

1. Take Heart! The Best Life is Yet to Come

- a. But, now, Christ HAS been raised from the dead
- b. All this talk about ‘if he has not been raised from the dead’ is, frankly, simply rhetorical questioning meant to reveal to you the inconsistencies of such a position
 - i. But, it is not under question, for the Christ was surely and certainly raised from the dead!
 - ii. The implications of His resurrection are, therefore, vast
- c. He is the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep
 - i. That is, He is the first to be brought in from the harvest, the promise and precursor of a huge harvest to come
- d. The first-fruits were also to be given to the LORD in recognition of His provision as YRH YHWH (Jehovah Jireh), “The LORD will provide”
 - i. Exodus 23:19 – “The best of the firstfruits of your ground you shall bring into the house of the LORD your God...”
 1. The firstfruit offering was an offering of gratitude and joyful expectation
 - ii. When the first-fruits are brought in, everyone celebrates because we know that the full harvest will be grand and is just around the corner
 1. In this way, we celebrate the fact that Jesus’ body was raised from the dead because it means that the redemption of Creation is certain, glorious, and abundant
 2. Romans 8:19-23
 - iii. The resurrection of the dead, the full harvest, is the completion of our reconciliation with God
 1. Interestingly, the firstfruits brought to the LORD, were then given to the priests (Numbers 18:12) ‘as a perpetual due’
 2. Thus, in like manner, the firstfruits Christ, when given to the Father, is given back to His people, made a priesthood forever, that Christ may be both the Father’s and ours in holy union
 - a. “I in you and them in us” (John 17:21, cf. 14:20)
 - iv. The Father raised the Son for Himself and in anticipation of your resurrection
 1. The Father raised the Son for Himself
 - a. John 17:5 – “Now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.”
 - b. Heb 1:3 – “He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.”
 - c. Rev 3:21 – “He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with me on my throne, as I also overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne.”
 2. Note the passive verbs for Christ’s resurrection
 - a. Acts 2:24 – “God raised Him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for Him to be held by it.”
 - b. Acts 2:32 – “This Jesus, God raised up, to which we are all witnesses...”
 - c. Acts 3:15 – “you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses.”
 - d. Acts 4:10 – “...Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead – by him this man is standing before you well.”

- e. Acts 10:40 – “God raised Him up on the third day and made Him to appear...to us”
- e. It is those who have ‘fallen asleep’ that will be raised as the harvest to come
 - i. His life precedes the manner and nature of our resurrection
 - ii. This means that your resurrection from the dead is part of the gospel!!
 - 1. As the firstfruits, His resurrection is not complete if the whole harvest is not brought in
 - 2. This makes your resurrection NECESSARY to the gospel, the work of God, and the nature of His redemption of all things
 - iii. Thus, says Paul, your resurrection from the dead is a necessity for God to keep His word.
 - 1. Do not fear death, O Christian, for God has made it your servant to bring you to be seated with His Son in the Kingdom of God

2. Take Heart! Christ Jesus Will Raise You Up

- a. Two Representatives: Adam or Christ
- b. Every human being is born in sin because we are Adam’s kin
 - i. “Since death is through a man” & “all die in Adam”
 - 1. All humans are born into sin, and we sin by nature and by choice, and therefore we die. This is a present reality.
 - 2. The curse of death came through Adam, but is not only Adam’s, it is ours, too.
 - a. Just as physical genetics are passed from father to child, so also spiritual genetics are passed from father to child
 - b. Original sin of Adam, born under the curse of death
 - 3. Romans 5.18a – ‘as one trespass led to condemnation for all men...’
- c. Every human who entrusts himself or herself to Christ is “born again” into a new family, a new race, a new humanity with a new Head who breaks our old curse and sets us free to the newness of life
 - i. “So also the resurrection from the dead is through a man”
 - 1. And through His resurrection, we know that we have been justified by his ‘one act of righteousness’, i.e. vicarious death
 - 2. Rom 5:18b – “...so also one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men”
 - ii. Representative Headship
 - 1. Adam was a type of corporate head by whose actions all his ‘family’ was affected
 - 2. Jesus is the substantive head by whose action all his family is affected
- d. Everyone who belongs to Christ, is ‘in Christ’, will be made alive like Christ
 - i. “resurrection comes through a man” & “so also all will be made alive in Christ”
 - ii. Thus, two families stand at the resurrection of the dead at the end of the age
 - 1. Both believers in Jesus will be raised AND unbelievers will be raised
 - a. Acts 24:15;
 - 2. One has Adam to represent them, and one has Christ to answer for them
 - 3. Daniel 12:2; Matt 3:12; 25:46; John 5:28-29; Rev 20:13
 - iii. This is what Paul means by the phrase, “each one in his own order”
 - 1. “Order” is not the term for priority, but for “class” (taxonomy)
 - a. Previous clause?: the classes are “in Adam” or “in Christ”
 - b. Following clause?: Christ Himself and those ‘in Christ’
 - c. I lean toward the previous because there are two distinct classes
 - 2. The representative heads (Adam & Christ Jesus) both have *instrumentality* in common – they are both the means of something
 - a. Adam is the instrument of human death and suffering

- b. Christ is the instrument of human life and resurrection
- 3. Christ the first-fruits
 - a. “by asserting in vv 21-22 that Jesus is the true human and the Messiah, Paul explains both *that* his resurrection is the beginning of a larger harvest and *how* that harvest will be accomplished.” (N.T. Wright)
 - b. Paul encapsulates the entire story of God’s redemptive works in this brief exchange
 - i. The archetypal problem of sin (through Adam) finds its eschatological resolution through the climactic breakthrough of Christ’s resurrection as the firstfruits of the redemptive resurrection of God’s new humanity
- 4. then the ones in Christ
 - a. at his arrival (*parousia*)
 - b. 1 Thess 4:15-17
- e. The resurrection of Jesus is the proof, as the firstfruits, of our future glorious resurrection AND of our adoption into the family of God!
 - i. Adopted through justification and resurrection
 - ii. Justified through union with Christ
 - 1. Your sins united to Him and PAID IN FULL
 - 2. His righteousness united to you and UNABLE TO KEEP HIM DEAD

3. Take Heart! Jesus Will Finish All That He Set Out to Do When He Returns

- a. This ‘completion’ is the finishing of His redemptive/judgmental work
 - i. when he delivers over the kingdom to God, that is the Father
- b. This ‘completion’ is the finishing of His authoritative victory/conquering of every power raised against God
 - i. when he might 'bring to an end' (render used up)
 - 1. every ruler
 - 2. every authority
 - 3. every power
- c. This ‘completion’ consists of both authority and submission by the Christ:
 - i. Submitting the Kingdom to the Father
 - 1. John 6:38 - “I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me.”
 - 2. Jesus never rules on His own, but only in submission and obedience to His Father
 - a. This unity of purpose and role and provision within the Triune God is the perfect to which all of Creation is made to reflect
 - b. Why did Jesus ‘come down from heaven?’
 - i. To accomplish the desires of the Father
 - ii. What are these desires of the Father for Him to accomplish?
 - ii. Bringing an end to all other so-called rulers, powers, and authorities
 - 1. So, we have at the end of the age, the Son of God both submitting and authoritative, the perfect Man, the True and Blameless ‘Adam’
 - 2. His defeat of all other rulers is the salvation of His people from such rule
 - a. John 6:39 – “And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given to me, but will raise it up on the last day.”
 - b. John 6:40 – “For this is the will of my Father, that all who are looking upon the Son and believing upon him may have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.”

3. Jesus came *so that you who believe in Him would be raised up!!*
 - a. Raised up free from tyranny, injustice, oppression within every sphere of life:
 - b. Physically – freed from the power of addiction, cancer, entropy, hormones, depression, and death.
 - c. Socially – freedom from the tyranny of bad leadership, tyrannical monarchs, foolish presidents, cruel parents, power-hungry bosses, and the sneering authority of the social herd.
 - d. Spiritually – freed from the Satanic oppression of apathy and arrogance, systemic racism and sexism, the slavery of sexual and erotic desires so exacerbated by the spiritual forces of darkness, and ultimately to disarm him of his greatest threat by annihilating death itself.
- iii. That day! That day is the purpose for which Christ Jesus was sent.
 1. That day is coming. That day is near. That day is our hope!
 2. The power of the resurrected Christ Jesus is incomparable!
 - a. No power can stand before him.
 - b. No authority has rights before him.
 - c. No ruler can outmaneuver him.
 3. He is our hope, and on the day of his arrival, all Hell will break loose upon His enemies, including death itself, and all Heaven will break loose upon you, His people for whom He gave His life.
 - a. Take heart, dear friends! Take heart during an election cycle, during earthquakes and starvation and slavery!
 - b. That day is coming!
4. Take Notes! The Reason for Our Resurrection Redemption is the Glory of God
 - a. it is necessary for Him to reign
 - i. up to which He might place all the enemies under His feet
 - ii. The last enemy to be 'brought to an end' (13:8,10,11) is death
 - b. Jesus has the authority to bring an end to death!!
 - i. Consider this: He will triumph and reign by removing death from the very cosmos!
 - ii. Every decomposition will never play its dissonant chorus upon the overture of His New Creation ever!
 - iii. Every sorrow and pain and grief will be swallowed up in the blazing light of true and unspeakable joy at the demise of all things which would raise their shadow-breeding viruses of the sin which wrought such great destruction to all of Creation.
 - iv. This redemption is *so that* Jesus will be glorified, and He will hand His glory to the Father with the white-hot comings and goings of the Holy Spirit, so that God will be all in all.
 - c. He reigns in order to grant all reign to the Father
 - i. This story is not centered upon us, though we clearly have great hope and gain great benefit through it
 - ii. This story is about the magnifying of God's great and glorious name, that all might see His greatness in the work of redeeming sinners and making them sons
 1. Eph 3:8-10
 2. Heb 2:1-15

We await that day that we will see Him face to face and be made like Him. This is our hope, and it is sure. Take heart, Beloved! Your Husband is Your Maker and will restore your lost years so that all Creation may see His glory and flourish in exalting His great name. Take heart, He is coming soon! Maranatha! Make haste, Lord Jesus!