

April 19, 2020 - Why the Resurrection Matters – Senior Adult Bible Studies

What invention has been a game changer for you?

- cell phone
- the internet
- electric toothbrush
- computer
- ordering curbside groceries
- the car
- microwave oven
- bifocals
- the television

We live in an age where we've come to depend on these innovations.

- We can mark our age by the inventions that have come to be during our life time.
- The one event that has changed people's lives more than anything else is ... the resurrection of Christ

Today's Point: The Resurrection of Christ Changes Everything.

Paul founded the Corinthian church about AD 50 during his second missionary journey. He stayed with the Corinthian believers eighteen months before moving on to continue his evangelistic and discipling mission in other locations. Reports reached Paul that problems and conflicts were intensifying within the Christian fellowship. One major concern was that some people were questioning the truth concerning the future resurrection of Christians.

I Corinthians 15:20-22 But as it is, Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. 21 For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead also comes through a man. 22 For just as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.

In last week's lesson, Paul had settled the issue that Christ had lived, died and resurrected. Paul sited the many eyewitnesses to Christ's resurrection.

What is the meaning of the "firstfruits?"

- The Mosaic Law required farmers to bring their first or best crops to the house of the Lord to be dedicated to God.
- The harvest was brought before God in praise, thanksgiving and worship.
- Proverbs promises those honoring the Lord with their firstfruits will be blessed.
- It was an act of faith ... the first things harvested were given to God.
- Jeremiah referred to Israel as God's firstfruits.
- The Holy Spirit is the firstfruits of God's promised presence and the future redemption of the believers' bodies.
- Jesus demonstrates the victory over death for all who put their trust in Him

Paul recounted that because of the sin of one man (Adam), death came into the world and all die. Adam disobeyed God's one commandment in the Garden of Eden. God told Adam and Eve that they must not eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil or face death. Adam and Eve could not resist the temptation from the serpent, and therefore they tasted the fruit. This opened their eyes to sin and eventually to death.

What effect did Adam have on all humanity?

- Adam who represents mankind disobeyed God, he sinned.
- This brought sin to all people.
- We choose to sin.
- We will all experience death except those believers who are alive at Christ's second coming.
- We are condemned to spiritual death, separation from God.

What effect can Christ and His resurrection have on all humanity?

- We are all made alive.
- We can have the judgment of death replaced with the gift of eternal life.
- To those who receive Christ, and trust in the Truth of what He accomplished in His death and resurrection, we are given the right to be children of God.

Next, we will see the truths about the kingdom of God and Jesus eternal reign, when everything is subject to Him. Listen for truths about Jesus' rule.

I Corinthians 15:23-28 But each in his own order: Christ, the firstfruits; afterward, at his coming, those who belong to Christ. 24 Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, when he abolishes all rule, and all authority and power. 25 For he must reign until he puts all his enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy to be abolished is death. 27 For God has put everything under his feet. Now when it says "everything" is put under him, it is obvious that he who puts everything under him is the exception. 28 When everything is subject to Christ, then the Son himself will also be subject to the one who subjected everything to him, so that God may be all in all.

Paul made a timeline of how God's victory over death will eventually be realized. He said events will happen, **each in his own order**. The order of the events led to "the end."

- Christ, is the firstfruits.
- He will return from heaven to earth. At Jesus' coming, all who belong to Christ (both living and dead) will be raised and made alive forever. (This is referring to the Second Coming.)
- Then all believers will be given new life, resurrection life, eternal union with God.
- Jesus will hand over the kingdom to God the Father. All rule, all authority and all power will be abolished. (These are the evil powers, both spiritual and human, who are the enemies of God and His people. At the cross, Jesus defeated all the evil powers of darkness.)

Jesus must continue to reign until all God's enemies are conquered forever. (He will put all his enemies under His feet. Read Psalm 110:1 and Psalm 8:6).

What is the final enemy to be defeated and what does that have to do with the resurrection?

- death is the final enemy defeated
- all who are believers will be united with God for eternity

What does Paul indicate has been placed under Christ reign?

- all earthly dominions, authorities, powers
- all earthly kingdoms, nations, rulers, peoples
- all who are God's enemies

In verses 27 – 28, Paul used the word “everything” 5 times.

Christ is Lord over everything in the universe. Everything does not include God the Father who put everything under Christ's subjection. Paul did not mean that God the Father is more divine than God the Son. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are one God in three Persons (known as the Trinity). The Son, is willingly subordinate to the Father in the eternal plan and work of redemption.

At the end of all things Christ will hold everything in subjection. He will then place Himself under subjection to the Father. Christ will hand everything over to the Father. Christ will have completed His mission. All those who have wrongly disputed the rightful reign of God the Father over all creation will be silenced-forever. God will reign over every dimension of creation in every way forever.

What other things besides death will be conquered?

worry	desire for power	self-control
anger	desire for popularity	poor health
greed	finances	poor family relations

How does Christ's reign over all give you hope today?

- Life is not a meaningless existence
- Jesus is in control
- He gives guidance, wisdom, strength
- He rescues us from the very *presence* of sin
- He provided us a way to spend eternity with God

In Corinthians 15:29 – 34, Paul continues his argument for life-after-death for Christians. He said the Corinthian believers should reject sin and live holy lives.

In verses 35 – 53, Paul contrasted the mortal, earthly body humans now inhabit with the immortal, heavenly bodies believers will inherit at the return of Christ. He said God's people, living and dead, in the "twinkling of an eye," will be transformed from mortality to immortality. This is call glorification.

Next, we will see the culmination of Jesus' victory over death.

I Corinthians 15:54-58 When this corruptible body is clothed with incorruptibility, and this mortal body is clothed with immortality, then the saying that is written will take place: "Death has been swallowed up in victory." 55 "Where, death, is your victory? Where, death, is your sting?" 56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God! Who gives the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ! 58 Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the Lord's work, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

What does Paul say will happen to death?

- Death will be defeated – God will abolish death forever.
- It will no longer be victorious over us.
- It will lose its "sting."
- The sting of sin will be defeated.

Paul wrote that sin gets its power from the law God gave to Moses. Paul acknowledged that the law is good, holy and just. Second, he said that the law could not save anyone. Third, God's intention for giving the law was to convict people of their innate sinfulness. Lastly, Paul asserted that Christ has freed believers from the requirements of the law and the consequence of death.

God has won the victory through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ! Jesus Christ has defeated death and sin for all who by faith trust in Him.

Paul addressed his readers as brothers and sisters. Paul had a deep affection for those in the Corinthian church. He reminded them that they had a responsibility to live the way Christ would want them to. We have a responsibility to produce "good works" for Christ. Paul says our good works will not be in vain. Isaiah 55:11 says "so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it."

Application

Confess.

- If there is an area of your life in which you have allowed sin to have power over you, confess that to God.
- Acknowledge that sin has no power over you because of Christ.
- Choose to live under His lordship.

Serve.

- Find an area of ministry where you can get involved.
- Do not let hesitancy or fears make you feel inadequate to serve.
- Live under the lordship of Christ, knowing that you never serve Him in vain.

Share.

- Tell someone how the resurrection of Christ has made a difference in your life.
- Lead the person to trust the resurrected Christ for new life

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