

The Resurrection Plan

1 Corinthians, Vol. 34

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1 Corinthians 15:20-28

Our previous passage dealt with the consequences of **denying** the doctrine of bodily resurrection. Now we come to the **certainty** of resurrection.

Eschatology is the fancy word for the doctrine of “Last Things,” or Bible prophecy. The special wrinkle of eschatology in this passage is what you could call **personal eschatology** rather than the overall plan for the ages. In other words, *What is going to happen to YOU, not What is going to happen to the whole world?*

Christ's resurrection is . . .

I. **The Pledge Of Your Resurrection (20)**

1 Corinthians 15:20: *But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep.*

First fruits: This term comes originally from Leviticus 23. The first fruits was the first sheaf from the harvest, which was waved before the Lord as a thanksgiving offering and showing faith that God would provide. The term **FIRST fruits** implies later fruits are coming.

Asleep is the metaphor for the death of a Christian that is used several times in this chapter and several more times throughout the New Testament.

Christ's resurrection is . . .

II. **The Proof Of Your Resurrection (21-22)**

1 Corinthians 15:21-22: *For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.*

Those two sentences summarize what it taught throughout the Bible. The most thorough description of it is in Romans.

Romans 5:12–21: *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—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. 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. So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men.*

19 *For as through the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous. The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,*

21 . . . *so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Adam	Christ
Sin and death	Righteousness and life
Type	Fulfillment
Death reigns	Righteousness reigns
Many died	Many live
Judgment	Free Gift
Condemnation	Justification
Many made sinners	Many made righteous
Law exposes sin	Grace abounds more
Sin reigns	Grace reigns
Death	Eternal life

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See also Genesis 2:17, 1 John 2:2

Do you see the only two options? **By a man . . . By a man**. That tells you two things: 1) Jesus was truly human. He was fully a descendant of the first man, Adam. 2) Both Adam and Jesus are heads of the human race.

Christ's resurrection is . . .

III. The Plan Of Your Redeemer (23-28)

The argument of this section is that all of history is fully under God's control. This is a ***synopsis of God's plan for the future***.

1 Corinthians 15:23: *But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming, . . .*

The process of resurrection of every person who has ever lived began with Jesus. The next phase is ***those who are Christ's at His coming***. That refers to those who are alive at the moment of the rapture. Revelation 20:4-6 adds an explanation regarding those who are believers who died during the tribulation. They will be included with the resurrected ones at the beginning of the millennial kingdom.

1 Corinthians 15:24: *. . . 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.*

This verse describes the time when all the redemptive work of Christ will have been accomplished. After Jesus puts the final touches on defeating Satan, after He has redeemed all who will believe, after He has ended the curse on the earth, He gives it all over to the Father, who ushers in the new heaven and new earth.

when is an innocent looking little word. It's significant, though, that in the Greek it is an indefinite adverb. The choice of this word protects the teaching that no one can know or predict when this will be fulfilled.

The Kingdom: Ruling over the entire earth for 1000 years, Jesus will at last have complete authority over all things and all people. He will have subdued all God's enemies. The final step will be **when He has abolished all rule and authority and power.** That refers to Satan, all his demons, and all who rebel against God.

The next three verses explain a few details about how that end will come to pass.

1 Corinthians 15:25-27: *For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be abolished is death. 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.*

Paul quotes from Psalm 8:6, a Messianic psalm which is quoted here, in Ephesians 1:22 and Hebrews 2:8. When Paul says **it is evident**, he points out what we all should recognize as obvious.

1 Corinthians 15:28: *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.*

The Son again, as always, voluntarily submits to the Father. In this summary of the work of Christ and His voluntary submission to the Father, there is a lesson intended for us.

Philippians 2:3–8: *Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.*

That comes right before the part about **every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**

Are you willing to empty yourself and serve like Jesus for the glory of God?
