

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:20-23; 54-57

## I. What Christ resurrection means.

1. Christ represents the first man to raise from the dead in God's plan of salvation. (20,23) **But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.....But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.** Jesus arose from the dead three days after He was crucified. **Dr. McGee writes:** Christ is the firstfruits. In the Old Testament they had the festival of firstfruits when they would bring the first sheaf of grain to the Lord. This meant that there would be more to come, otherwise it couldn't be the firstfruits. The fulfillment of that is in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He came back from the dead in a glorified body. And He is the only one who has come back from the dead in a glorified body. There is the promise made to saved men that we to will be raised. **Dr. Wiresbe:** When Jesus was raised from the dead, it was God's assurance to us that we shall also be raised one day as part of that future harvest. To believers, death is only "sleep." The body sleeps, but the soul is at home with the Lord (2 Cor. 5:1-8; Phil. 1:21-23). At the resurrection, the body will be "awakened" and glorified. **1 Thessalonians 4:16-17** For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. **1 John 3:2** Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. God is clear believers are raised at the rapture and we will be like the firstfruit Jesus

**II. Christ has defeated the power of death. (54b-55), then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?** **Isaiah 25:8** He will swallow up death in victory; And the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; And the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: For the LORD hath spoken it. Paul actually begins to taunt the power of death in verse 55 **O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?** . **Hosea 13:14** I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: Repentance shall be hid from mine eyes. **(Heb. 2:14-15)** Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

**III. We have victory over sin through Jesus. (56-57) The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.** The Law revealed sin and man tried to overcome sin by works of the Law. **Romans 8:3-4** For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. The resurrection means I have overcome sin through Jesus

power using the principles of grace. No longer do we need to try to measure up to please God. Because the resurrection is true we can trust the truth of God's word which tells us we stand in the power of grace.

**1. We need to claim the victory that Christ won for us at Calvary. Colossians 2:15 *And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.*** Satan thought he had won a great victory at Calvary but instead he sealed his own doom. Remember the first prophecy of the cross in **Gen. 3:15** *And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.* The cross was a bruise of Jesus heel, but the resurrection struck the devil a lethal blow. His doom is sure. Torment in the Lake of Fire for eternity awaits him. Dr. Warren Wiresbe suggest that there are three great victories Christ won at the cross:

**A. He spoiled principalities and powers** The word spoiled means disarmed. That means that Satan and his demons cannot harm the believer who will not harm himself. The weapons of Satan's warfare, which most of the time is an attack on the mind, are ineffective unless we cease to watch and pray or fail to use all of the spiritual armour described in Ephesians 6:10-18. Folks this is something that has already happened. Couple of verses to remember **James 4:7-8a** *Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.* <sup>8</sup> *Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.*

**B. He displayed His victory openly.** *he made a shew of them openly,* From the perspective of people on earth his public resurrection appearances confirmed His power over death and over Satan. His ascension to heaven was an open confirmation to the spiritual principalities and powers (angels) that He had won the battle.

**C. He returned to heaven as a triumphal conqueror.** In ancient Rome when a general won a great battle there was a parade to view the spoils of victory and to praise the conqueror. **Ephesians 4:8-10** *Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.* <sup>9</sup> *(Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? <sup>10</sup> He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)* What a triumphal entry into glory. I love Dr. Wirebe's closing comments: *You and I share in His victory over the devil. We need not worry about the elemental forces that govern the planets and try to influence men's lives. The satanic armies of principalities and powers are defeated and disgraced! As we claim the victory of Christ, use the equipment He has provided for us (Eph. 6:10ff), and trust Him, we are free from the influence of the devil. What a wonderful position and provision we have in Christ! Are we living up to it by faith? Are you living up to your potential in Christ? A Civil War veteran used to wander from place to place, begging a bed and bite to eat and always talking about his friend "Mr. Lincoln." Because of his injuries, he was unable to hold a steady job. But as long as he could keep going, he would chat about his beloved President. "You say you knew Mr. Lincoln," a skeptical bystander retorted one day. "I'm not so sure you did. Prove it!" The old man replied, "Why, sure, I can prove it. In fact, I have a piece of paper here that Mr. Lincoln himself signed and gave to me." From his old wallet, the man took out a much-folded piece of paper and showed it to the man. "I'm not much for reading," he apologized, "but I know that's Mr. Lincoln's signature." "Man, do you know what you have here?" one of the spectators asked. "You have a generous federal pension authorized by President Lincoln. You don't have to walk around like a poor beggar! Mr. Lincoln has made you rich!" Our Lord and Savior has given us all the riches of grace let's take advantage of that grace.*

