

Christ's resurrection and its effects

Part 1

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[00:00:00] Come along with me, please, to 1 Corinthians, chapter 15, verse 20.

But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order, Christ the first fruits, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then come at the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father, when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. [00:01:07] For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. For when he says all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is accepted who did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him, that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

Ephesians chapter 1 We may start at verse 15.

Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, [00:02:11] making mention of you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation, and the knowledge of him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of his glory, of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power towards us who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, [00:03:02] and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in that which is to come. And I put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

I desire with the help of the Lord, beloved brethren, to say a brief word about the glory of Christ.

I've read in 1 Corinthians 15, where we get the restatement of the fact of the resurrection of Christ.

This was necessary because there was that which would seek to discredit [00:04:05] what God had done in power, in raising Christ from among the dead. And so here it is restated.

Indeed, the apostle says, if Christ be not raised, ye are yet in your sins. This foundation in Christianity, a very important one, so important it was that when the Lord arose from the dead, they told a lie.

They said that his disciples came and stole away his body. And it says that this fable is current among the Jews to this day.

The way that Satan would seek to discredit what God has done, [00:05:01] futile as his efforts are, the apostle Paul restates it. Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept.

The resurrection of our Lord Jesus was selective. The Lord Jesus is unique in this regard as in every other regard that we can look at him. He is the firstborn from among the dead. There is none that can challenge or rival the place of the Lord Jesus in any position in manhood that we view him. He takes that place before all.

You might say, historically, he was not the first person to be raised from the dead. He raised Zazarok from the dead.

But he takes that place in rank, that first place in every way.

[00:06:04] He was not the first person to come into creation.

But he is the firstborn of all creation.

He takes that place.

We are reminded that death came by man.

But it is very attractive the way the apostle Paul puts it. He says, since by man came death, by man also came the resurrection of the dead. The Lord Jesus is being portrayed as a man who was brought in this wonderful line of things which as we read in the scripture today is bringing many sons to glory. That is one aspect.

There is much more and maybe we will see something more of what the Lord has done in this wonderful work. [00:07:03] Man is brought in death.

And God would not be defeated. Since by man came death, by man also came the resurrection of the dead. And then we get an indication of how the thing would work. Each in his own rank. I know this version says order, but the word is rank. Each in his own rank, Christ the first fruit. Then those that are Christ's, that is coming. He must have the first place in all things.

There is no rival to this blessed man. And as we read of him today, in his glory, he comes in and he fills all that God desired in man.

He fills it out in perfection and in glory in a way that man even if the fall had not come in could not have done.

[00:08:09] He must have the first place in all things.

And then we have this reference to the end.

And then we have the reference to the day of Christ.

He must reign till he put all enemies on his feet.

The reference to the end I believe is a reference to the day of God. The reference to his reigning I believe is a reference to the day of Christ. And then we are told that the last enemy to be destroyed or to be annoyed is death. That will be removed out of the way finally. In order to make way for the coming in, in all its vista and glory and fullness. [00:09:06] The greatness of the day of God.

And then we have repeated that he has put all things on his feet.

It is very striking that in this scripture, and it has to be so, that God is excluded.

It is unthinkable that God could be under the feet of Christ. So it clearly makes that distinction that it is except him who place all things in subjection to him. And we must recognize, beloved brethren, that the position that is here delineated is the position of Christ in manhood. [00:10:04] There could be no question of anything being put under the feet of Christ in his essential glory. That was already so. There would be no question about that. As God, there is no question of anything being put under him. He has that authority and power, essentially. But here he is viewed as man.

And God has put in all things under the feet of Christ as a man.

And when all things shall have been brought into subjection to him, then the son himself.

We should note the wording of scripture.

The son himself shall be placed in subjection to him who puts all things in subjection to him that God may be all in all. [00:11:12] Now, there is something of a mystery in this verse.

And I try to say something about how I apprehend that mystery. It might be difficult to explain it in words. But Christ as man is placed in subjection to God.

But the expression God all in all includes Christ in his essential glory. It may be difficult to apprehend it in the mind that this person, the Lord Jesus, as man is in subjection to God. But in his essential being, he occupies that position in the deity which this expression includes. [00:12:05] God may be all in all.

Eternally, the son will be in subjection to God. But equally so, eternally, he will have his place in the deity. As he said in John chapter 17. Glorify thou me, Father, along with thyself, with the glory which I had along with thee before the world was. And here, as he went back to glory, and in the full expression of it, he resumes that position that he occupied before he came into manhood. But as man, in this world, where he was rejected, where he was scorned, where he was dishonored, where he was put to shame, [00:13:01] he is going to have glory and honor and power and might. He is going to take up his position as son of man, in his universal glory, as head over all things. In Ephesians, I

read the commencement of the apostles' prayer for the connection.

He desired that we should understand something of the greatness of the mystery, which it was his responsibility to make known to the church.

And he is praying for the saints, that the eyes of their understanding might be enlightened, to know the hope of his calling and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints. [00:14:14] And the exceeding greatness of his power towards us who believe, according to the working of his mighty power. And then the resurrection of Christ is brought in as an example, or an expression of that great power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead. And he has set him at his own right hand in heavenly places. There is where the Lord of glory is, at the right hand of God. He is with us.

At the end of Matthew, he says, Lo, I am with you all the days. He is with us testimonially. In John's gospel, it says, I will not leave you often, so I am coming to you. [00:15:05] He comes to us on the Lord's day at the supper. He comes on other occasions as we gather, where two or three are gathered together. Here am I in the midst, where he occupies that place at the right hand of God, in glory and in power, waiting until his enemies be made the footstool of his feet. Far above all principalities and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but in that which is to come. And I put all things under his feet. You remember in Genesis, when man was made, God said, let them have dominion. That was God's primary thought.

[00:16:06] Let them, not let him, let them. And here we have Christ and the assembly having universal dominion. This is the fulfillment. This is God's final thought. You get his primary thought in Genesis, you get his final thought in Ephesians. We look forward to it, beloved brethren, when we shall come into the fullness of it. But now we can apprehend it in our souls, that Christ has that place and the assembly by his side. The assembly, a creature vessel, but is excluded from being under the feet of Christ. The assembly is not under the feet of Christ. Everything else, God is not there, the assembly is not there. It's a marvel, it's a wonderful thing. When we think of it, we can understand the blessed God being in his own glory, apart from that. But to think of it, that you and I, beloved brethren, form a vessel that takes a place alongside of Christ in his universal dominion. [00:17:12] Everything on his feet and the assembly alongside of him. I put all things on his feet and gave him to be head over all things to the assembly, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all. The Lord Jesus is the one who fills all things, but the assembly is here referred to as his fullness, his complement, sharing his glory and headship. We sang in our first hymn, and this really encouraged me in this word, Lord Jesus Christ, our living head, how bright thy glory shines. And here we get this wonderful expression that the assembly, his body, is the fullness of him who fills all in all.

[00:18:08] In Colossians, we get the greatness of the headship of Christ. In Ephesians, we get the assembly being elevated to that position of dominion with Christ in his headship, sharing his headship in the universal position. Wonderful thought, beloved brethren. But we can revel in it. We can take account of it. We can look forward to it anticipatively. When it comes out in all its fullness, the son of man in his glory and the assembly by his side, we can look forward to it in faith. And the time is going to come when we will be there in all the glory and the splendor and the radiancy of that blessed man in universal dominion. May the Lord bless the world.