

The Coming Resurrection

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1Corinthians 15:12-58

“If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.”

(1Corinthians 15:19-20, ESV)

Introduction

Of the six foundational teachings of the apostles—repentance from acts that lead to death, faith in God, baptism with water, the Holy Spirit and fire, the laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment (see Hebrews 6:1-2)—the most controversial has continued to be the resurrection of the dead. As Paul writes, if Christ has not been raised then our faith is worthless, but because He has been raised from the dead, our faith is priceless and leads to eternal life.

1. Adam and Christ compared.

(vv.12-28)

- a) Just as Adam was our predecessor according to this life, so is Christ is for eternal life.
- b) Christ will destroy even the power of death over those who believe in Him.

2. What does Paul mean by “baptism for the dead”?

(vv.29-34)

- a) “Baptism for the dead” described how martyred Christians resulted in more disciples.
- b) “Baptism for the dead” was not vicarious repentance unto salvation (He 9:27-28).

3. Because of the resurrection, our labor in Christ is not in vain.

(vv.35-58)

- a) In the universe we live in there are bodies which are gaseous, liquid and solid.
- b) In the resurrection our weak and perishable bodies will be raised strong and eternal.

Conclusion

The only enemy of our soul that Jesus does not take care of for us is ourselves. That’s why Paul writes these words: “be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, know that in the Lord your labor is not in vain” (1Co15:58, ESV).

For our prayerful study, discussion and application

1. Read verses 12-27. Why and how is the resurrection important to our faith?
2. Read verse 29. What does Paul mean by someone being “baptized for the dead”?
3. Read verses 35-58 and then try to put Paul’s explanation into your own words.

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