Genghis Khan, Joan of Arc, Martin Luther, Indira Ghandi, Ted Bundy, Joe Biden, Oprah Winfrey, Tiger Woods, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Donald Trump, Mickey Mantle, Yogi Berra, Mohammed Ali, Abraham Lincoln, Queen Victoria, Aaron Burr, Louis L'amour, Nadia Comăneci, Adolf Hitler, Ananias and Sapphira, Garrison Keillor, Larry King, Bob Hope, Johnny Carson, Mother Teresa, Billy Jean King, and you and you and you and me too. Let this sink in. All the dead who have ever lived will be raised from the dead by Jesus. Millions of Chinese, Indians, Nigerians, Germans, Indonesians, and South Sea Islanders. Jesus will raise Julius Caesar, Judas Iscariot, Isaiah the prophet, Michelangelo, Johann Sebastian Bach, Marilyn Monroe, Princess Diana, Michael Jackson, Ted Kennedy. He will raise them, and they will stand before him. And each of you too. All people by the billions without exception, will be raised from the dead by Jesus. Jesus lets no one go out of existence, There will be no such loss for the righteous, and no such hope for the wicked. Jesus raises them all.

The first resurrection Pastor Larry read about in Revelation 20:4-6, and we read in verse 6, "Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death/second resurrection to judgment, has no power." This first resurrection will bring us our new glorified bodies—at the Rapture of the Church, either before the Great Tribulation, at the middle of it or just before the seals, trumpets and bowls of Revelation are poured out. These who have believed in Jesus with new eternal bodies now will rule and reign with Jesus for 1,000 years. Those saved during the Great Tribulation not taking the mark of the beast will be the saints coming out of Great Tribulation—they are still part of the first resurrection. What a group of saved, saved, saved sinners! Born again saints.

Then at the end of Christ's honeymoon for a thousand years with us, His Bride, the rest of the dead from all human history, the unregenerate, the unredeemed, the ungodly, will be raised to stand before the Great White Throne Judgment of Rev. 20:11-15. All these will not have been saved, they will not have stood at the Judgment Seat of Christ or sat down at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. When our body dies, that is not its last appearance on earth in a visible form. Eternity is not a place of disembodied spirits. It is a place for resurrected bodies containing our original spirits given at conception. We will live consciously with or without God forever. One last thought—what is this word of Jesus about those who have done good or those who have done evil? Are we saved by our works? No, but our works are the evidence of our faith. Unbelievers don't have eternal life. They don't have faith. They haven't lived a life evidenced by repentance when they sin. They have trusted in their good works—their good image. They've been proud, and not humble. They have lived bitter lives, promising to get even, without loving and forgiving. They've been going "first class on the Titanic," foolishly devoting themselves to doing things and living life their own way. Where do each of us stand today? Have we grown comfortable in our sin? Listen now!—Listen for the voice of God, and give your life to Him. The Savior is waiting to enter your heart.