

The Resurrection

John 2:19-22

Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews therefore said, "It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" But He was speaking of the temple of His body. When therefore He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this; and they believed the Scripture, and the word which Jesus had spoken.

Jesus said,
"I am the resurrection and the
life; he who believes in Me
shall live even if he dies, and
everyone who lives and
believes in Me shall never die.
Do you believe this?"

John 11:25-26

Easter, April 12, 1998. Revised Easter April 4th, 1999; April 23, 2000;
April 12, 2009

Liberty Christian Church
David Martin, Pastor

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I. The Necessity of Believing in the Resurrection of Jesus

"...that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved..." Romans 10:9

“¹⁶ For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised; ¹⁷ and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins. ¹⁸ Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. ¹⁹ If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.”

1 Corinthians 15:16-19

II. The Necessary Implications of Denying the Resurrection of Jesus

- To deny Christ's resurrection is to deny the Gospel because the resurrection of Jesus Christ is an essential element of the Gospel (Rom. 10:9; 1 Cor. 15:1-4), If one's "gospel" lacks a necessary component of the true Gospel, in this case the resurrection of Christ, it is, in the words of Paul, "a different gospel" which is really not a gospel at all but a distortion of the gospel of Christ (See Galatians 1:1, 6-7).
- To deny the resurrection of Christ is to deny the testimony of the Scriptures (1 Cor. 15:4). Paul specifically stated that Christ's burial and resurrection were both according to the Scriptures.
- To deny the testimony of the Scriptures is to deny the testimony of the Holy Spirit for it is the Holy Spirit Who moved men to write the Scriptures (2 Peter 1:20-21).
- To deny the resurrection of Christ is to deny the words of Christ (Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34; Revelation 1:17-18).
- To deny the resurrection of Christ is to deny the work of the Godhead, for Scripture states that all three Persons of the Godhead raised Jesus (Father- Romans 6:4; Galatians 1:1; Holy Spirit- Romans 8:11; Jesus- John 2:19-21; 10:18).

III. The Preaching of the Resurrection

1 Corinthians 15:13-14

"But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain."

A. All of the Gospels contain the message of the resurrection of Jesus:

Matthew 28:1-20 Luke 24:1-50; Acts 1:3
Mark 16:1-20 John 20:21

B. Peter preached the resurrection of Jesus:

Acts 2:22-36 Acts 10:39-43
Acts 3:13-15,26 1Peter 1:20-21

C. Paul preached the resurrection of Jesus:

Acts 13:29-42 Romans 14:9
Acts 17:30-32 1 Corinthians 6:14
Acts 23:6 1 Corinthians 15:1-58
Acts 24:15, 21 2 Corinthians 4:14
Acts 25:19 Galatians 1:1
Acts 26:6-8, 23 Ephesians 1:18-21
Romans 1:4 Colossians 2:9-15
Romans 4:24-25 Colossians 3:1-31
Romans 6:4-5 1 Thess. 1:9-10
Romans 8:11, 34

D. The writer of the book of Hebrews preached on the resurrection of Jesus:

The message of the high-priesthood of Jesus in the book of Hebrews is a powerful testimony of the resurrection of Christ. Hebrews 8:1-2 continues the resurrection message of Acts 3:32-33. His exaltation above the heavens (Hebrews 7:26) speaks of His resurrection after having offered Himself (v. 27) as the perfect sacrifice.

"Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord, equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen."

Hebrews 13:20-21

E. Angels announced the resurrection of Jesus:

Matthew 28:6 Luke 24:5-8

Mark 16:6-7

F. Jesus preached His resurrection:

Matthew 16:21; 17:22-23 John 2:19-22; 10:17-18;
11:25-26

Mark 8:31; 9:9-10, 31 Revelation 1:17-18

IV. The Kind of Resurrection

The resurrection of Jesus was physical. His mortal body was raised an immortal body. Consequently, the future resurrection of all people will also be physical (See V. The Results Of The Resurrection In the Lives Of People).

1. Bodily

a. This temple = His body (John 2:19-21)

b. Physical (Biblical evidence)

1. Ability to touch Him. Matt. 28:9; Lk. 24:39; Jn. 20:24-29

2. He ate and drank. Luke 24:41-43; Acts 10:40-41

3. He declared He had a body. Lk. 24:38-39

4. He was seen. Acts 1:3; 1 Corin. 15:1-8

2. Spirit (no body = error)

There are a few verses which when misunderstood seem to indicate that at resurrection it is a spirit (not a physical body) that is raised.

a. 1 Corinthians 15:44-45, 50.

In these verses Paul is simply explaining that it is not with the perishable body of flesh and blood as we currently know it, in which we will inherit heaven, but with a spiritual body suited for heaven. Paul, in the same context uses other contrasting words to describe the changed body. The contrasts indicate a difference or a change in the body not an absence of body.

1. Seed - fruit (37-38).
2. Humans - beasts - birds - fish (all flesh, but different) (39).
3. Heavenly - earthly (all planetary bodies, but different) (40-41).
4. Sown perishable - raised imperishable (42, 50, 53).
5. Sown in dishonor - raised in glory (43).
6. Sown in weakness - raised in power (43).
7. Sown a natural body - raised a spiritual body (44).
8. Adam - Jesus (45).
9. Earthy - heavenly (48-49).
10. Mortal - immortality (53-54).

V. The Results of the Resurrection in the Lives of People (See Diagram on page 22)

John 5:25-28

“Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear shall live. For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself; and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man. Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall come forth...”

1. Believer

a. Bodily 1 Corinthians 15:50-58

b. Raised to eternal life in heaven

“... those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life...,” (John 5:29)

2. Unbeliever

a. Bodily Revelation 20:11-15

b. Raised to eternal condemnation in the Lake of Fire

“...those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment.” (John 5:29)

Revelation 21:1-5

“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them, and He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be any death; there shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.’ And He who sits on the throne said, Behold, I am making all things new.’ And He said, ‘Write, for these words are faithful and true.’”

VI. The Hope of the Resurrection in the Old Testament

Today, we have the advantage of being able to interpret the Old Testament in the light of the New Testament. We will use this principle of interpretation as we examine a few of the Old Testament passages that pertain to the resurrection. However, from this vantage point we should not assume that the saints of the Old Testament were not aware of the resurrection of the Messiah, nor should we think that they were unaware of the resurrection of the dead in general. As we shall see, the saints of old, in addition to

having sufficient information declaring the resurrection, they also understood its significance.

Genesis 3:15

The first prophecy of Christ comes packed with information. Consider the wisdom of this prophecy, and the knowledge gained of the coming Messiah, and His resurrection as God unwrapped the contents of this verse through both the Old and New Testaments.

Following the sin of Adam and Eve in the garden, God pronounced the curse upon the serpent saying,

"And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel." Genesis 3:15

Consider a few of the characteristics of Christ we learn from this verse:

Her seed

Not the seed of man, but "her seed." This refers to the deity of Christ. He would be born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14). She would be with child by the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:18, 20).

At the same time that this small phrase references His deity, it also reveals His humanity. He will be born of a woman (Galatians 4:4).

He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel.

The pronoun "He" definitely points to the fact that the fulfillment of this prophecy will be accomplished in one individual. It is in this phrase that we see both the resurrection and death of Christ proclaimed.

His death, "you shall bruise him on the heel." We learn from the New Testament that as God spoke to the serpent He was also

referring to the devil or Satan (Revelation 20:2). The following New Testament verses give us a glance into Satan's activity with regard to the death of Christ: Revelation 12:4; Luke 22:3; John 6:70-71; 13:2, 27. Acts 2:23 informs us that Jesus was nailed to the cross by the hands of godless men. In this verse we see the enmity between the serpent's (Satan's) seed and the woman's seed spoken of in Genesis 3:15.

Regarding the resurrection of Christ-- "He [Jesus, the seed of the woman] shall bruise you [Satan] on the head..." The word *bruise* in both cases is better translated "crush." The crushing of Christ's heel speaks of a vital but temporary condition (His death), where as the crushing of the serpent's head testifies to the ultimate victory of the seed of the woman (Christ) and the permanent defeat of Satan. In Genesis 3:15 Satan's death sentence is rendered. The death and resurrection of Christ seal the sentence (Colossians 2:15). At the end of the millennium, the execution is carried out (Revelation 20:10). Consider the following verses that speak of Christ's victory and Satan's demise brought about by the death and resurrection of the Messiah.

Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 26:21-27:1; Colossians 2:12-15; Hebrews 2:14; 1 John 3:8; Revelation 1:18; 20:1-3, 10. Compare the verses of Isaiah 26:21-27:1 with those of Revelation.

The triumph of Christ is the blessed aroma of victory to Believers (1Corinthians 15:50-58), and an aroma of death to unbelievers. To the one, life to the other, death (2 Corinthians 2:16). See how the devil's children are also defeated along with him (Satan),-- John 5:29; 1 Corinthians 1:18; 2 Corinthians 2:14-17; Revelation 20:11-15.

Job

The story of Job takes place sometime following the flood, but before Abraham. In verses 23-27 of the 19th chapter we see that Job himself was aware of the resurrection.

“Oh that my words were written! Oh that they were inscribed in a book! ‘That with an iron stylus and lead they were engraved in the rock forever! ‘And as for me, I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last He will take His stand on the earth. ‘Even after my skin is destroyed, yet from my flesh I shall see God; Whom I myself shall behold, and whom my eyes shall see and not another. My heart faints within me.”

Abraham

The story of Abraham and God's command for him to sacrifice his son Isaac reveals to us that Abraham knew of God's ability to raise the dead (Gen. 22). Notice in Genesis 22:5 that Abraham told his servants that they were to wait with the donkey, and after worshipping he and Isaac both would return:

"And Abraham said to his young men, 'Stay here with the donkey, and I and the lad will go yonder; and we will worship and return to you.'"

Hebrews 11:17-19 teaches us that Abraham did indeed expect to return with Isaac, and indeed he did! Hebrews tells us that Abraham received Isaac back [from the dead] as a type. At the moment Abraham was told by the Lord to sacrifice his son, to the day that they arrived at the appointed place three days passed (Genesis 22:4). According to Hebrews 11:19, Isaac was a type pertaining to the death and resurrection of Jesus. Abraham considered Isaac dead on the day God told him to sacrifice him and therefore on the third day when Isaac was spared, Abraham in a sense received him back from the dead. Jesus was resurrected on the third day (Mt. 16:21; 17:23; 20:19; 1 Cor. 15:4).

David

In Psalm 16:10 King David spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah when he said, "Neither wilt Thou allow Thy Holy One to undergo decay." The Apostle Paul on his first missionary journey (Acts 13:30-37) quoted this verse and one other (Psalm 2:7) from the book of Psalms as he preached the resurrection of Christ. In addition to these two he also quoted Isaiah 55:3 in the same context speaking of the resurrection. All of which he described as, "...the good news of the promise made to the fathers, that God has fulfilled this promise to our children in that He raised up Jesus..." Notice that Paul said that the good news of the promise (resurrection of Christ) was made to the fathers!

Peter also referred to Psalm 16 as describing the resurrection in Acts 2:24-32.

The Burning Bush

"He said also, 'I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' Then Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God."

On the surface this verse may seem somewhat obscure when it comes to the resurrection, but when we go to the New Testament we have its relevance to the resurrection revealed. In Mark 12:26-27 Jesus used this very verse to defeat the Sadducees and their belief that there was no resurrection (Mark 12:18).

Daniel

Daniel 9:26 tells of the death of the Messiah ("the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing") occurring after the sixty-two weeks (a time now past). However, relating to a time following the 70th week of Daniel 9:27, we see in Daniel 7:13-14 a reference to the Second Coming of the Son of Man (a time yet to come). If He was put to death after the 62nd week and then returns at the end of the 70th week, there must be a resurrection between these two times. Daniel 12:2 and Isaiah 26:19 mention a resurrection of people that takes place following the tribulation.

Jonah

Jesus referred to the prophet Jonah as He related the truth of His death and resurrection to a wicked generation seeking a sign.

"And as the crowds were increasing, He began to say, "This generation is a wicked generation; it seeks for a sign, and yet no sign shall be given to it but the sign of Jonah. For just as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so shall the Son of Man be to this generation.'" Luke 11:29-30

No doubt, in the Old Testament there are yet other references to the death and resurrection of Christ and the resurrections yet to come which I have not examined here, but in closing consider the words of Jesus in John 8:56 concerning Abraham:

"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw {it} and was glad."

According to Jesus, Abraham saw His day. Most probably this was accomplished through Isaac as a type of Christ. In conjunction with Hebrews 11:13-17 also see Galatians 3:15-16. Notice Jesus said that Abraham saw His day and was glad. Abraham looked forward and rejoiced because of Christ. While we look back at His first coming, like Abraham and other Old Testament Saints we also looked forward to a time when we shall be with the Lord, and in this we too rejoice!

VII. 1 Corinthians 15

1. [The Gospel Message Encompasses the Resurrection](#) vs. 1-4
According to the Scriptures:
 1. Christ died for our sins. (3)
 2. He was buried and then raised on the third day. (4)
2. [The Proof of the Resurrection](#) vs. 5-11
Testimonies of eyewitnesses 5-8
Testimony of a changed life 9-11
3. [The Consequence if \(hypothetically\) there is no Resurrection](#) vs. 12-19
Christ is not raised 13
Preaching is in vain 14
Faith is vain 14
Apostles are false witnesses of God 15
To die is to perish 16-18
Believers are still in their sins 17
Above all Believers are to be pitied 19
4. [The Consequence of the Resurrection Truth](#) vs. 20-34
The truth 20
The future consequence-- all resurrected
 - Those who are Christ's at His coming 23
 - Death is abolished (all unbelievers compare Jn. 5:28-29) 24-28The present consequence--Our labor in the Lord is significant 29-34
5. [The Character of the Resurrection](#) vs. 35-49
 - Nature illustrates the work and wish of God regarding the character of the resurrection. 38
6. [The Condition of the Resurrection](#) vs. 50-53
7. [The Comfort of the Resurrection](#) vs. 54-57
8. [The Confidence Produced by the Resurrection](#) v. 58

1. The Gospel Message Encompasses the Resurrection 15:1-4

Among the various problems that impacted the Corinthian church was the influence of false teaching regarding the resurrection of the dead. There were some within the church who were actually saying that there was no resurrection (15:12). Although unbelieving false teachers may have influenced these individuals (15:33), Paul attributed the presence of the false doctrine to a lack of knowledge of God among the believers at the church (15:34).

Confronting the error Paul called the attention of the Christians at the church of Corinth back to the fundamental principles of the Gospel (death and resurrection of Christ v. 1, 3-4). This was the Gospel he preached to them, which they received, wherein they were standing. This was the Gospel of their salvation. The genuineness of their belief was to be discovered by whether or not they were holding fast to the Gospel Paul initially preached to them.

Paul then preached the Gospel and demonstrated that according to the Scriptures the Gospel message encompasses both the death and the resurrection of Christ. Therefore, we as well as the Believers at Corinth should know that a gospel that does not include both the death and the resurrection of Christ is no Gospel at all.

2. The Proof of the Resurrection 15:5-11

Even today, as well as then, many liberal theologians deny the bodily resurrection of Christ. Paul refuted their argument using two significant facts-- 1) The testimonies of reliable eyewitnesses who saw Christ in His resurrected body. Two would have been enough but he lists Peter, the twelve (The 11 plus Matthias see Acts 1:21-22), and James. Then there were over five hundred brethren to which Christ appeared at the same time. In addition to the reliability of these witnesses some were currently living by which the fact could be verified. By listing all the apostles again Paul was most likely referring to the point that they witnessed the Lord more

than once and in different locations, at different times, involving different circumstances. 2) Paul's own testimony of a changed life. Paul reminded them of his life before encountering the resurrected Lord, when as Saul he persecuted the church of God. His story was also something that could be easily verified through other Christians who knew of his former practice. Paul is here saying that not only did he encounter the resurrected Lord, but his life was also dramatically altered by the grace that came from Him. Adding to these two facts he also reminds the Corinthians that they at one time, believed what was preached.

3. The Consequence if (hypothetically) there is no Resurrection 15:12-19

In the light of such profound evidence Paul asks, "...how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?" He then informs them of the folly of such a position by telling them that if there is no resurrection of the dead then not even Christ had been raised. Hypothetically speaking, if Christ is not raised, and since the Gospel must include the resurrection of Christ, then both preaching and belief are vain. By following the argument that the dead are not raised to its logical conclusion Paul hypothetically demonstrated the consequence of such a position. Consequences which in and of themselves speak volumes:

Christ is not raised	13, 16
Preaching is in vain	14
Faith is vain	14, 17
Apostles are false witnesses of God	15
Believers were still in their sins	17
To die is to perish	18
Above all Believers are to be pitied	19

The last of which seems to be the sum of the others, "If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied." He will refer to this hypothetical argument later (v. 29-32) to demonstrate that if there is no resurrection, working for the Lord at the risk of death is of no importance and might as well be exchanged for the pleasures of the carnal world.

4. The Consequence of the Resurrection Truth 15:20-34

Leaving the consequences of the folly of no resurrection Paul returns in verse 20 to the truth-- "But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep." Reaffirming the truth he now relates (in contrast to the consequences of the hypothetical argument) the consequences of the truth of the resurrection, consequences which are relative to both the future and the present. He first deals with the future.

Future (Refer to the [diagram](#) on page 22)

Calling to remembrance the initial entrance of death to all by one man (Adam), Paul states that it is by one man (Christ) that all shall be made alive. The word *alive* in verse 22 is a synonym for resurrection. This is evident in the next verse where Paul refers to the order of the resurrection, not to mention that the subject of this chapter is bodily resurrection.

Because all resurrection is predicated upon the resurrection of Christ, He is first in the order and consequently described as the first fruits (v. 23). After that Paul says, "those who are Christ's at His coming." Two different components of Christ's coming must be in view here and both pertain only to Believers. 1) The rapture of the church prior to the tribulation (1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 1Thessalonians 4:13-17). 2) Those who died during the tribulation, along with the Old Testament saints will be raised at the second coming of Christ, to reign with Him during His millennial reign (Daniel 12:2; Revelation 20:4, 6).

Following the millennial reign of Christ will be the great white throne judgment (Rev. 20:11-15). It is at that time that the last enemy (death) will be abolished (1 Corin. 15:26). This final judgment will involve the resurrection of all unbelievers from all time. They, unlike the saints who are resurrected to life, will come forth to a resurrection of judgment (John 5:28-29). At this time all things will have been submitted unto God the Father.

Present

In verses 29-34 Paul turns his attention toward the consequences of the resurrection in the present. Knowledge of the resurrection produces confidence in the lives of Believers as they work in the Lord. They know that their present labors are not in vain in the Lord (v. 58).

If there is no resurrection then the labor that is performed by Believers is pointless. Here Paul returns to the hypothetical argument he mentioned earlier (v. 12-19), demonstrating that if there is no resurrection, working for the Lord in any fashion and especially at the risk of death is of no profit and should be exchanged for the pleasures of the carnal world (v. 32).

Those among the Corinthian Believers who were saying that there is no resurrection of the dead were corrupting the conduct of the Believers. Here Paul tells these corrupted Believers not to be deceived, and that they should become clear in their thinking of God and stop sinning. Obviously, because there is a resurrection!

5. The Character of the Resurrection 15:35-49

So far Paul has declared that the Gospel includes the message of the resurrection. He has distinctively pointed out the evidence of the resurrection, and demonstrated the consequences on both sides of the argument. Now, in the remaining verses he turns toward the **character**, **condition**, and **comfort** of the resurrection, and finally to the **confidence** produced by the resurrection in the minds of Believers.

In response to the two taunting questions (v. 35) of the one who lacks knowledge of God (v. 34), the apostle points to nature and uses it to illustrate the character of the resurrection.

- How are the dead raised? By the power of God just like a seed which dies grows by the power of God.
- What kind of body do they have? One that pleases God.

Although these answers may initially appear trite they are essentially the solution. God is the creator and with His creation He does exactly as He pleases. The mystery of resurrection like the mystery of life is in His hands, and like all things God orders them according to His own will (v. 38). Truly He is in the heavens and He does what ever He pleases (Psalm 115:3). Only fools willfully choose not to recognize such truth (v. 36).

In verses 39-41 Paul points to the creation as a display of the work of God demonstrating that there are different kinds of flesh, different kinds of bodies, and different kinds of glory. So it is with the character of the resurrection. It is sown in one condition and raised in another (42-44). Adam (the first man) and Christ (last Adam) compose the human illustration of the character of the resurrection (45-49).

6. The Condition of the Resurrection 15:50-53

Now Paul reveals a mystery. It is evident that the dead will be raised, what about the living? Since flesh and blood in its present condition cannot inherit the kingdom of God (50); nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable, something must take place with the bodies of those Believers who are living before they can enter the kingdom. The answer is found in yet another work of God. He will change those Believers who are alive. In regard to the church this change will take place at the rapture when Christ returns for His bride to take her into heaven (For the rapture which could be considered one component of Christ's coming [v. 23] see John 14:1-4 and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). The present condition of a perishable mortal body will be changed to a new condition. An imperishable immortal body (v. 53).

7. The Comfort of the Resurrection 15:54-57

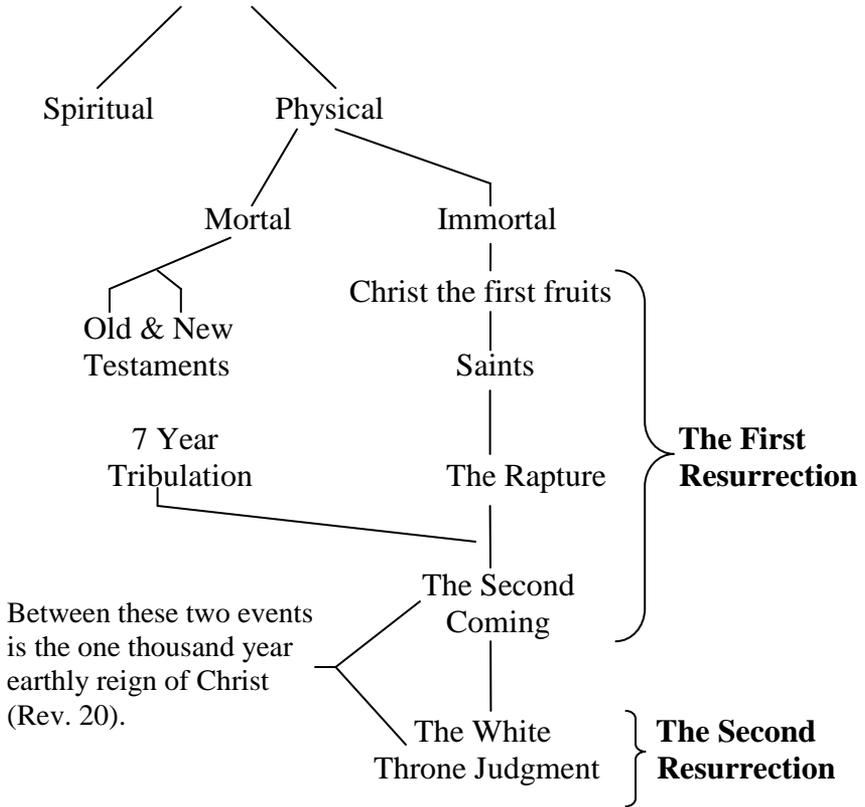
At the moment of the change when the perishable is replaced with the imperishable death will be swallowed up in victory. It is God that gives us such a victory, and it is through Jesus Christ that the victory comes to us. Having been comforted by such truth the Christian responds with thanks to God (54-57).

8. The Confidence Produced by the Resurrection 15:58

In addition to the comfort there is an overwhelming confidence that comes from knowing that one's toil is not in vain. Therefore we should be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord (58).

"But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve, as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words." 1Thessalonians 4:13-18

RESURRECTIONS



This diagram illustrates the kinds of resurrections mentioned in Scripture as well as the order of the immortal resurrection. The outline on the next page provides a brief explanation and verse references for the diagram.

THE RESURRECTIONS

- I. Spiritual** [This aspect of resurrection is the regenerating work of God that He performs in the lives of the elect. It is a spiritual resurrection in the sense that the prior state of the Believer is one of spiritual death, whereas when the Believer is saved he or she is said to be raised up (made alive) with Christ]
John 5:25; Ephesians 2:1, 5-6
- II. Physical:**
1. **Mortal** (Resurrection of a mortal body to die again.)
 - a. Old Testament (2 Kings 4:32-35)
 - b. New Testament (Matthew 9:18-25; Luke 7:11-16; John 11:43-44; Acts 9:36-43; 20:9-10)
 2. **Immortal** (Resurrection of an immortal body each in his own order.)

The Order:

First Resurrection. Resurrected to life and peace.

(John 5:29a; 1 Corinthians 15:20-23)

- a. Jesus (The First Fruits) 1 Corinthians 15:20, 23)
- b. Saints at Christ's resurrection. (Matthew 27:50-53)
- c. The Rapture
 - The Church (Believers since the death and resurrection of Jesus) [1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:50:-54]
- d. The Second Coming (Revelation 20:4-6)
 - Old Testament Saints (Isaiah 26:19; Daniel 12:1-3, 13)
 - Tribulation Saints (Revelation 6:9-11; 20:4-6)

The First
Resurrection

The Second Resurrection. Resurrected to judgment (The second Death).

(John 5:29b; 1 Corinthians 15:24-26)

- e. The White Throne Judgment (Revelation 20:11-15)

The Second
Resurrection

The Two Resurrections of Revelation 20

“⁴ And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. ⁵ The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. ⁶ Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.”

Revelation 20:4-6 NASB

Verse 4 is a specific reference to the souls (spirits) of those who were martyred (beheaded) for the testimony of Jesus and the Word of God. Most probably to those who were martyred during the tribulation as indicated by the fact that they “had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand”. Compare Rev. 6:9-11.

That they were beheaded addresses the fact of the death of their bodies. Nevertheless, John said he saw their souls, which indicates that although they were killed they continued to live. Essentially, they were martyred on earth but their souls lived apart from their bodies in heaven (Compare Rev. 6:9-11; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23).

Then John says “and they came to life...” In that he had already stated he saw their souls indicated they were alive but only as spirits. So when he says here, “they came to life” he is referring to their bodies being resurrected.

- This could not be a reference to them being spiritually born again as that was already the case seeing the text says they were beheaded, “*because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand.*” A clear indication that they were Believers.
- The phrase *came to life* of verse 4 has the same sense of meaning as the similar phrase used in the next verse (v.5) which says, “The rest of the dead did not *come to life...*” The *rest of the dead* are described as coming to life in verses 12 – 13 where it is clearly the physical resurrection to the final judgment that is in view. Thus the phrase of verse 4 indicates a physical resurrection.
- The last sentence of verse 5 describes the event associated with those of verse 4 as a resurrection when it says, “This is the first resurrection.” Again, this is not a reference to a spiritual resurrection but a physical resurrection.

A Separate Resurrection

A comparison between the phrases “came to life” of verse 4 and “come to life” of verse 5 shows the nature of the events to be of the same type— a physical resurrection. However, while the nature is of the same type it is clear that two separate resurrections are in view. They are the same in type (physical resurrection) but different in timing (divided by one thousand years).

- Verse 5 is explicit, “The rest of the dead” in contrast to those who were already raised in verse 4, “did not come to life **until**” that is, their resurrection was set apart from those of verse 4 by the use of the word *until*.

- Furthermore, verse 5 informs us that that which sets apart the two is a period of intervening years. Specifically stated, the completion of “*the thousand years*.”

The first phrase of verse 5, “The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed” is parenthetical. The subject of the resurrection of the rest of the dead is not taken up again until verses 11-15. Thus, distinguishing the two resurrected groups—those raised to reign and those raised to judgment. The last phrase of verse 5 then calls the resurrection of the first group the “first resurrection”. This is the resurrection of those who were believers. This resurrection is referred to as the *first* resurrection because it:

1. Precedes the resurrection of the rest of the dead who are said to come to life and are then judged and cast into the lake of fire.
2. Is superior to the second, in the sense that over those who have a part in this first resurrection the second death (being cast into the lake of fire) has no power (v. 6).

Therefore, in these senses we can say that the first resurrection is first in timing and in quality.

Those of the first resurrection are blessed and holy because over them the second death has no power. Therefore, by implication the first resurrection is inclusive of all those over whom the second death has no power regardless of the time they are resurrected. In this sense the first resurrection is the resurrection of the righteous (Lk. 14:14; Acts 24:15).

“‘The first resurrection’ applies most directly to the resurrection of the martyrs at the end of v. 4, but it does not exclude earlier phases of resurrection from its scope.” (Robert Thomas, Commentary on Revelation Chapters 8-22, p. 419)

We know that the resurrection of Revelation 20, although called the first resurrection is not the first resurrection to immortality to occur.

There are multiple resurrections associated with the *first resurrection*:

1. The resurrection of Jesus (He is the first fruits from the grave 1 Cor. 15:20)
2. The resurrection immediately following the resurrection of Jesus which served as a proof of the effect of Christ's resurrection (Mt. 27:52-53). Assuming this was a resurrection to immortality.
3. The resurrection that takes place when Jesus raptures His Church and takes them into heaven (1 Cor. 15:52-53; 1 Thes. 4:13-17).
4. The resurrection of the saints in Rev. 20:4.
5. The resurrection or transformation of the saints who die during the millennium.

The unifying factor of those partaking of the *first resurrection* is not so much the timing of the specific instances of resurrection but the fact that “over these the second death has no power.” (Rev. 20:6).

And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as a dead man. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying,

“Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.”

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"Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."

Revelation 1:17-18
Revelation 22:12-13