

Seriously! Jesus Really Did Rise From The Dead!

Long Beach Alliance Church • March 14th, 2010 • Pastor Chris Lankford

For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be abolished is death.

~1st Corinthians 15:25–26 (NASB)

1) From First Fruits To The End, God Is All In All

- A) As the “first fruits” of a new crop (“order,” 1st Corinthians 15:23), the resurrection is described as being “first Christ, then all those who died in Christ...”
- B) Paul goes on to describe the events of the “end” (15:24) which will follow the harvest of Christ’s resurrection. The Kingdom will be marked by Christ’s total victory over “all rule and authority,” and all enemies of God (15:24-25).
- C) Christ’s conquering reign over all the enemies of God from His resurrection through the end is part of God’s plan, and is a characteristic of the end times (15:25).
- D) Notably, the last enemy which is destroyed is death (15:26), coinciding with the resurrection of the dead. Faith in Christ includes the conviction that in the end, resurrection includes God’s ultimate victory through Jesus Christ.
- E) Paul is careful to note that Christ is subjecting creation to God, and not God Himself (15:27), and that the original creation order will be restored – all things created by God and under God will be subjected to God (15:28).
- F) That God is “all in all” is not some sort of pantheistic statement, but rather that God’s reign is unopposed.

G) Christ’s subjection to God is consistent with His prayer “not My will, but Yours be done...” (Matthew 26:10). Subjection, like in marriage, does not imply an inferiority of person but is (clearly) a subjection of will and authority (15:28).

H) Placing one’s faith in the Gospel, including the bodily resurrection of the dead, means faith in Christ’s ability to conquer His enemies and death. Not believing in the resurrection means lacking faith in God’s ultimate victory.

2) The Resurrection From The Dead Transforms Behavior!

- A) Further, personal behaviors are transformed because of the transformative power of the resurrection (15:29-34). Paul uses several “normal” practices to make his point.
- B) First, Paul notes that baptism is symbolic of literal death and literal rising (15:29), which is rendered meaningless without an actual bodily resurrection of the dead.
- C) The wording of 1st Corinthians 15:29 is a bit awkward, but appeals to the literal pre-conversion state of true death (Romans 6:3-14; Ephesians 2:1, 5; Colossians 2:13). Referring to those who are baptized, Paul asks “why be baptized through immersion in death & resurrection if it’s not real?”
- D) In addition, Paul appeals to the experience of suffering which many Christians endure (15:30-32). If the resurrection isn’t real, why bother living differently?!
- E) Rather, if the resurrection from the dead is not a reality, then we should “eat, drink, and be merry – for tomorrow we die” (cf. Isaiah 22:13).
- F) Paul, for his part, does everything he does, in an active expectation of the future resurrection (“I die daily,” 1st Corinthians 15:31). The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the hope of the Christian and the motivation for change!
- G) The resurrection translates into genuine change. Change in who we spend time with, and change in how we live. Living a resurrected life means living transformed (15:33-34)!