

“The Redemption of Our Bodies”

1 Corinthians 15:12-20; Romans 8:22-26

THE CENTRALITY & NECESSITY OF CHRIST’S RESURRECTION

1. The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is foundational to the Christian faith.

- Christ’s resurrection was the evidential, miraculous proof that Jesus is, in fact, the Son of God. Rom 1:4
- Christ’s resurrection is proof that His atonement for our sins was acceptable. Mark 16:19; Heb 1:3; 10:12
- Christ’s resurrection is directly linked to our sanctification (growth in holiness). Eph 1:19; Phil3:10
- Christ’s resurrection from the dead defeated death and the grave. 1 Cor 15:54b-55

2. The Bible says if there was no resurrection, then there is no Christian faith. 1 Cor 15:12-19

IF there is NO resurrection, then...

- v.13: ...not even Christ has been raised.
- v.14a: ...the message of the Gospel is useless. (There is no “good news.”)
- v.14b: ...the faith of Christians is in vain. (I.e., futile, useless)
- v.15: ...Christians are misrepresenting the message of God.
- v.17: ...Christians are still in their sins. (I.e., our sins have not been forgiven)
- v.18: ...Christians who have already died have, in fact, perished and not gone to heaven.
- v.19: ...Christians of all people are to be most pitied. ‘How sad for them!’

→ v.20: Paul’s response: “But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead....”

CHRIST’S RESURRECTION: “THE FIRSTFRUITS”

1. Agricultural meaning.

- “Firstfruits” = The earliest gathered part of the harvest. The first bundle of wheat from the harvest to be followed by the rest of the bundles of wheat. The bundle was called a “sheaf”.

2. Old Testament references to “firstfruits.” Ref. Ex 23:19; Lev 23:9-11; Deut 26

- Ex 23:19: “The best of the firstfruits of your ground you shall bring into the house of the LORD your God.”

3. In 1 Corinthians 15:20, Christ’s resurrection is called “the firstfruits” of those who have already died.

WAITING FOR THE REST OF THE HARVEST. Romans 8:22-26

1. How waiting is described: groaning.

2. Who is waiting/groaning?

- **v.22: Creation groans**
- **v.23: Christians groan** (note: “we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly”) -2 Corinthians 5:2, 4: Paul says that while we are still in our earthly bodies, we groan.
- **v.26: The Holy Spirit groans** Ref. John 14:16

3. How, then, shall we wait?

- **Living a life of Anticipation. v.23b:** “...we wait eagerly...”
- **Living a life of Hope. v.24** I.e., Certainty, Peace.
- **Living a life of Perseverance. v.25:** “...we wait for it with patience...”
-*The Art of Sailing On* about ship diaries of Christopher Columbus: “And today we sailed on.”
-Ref. The diaries of William Bradford and the other Pilgrims who landed at Plymouth Rock

The terminology of the sea well befits the task upon which we are all engaged—the task of life itself. The qualities that are needed in the one are required in the other. Imagination, venture, faith, courage—such as these are the marks of a true mariner of whatsoever kind. Then there is patience, which is just the art of sailing on and on and on. Happily, mariners on the high seas of life are not without chart and compass. It is certain too that there is a Master Mariner whose voice is stronger than the sea. It is theirs then to practice the good art of sailing on, and ever on, until the kindly hour of grace shall dawn, and the good ship shall enter the harbor of the country for which they look.

-Edgar Whitaker Work, Forward, *The Art of Sailing On*