

## **THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS - and what it means for us.**

Wellington sent news to England:

***“Wellington defeated Napoleon at Waterloo.”***

But fog interrupted. So they just heard ***“Wellington defeated.”***

Later the fog cleared and the full message was received resulting in great joy. Likewise many look at Good Friday and see defeat, but on Easter Sunday God’s message was complete -VICTORY!

The greatest chapter on the resurrection is 1 Corinthians 15.

**“I declare to you the gospel ... by which also you are saved ... that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He was seen”** (v1-8). The literal resurrection of Jesus is a vital part of the Gospel message by which we are saved. Why is the resurrection so important that our salvation depends on it?

### **1. THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST TELLS US THAT GOD IS SATISFIED WITH THE BLOOD OF CHRIST.**

Jesus paid for our sins on the Cross as our perfect sacrifice - the BLOOD. But for the sacrifice to be effective it has to satisfy God’s perfect standards. If Jesus had been left in the grave it would have meant failure. ***“If Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty”*** (v14). ***“If Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!”*** (v17).

But God raising him up meant satisfaction. He said:

***“I accept the Blood, and on that basis I raise him up to be the head of a new-creation of righteous men whose sins are forgiven.”***

It means Christ’s sacrifice is effective, and forgiveness is available.

***“He was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification”*** (Romans 4:25). Because our justification was achieved God raised up Jesus as proof. So our faith is based on his resurrection. If he was not raised our sins have not been forgiven but he is risen! Also by the public resurrection of

Christ God tells us that the power of sin, satan, death and hell, evil, curse, sickness has been defeated once and for all. All was laid on Jesus on the Cross. He took it all on himself. Would he overcome or be overcome? If it found any foothold in him it would be over. But Jesus said: ‘satan has no place in me.’ If nothing happened, we would have to assume His defeat, but his resurrection never to die again means He has conquered the grave and powers of hell FOR US! Our response can only be:

**"O Death, where *is* your sting? O Hades, where *is* your victory?"  
The sting of death *is* sin, and the strength of sin *is* the law.  
But thanks *be* to God, who gives us (now) the victory (over sin, satan, death, hell) through our Lord Jesus Christ" (v55-57).**

## **2. HIS RESURRECTION MEANS OUR PHYSICAL RESURRECTION IS GUARANTEED !**

Whether we will rise or not is bound up with whether Christ rose or not. He said: **"Because I live you shall live also."**

If not we have no hope. If he did we have great hope. **"But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen"** (v13).

**"For if *the* dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen ...then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished"** (v16,18).

**"But now Christ IS risen from the dead ... the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep"** (v20). So our sins are forgiven and our glorious future resurrection is secured.

To explain the meaning of the resurrection and how it works Paul uses seed-time and harvest through-out this chapter. **"How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?" Foolish one, what you sow is not made alive unless it dies. And what you sow, you do not sow that body that shall be, but mere grain - perhaps wheat or some other grain. But God gives it a body as He pleases, and to each seed its own body"** (v35-38). Jesus said, **"The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified... unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains**

**alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain”** (John 12:23,24).

Here Jesus compares his humanity to a seed. Within the ordinary looking outer shell there is LIFE - and the blueprint for something glorious. The outer-shell is the body. The seed must be planted in the earth and the shell cracked for a new resurrection life to be brought forth. Likewise in death our we are sown as seed into the earth and even though our body is broken our inner life remains and in due time it is revealed in a new resurrected form far more glorious than the original seed (like the difference between a daffodil and its original seed. The glory, life and full potential is no longer hidden but revealed. Our new body will come forth from our new-creation spirit. The blueprint is within and we can't imagine the result. Throughout time billions of believers have been sown into the earth. Is that it or will they rise again as a great glorious harvest?

The resurrection of Jesus answers that question.

**He is the FIRST FRUITS of the harvest.**

This is the first fully formed ripe part of the crop, that was offered up to God as a representative of the whole harvest.

(1) The first-fruits was the sign and guarantee of the harvest to come.

Jesus' resurrection guarantees the rest of the harvest: **“For since by man came death, by Man also *came* the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. But each one in his own order: Christ the FIRSTFRUITS, afterward Christ's at His coming”**(v21-23).

(2) The first-fruit sets the standard. You can tell from it what the rest

is going to be like: **“Our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself”** (Philippians 3:20,21).

**“The first man *was* of the earth, *made* of dust; the second Man *is***

**the Lord from heaven. As was the *man* of dust, so also *are* those *who are made* of dust; and as *is* the heavenly Man, so also are those *who are* heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man” (v47-49). We will no longer bear Adam’s image but Christ’s. Our first body was made from Adam’s DNA blueprint, but our next body is from Christ’s perfect pattern.**

### **3. CHRIST’S RESURRECTION means that your life now determines your eternal glory.**

We are sown in death as seed and whatever has been developed within us will be revealed in the resurrection. Thus there will be different degrees of glory: **“There are also heavenly bodies and earthly bodies; but the glory of the heavenly is one, and the glory of the earthly is another.”** Our heavenly body is on a different level of glory far above the earthly- like a star in brilliance).

**“There is one glory of the sun, another of the moon, and another of the stars; for one star differs from another in glory.”**

The more you live to glorify God in this life the more glory you will have to glorify Him in eternity.

**“So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption (subject to decay and destruction), it is raised in incorruption (indestructible); sown in dishonour (wonderful creation but finishes sadly but), raised in glory, sown in weakness, raised in power; sown a natural body, raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body” (v40-44).** When raised we stand before Christ’s Judgement Seat when He reviews our life and releases His glory in us as our reward.

Our present body couldn’t handle the glory:

**“Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption” (v50).**

But our new body can carry the glory of God: **“Behold, I tell you a**

**mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed -in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal immortality.” So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory" (v51-54).**

If we believe in the resurrection of Christ it will change how we live and die. Death isn't the end but the entry into glory. This life (as a seed) is just the preparation for our eternal life of glory. What we sow we shall reap. If we sow ourself into the earth after a life lived unto ourselves there will be little glory, but a life lived in love and faithfulness will spring forth glistening with glory.

**“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord” (v58).**

Those who live just for their comfort and pleasure, live as unbelievers- as if they don't believe in the resurrection. For it is knowing that all men will be raised to heaven or hell and that all we do now is being sown to be reaped in the afterlife which causes us to make sacrifices and take risks for God's cause to get the gospel out to all men. As Paul says: **“Why do we stand in jeopardy every hour? I affirm... I die (risk death) daily. If, in the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantage is it to me? If the dead do not rise, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!" (v30-32). “We might as well live how we like because we will die and that is it.”** - that's how unbelievers think. If you live like this it is because you don't believe in a resurrection. But the dead will rise and there will be much 'weeping and gnashing of teeth' in remorse and regret of their wasted lives.

Because there is a resurrection we need to fellowship with the right crowd: **“Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits" (v33).** Don't get too close with people who will corrupt your character. Even if you enjoy their company why spoil your future resurrection?

**“Awake to righteousness, and do not sin” (v34).**

Christians out of fellowship (sleeping) must wake up from their sleep. They are so emeshed in the world they look like the world, as a sleeper among the dead (Ephesians 5:14). Wake up and walk among the living and raise the dead with the Word! Join with those who are awake (alive in Christ) who will spur you on to greater things in the Lord. The glory of your future resurrection is at stake.