

1 Corinthians Part 15 pt 2 v.12-28

The contention, the consequence, chronology of it all

V.12 - the contention

Very early on in the development of the church, bad doctrine began to creep into the Body. This is not unique to our era.

[Act 23:6-8 NKJV] 6 But when Paul perceived that one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, "Men [and] brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee; concerning the hope and resurrection of the dead I am being judged!" 7 And when he had said this, a dissension arose between the Pharisees and the Sadducees; and the assembly was divided. 8 For Sadducees say that there is no resurrection-- and no angel or spirit; but the Pharisees confess both.

For Bible believing Christians, the biblical narrative of Christ's bodily resurrection is a non-negotiable. It is fundamental to our faith. But people - pastors, teachers, elders, the body; began to compromise incrementally on the importance of this doctrine very very early in church history.

Paul challenges them on this trend.

His question is rhetorical. Paul knows what he has seen. He knows that these people are speaking from a position of ignorance. His continued

writing on this matter confirms that this is a fundamental belief for those who would follow Jesus.

Yet...here we are over 2000 years later, and the debate is still very much alive.

A 2017 survey conducted in the UK reports these findings:

- Three in ten Christians surveyed (31%) said they did not believe in life after death.
- A full quarter of Christians polled do not believe the resurrection occurred at all.
- Exactly half of all people surveyed did not believe in the resurrection at all.

In a study conducted by Ligionier (LIG uh NEER) Ministries, founded by R.C. Sproul reports:

- Nearly a third of All respondents were unsure or disagreed with the Biblical accounts of the resurrection.
- The good news is that nearly 95% of Evangelical Christians in the US report believing this truth.

The problem with “christians” who deny the resurrection is this:

The former chaplain to Queen Elizabeth II had this to say, "Those people who neither believe in the resurrection nor go anywhere near a church

cannot be 'Christians, as with so many things, the key is in the definition of terms. Discovering the evidence for the resurrection having taken place to be wholly compelling is one of the things that makes you a Christian; ergo, if you haven't, you are not."

The problems that spring from a gospel devoid of the resurrection are myriad! But at the base of this denial is a false gospel, it is some distorted version of what the Bible teaches.

[Gal 1:8 NKJV] 8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.

That gospel might sound like this: Jesus was a good man. He lived a good life. He loved people well, he did good things for people, he taught powerfully, and he was martyred because of his activism and because he threatened the establishment. His time on the cross may have atoned for our sins, but we have no way of knowing for sure because he's dead. At the least he showed us how to die gracefully even when enduring tremendous physical discomfort.

The observant christian might say, now wait a minute, what about the resurrection? To which the crafty teacher might say, oh, don't worry about that, the resurrection doesn't really matter. God is only concerned with the Spirit. Perhaps Christ's Spirit is with the Father but we can't really be sure of that either. Anyway, it is a beautifully rich piece of allegory that we can teach from occasionally.

This false gospel obscures the carefully observed and documented historical facts of the resurrection event and fabricates uncertainty and apathy in an attempt to diminish the power of Christ's resurrection.

Denying the bodily resurrection both minimizes the importance of Christ's manhood by focusing solely on an ethereal faux-spirituality; and minimizes Christ's deity by denying the power demonstrated in His resurrection.

In a mighty declaration of power — [Jhn 10:18 NKJV] 18 "No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father."

Denying the resurrection cheapens the gospel. It is one of Satan's wickedest weapons, wrapped in the soft veneer of intellectualism.

It also opens the Bible to undue criticism as a Book peddling fairytales and lies. So if we can't believe the resurrection, what else can we toss out?

If it is simply allegorical, what else is simply allegorical? Be on guard Christian that you receive no other gospel!

The resurrection matters, more than anything else. By it Jesus proved that He has complete power over all things, even death. That means He alone can keep our souls for eternity. He is the master over death, and He is the master over life.

[Col 1:17-18 NKJV] ...He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.
18 And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.

V.13-19 **The Consequence**

Paul runs the logic - he goes through the “what-if” scenario for those who deny the resurrection and the implications - 2nd/3rd order effects.

If there's no resurrection then:

-Christ is not risen

 If Christ is not risen then:

 -Our preaching is empty

 -AND your (our) faith is empty

 -We are false witnesses of God

 -Your (our) faith is futile

 -You are still in your sins

 -Those who have died have utterly perished

 -Our future hope is lost - we have been duped, a people to be pitied -
we're a joke!

V. 20 - the truth - BUT Christ IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD. He is the first of many - the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. The consequence of which is that we shall follow in His likeness, even as we are conformed into His likeness by the Spirit in this life. So we shall follow in His likeness in the next.

[Rom 14:7-9 NKJV] 7 For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself. 8 For if we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. 9 For to this end Christ died and rose and lived again, that He might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

21-22 The purposeful pattern - death came by a man - Adam. This is the consequence of sin. Resurrection came by a Man - Christ; this is the result of God's power conquering the consequence of sin.

While the man Adam places all under a curse; the man Christ, lifts the curse and brings life.

The chronology / eschatology

v.23 - The resurrection has an order (gr. Tagma - 1x) (a series or succession; especially a military term, a band or corp of troops set in order). God is not willy nilly in His eschatology. He is not slack concerning His promises.

This is where we must exercise caution on date setting and relying on our own wisdom to pin down when this will all occur.

[Mar 13:32 NKJV] 32 "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

We know for certain that this will occur. We know some key things that will happen. But we must admit that we do not fully know all of the details.

We know that Christ is the firstborn from among the dead (COL 1:18). Or as Paul describes here - the firstfruits. By Christ's resurrection, God shows His power over death, His fulfillment of righteous judgment of sin, and His power to reconcile humanity to Himself by His complete authority over life and death.

The resurrection of Christ marks the beginning of the end - as it were - we are in the end times and have been since the resurrection.

Afterward - what length of time does this denote? It doesn't. Those who are Christ's at his coming.

[1Th 4:16-17 NKJV] 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive [and] remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

In passing, the idea of the rapture - gr. harpazo from v.17 (caught up, snatch away), lat. rapiemur (from the vulgate) = Conjugation of [rapiō](#) - snatch, carry off - and used many other places in scripture.

v.24 THEN - after another undisclosed period of time, potentially what is known as the millennial kingdom, comes the end. This time period follows after Christ has claimed His saints.

Following that period of time - Christ shall deliver the kingdom, purchased by His blood, to God the Father. It is at this time that God shall then come into direct connection with the His eternal kingdom, instead of through our mediator, Christ.

[Rev 21:3 NKJV] 3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God [is] with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them [and be] their God.

v.25-26 Until that time He, Christ, must reign until all enemies have been subdued. While Christ has disarmed them by His death and resurrection; We still do war against **principalities**, against **powers**, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. And all of these enemies shall be put under Christ's feet once and for all.

This is the nature of Christ's patience and the patience of the saints - to endure in a world that has been purchased and yet is inhabited by spiritual wickedness - until the fulness of those being saved is complete.

v. 26 - pretty straight forward. Death is an enemy and will be defeated once and for all.

v. 27-28 - this is where we must be very careful in our theology. Paul is careful to point out that the Father / Son relationship is eternal. There is no subordination either with the Father or with the Son.

We may be tempted to view this verse as claiming that Christ is subordinate to the Father because we have skewed views on power and hierarchy.

The truth is that Christ's eternal role is as the Son, even as He is equal with the Father.

Jesus Christ is always about the Father's business, that is His role. No less God, no less man. Demonstrating the power of God in His mortal Body for our sakes.

[Jhn 10:30 NKJV] 30 "I and [My] Father are one."