

Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

The Order of the Resurrection

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:20-28

Code: 90-409

Open your Bible to 1 Corinthians chapter 15. We are in a study of the fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians on the resurrection. We have emphasized its utter importance to us as believers, to the church of Jesus Christ, to the Son of God, to the Spirit of God, to the Father Himself. This is the ultimate end of everything that God has planned in His glorious redemption.

One of my favorite writers is a man named Erich Sauer, a German writer. If you ever find any of the little books by Erich Sauer, you want to grab on to them and read through them, they are powerful books. He has a way of condensing things in an outline form that is easy accessible... easy accessible and very manageable and very powerful.

There are many quotable quotes that have come from Erich Sauer, here's one that I especially have appreciated. He said this, "The present age is Easter time. It begins with the resurrection of the Redeemer and ends with the resurrection of the redeemed, between lies the spiritual resurrection of those called into life. So we live between two Easters and in the power of the first Easter, we go to the second Easter." We understand that. We live between the resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of the redeemed, those two great Easter events

Now, in the Corinthian church, we will remember that some were denying the resurrection of the body because it was denied by the philosophers of their day, their time and place. Paul then answers those who would claim to be Christians but hanging on to their past philosophers deny the resurrection of the body. They weren't denying eternal life, they weren't denying spiritual life in heaven forever. They were simply denying the resurrection of the body based upon what they had been taught by their philosophers. So Paul presents in this chapter, 1 Corinthians 15, a case, the great case, the unparallel case for bodily resurrection. It is the greatest document ever penned on that subject. And it is all based on the reality that Jesus Christ rose bodily from the grave.

One cannot be a believer without believing in the resurrection of Christ because Romans 10:9 and 10 says if you believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead and confess Him as Lord, you'll be saved. One cannot be saved unless there is an affirmation of the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ. That's part of the gospel.

Now in the opening eleven verses of this chapter, he laid that out. The gospel, what is the gospel? Verse 3, "That Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried and that He was raised on the third day according to the scriptures." That's the gospel to be believed for salvation. So the first eleven verses then are an affirmation of what the believers at Corinth have already believed, that is that Jesus rose bodily from the grave. If that happened, how then can they deny or question bodily resurrections? Since you already believed in Christ's bodily resurrection, why should your own bodily resurrection be such a problem as to bring you to want to deny that?

Then having laid out the reality of Christ's resurrection in the opening eleven verses, starting in verse 12 in a masterful flow of logic, he shows the consequence of denying bodily resurrection. If dead men don't rise, if as verse 13 puts it, there is no resurrection of the dead, then what?

Well we remember His flow. Christ is not risen if dead men don't rise. If Christ is not risen, all gospel preaching is useless. Your faith is empty. The Apostles are liars. We're all yet in our sins. And dead Christians are damned because they're in their sins and Christians are, of all the people in the world, most to be pitied if dead men don't rise.

So he starts out with a positive affirmation that there is a bodily resurrection because they already believe in that with regard to Christ. And then he goes to a negative point and shows the absolute disaster all of the Christian gospel and all of the divine plan of redemption crumbles if there is no bodily resurrection.

Now we come to verse 20 for tonight, and here is another transition. "But now Christ has been raised from the dead." And here is the statement of affirmation that launches this section from verse 20 to 29, let me read it to you further.

"The firstfruits of those who are asleep for since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam, all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own order, Christ the firstfruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming, then comes the end when He hands over the Kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power, for He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be abolished is death, for He has put all things in subjection under His feet. But when He says all things are put in subjection, it is evident that He is accepted who put all things in subjection to Him, meaning God, when all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself will be subjected to the one who subjected all things to Him so that God may be all in all."

What you have here is God's redemptive plan taken to its consummation and how critical resurrection is to it. This is precisely a passage that describes what Erich Sauer says about the living of the church in the midst of a time of spiritual resurrection between the resurrection of Christ and the final resurrection of the redeemed.

So we'll start with that statement, "Now is Christ risen from the dead." They know it. They believe it. They have affirmed it. It cannot be denied. And that takes us back to the eyewitnesses that we read about in the early part of the chapter, verse 5 tells us He appeared to Cephas, then to the Twelve, then to more than 500 brethren at one time, then to James, then to all the Apostles, and finally to the one untimely born, the one Apostle Paul himself. These eyewitnesses attest to the validity of the resurrection.

So the resurrection is a historic fact. They believe it when it comes to Christ. Now he wants them to understand how important it is for them to believe it with regard to themselves as well. Everything in God's plan demands the resurrection. Not only the resurrection of Christ, but the resurrection of believers as well. The whole redemptive plan is dependent on a bodily resurrection, of Christ and of all who believe. Christ has risen and so will we rise. It's the words of Jesus, "Because I live, you will live also," John 14. "Now is Christ risen," or better as the NAS puts it, "Now has been raised from the dead," perfect tense verb form. Either translation would work to convey the fact that He did rise and He continues to be alive. He was raised and continues to be alive, not like Jairus' daughter who was raised and died, not like the widow's son who was raised and died, not like Lazarus who was raised and died. Christ was raised never to die. That's the foundation of the gospel.

Now moving from there, he begins to just simply unfold for us how critical resurrection is to the redemptive plan of God. We'll see it in three parts... the Redeemer, the redeemed and the redemption... the Redeemer, the redeemed and the redemption. That's how his flow goes and it is a powerful passage.

Let's start with the Redeemer, verse 20. "Christ, the One who has been raised from the dead, is the firstfruits of those who are asleep...the firstfruits of those who are asleep." Everybody understood firstfruits, it's a very agrarian world not only in Israel, but in the Gentile world as well. Everybody understood that and everybody understood that the firstfruits were the first elements of the crop to be harvested. And when the firstfruits came in, you knew the rest of the crop was on its way. The Jews, of course, would be extremely familiar with that and many in the church in Corinth, of course, were converted for Paul had ministered to them. They knew that a firstfruits offering was ordered by God back in Leviticus 23:10, "You shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest." This is a sign of your harvest to come. In a sense, it kind of guarantees the harvest. And so it is that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the guarantee of the full resurrection harvest. As He comes to life in the way that plants come to life out of dead seeds buried in the ground, and Jesus even referred to Himself in that way, that He would be like a seed buried in the ground in the gospel of John, that would spring forth into life. As He comes to life, He guarantees that the full harvest will come in the future.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ then is a sign. It is a pledge. It is a guarantee for the resurrection of all believers which is to come. And just as the rest of the harvest couldn't be made without the

firstfruits, so the final harvest, the resurrection of all believers, cannot come until the One who guarantees that resurrection has come to life. Again, Christ was not the first to rise again. He was the first to rise again and never die. And thus He is guarantying for us a kind of resurrection not like Lazarus but like His, that we will be raised to life and never die again. Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in Me shall never die," John 11.

So, we have here then the foundation of our own resurrection in the resurrection of Christ. This isn't the only place that He is identified as the firstfruits, as the guarantee. He is in Colossians 1:18 called the *prototokos* from the dead, the first one from the dead, the primary one from the dead. In Revelation 1:5 He is called again the *prototokos* from the dead, the premiere one, the first one.

And notice again in this verse, He is the firstfruits of those who are asleep, of those who are asleep. Asleep is a term referring to death for believers, but it attaches itself, in a sense, to the body. It refers to the body, not the soul. When you die, your soul doesn't sleep, your body does. When you die, "You're absent from the body, present with the Lord." "Far better to depart and be with Christ," as Paul says in 2 Corinthians and Philippians. So, to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord, but the body sleeps.

And so, the guarantee is that because Christ rises, our bodies will rise as well. And now that poses a question, why are we to understand that, or how are we to understand that one man's resurrection could have such an effect on us? Paul's answer to that is a very familiar answer. Look at verse **22**. Here's his answer. It's in a principle, it's in an illustration. "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive." He uses an analogy between Adam and Christ, Adam the head of the natural order, Christ the head of the spiritual order, to prove the point that the act of one man can have an impact on others. This is a principle. This is a major point. The Corinthians may be saying, "Okay, we know Christ rose from the dead, we affirm that. But how is it that His resurrection guarantees ours? How is that possible? How does that happen?"

Paul then, wanting to show that the act of one man can affect many, uses this illustration of Adam. There was a far-reaching causal relationship between the death of Adam and the death of his descendants, right? There it is. As in Adam, all... what... what? All die. The sin of Adam catapulted the whole human race in every human that would ever be born into the reality of death. There is a causal relationship between the death of Adam and every other person. They knew that, they would understand that. And so there is a causal relationship between the resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of all the people who are His spiritual seed. The act of one man affects many... many.

This is an illustration, by the way, that the Apostle Paul uses in Romans 5. You might want to look at that for a moment. Romans chapter 5, and I'm going to work my way a little more patiently through this because it's so important. Romans 5 unpacks this a little more. "Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all

sinned.” That’s spreading it out, isn’t it? Unpacking it. One man sins, Adam... one man dies and death spreads through that one man to all men. That’s the principle.

The Jews had a great sense of solidarity. They knew that the sins of the fathers could be visited on the children, that’s an Old Testament principle. They knew that. They knew that every person was bound up in the bundle of life, bound up with family, bound up with society, bound up with national life and direction. And to say that the sins of the fathers have visited on the children doesn’t mean children would be punished for individual sins by the fathers, it does mean that when the fathers are corrupt, the generations that come from them will be corrupt, even to the fourth and fifth generation...it will take generations to root that out and turn it around.

This is something even beyond that, however. What we come to understand by this is that all men sinned in Adam. All the race was in his loins and when he sinned, we all sinned in him and we all died. So from Adam on there is solidarity of guilt, solidarity of fallenness, solidarity of corruption. We possess because we are the offspring of Adam, a nature that is fallen and sinful and dying.

But with Christ, that chain is broken. Christ pays the penalty for our sin, conquers death on our behalf and death is overwhelmed, overpowered, as we shall see later in the chapter. Death has lost its sting...death has lost its power. And all who put their trust in Christ, all who are a part of His spiritual seed possess His resurrection life.

Go back to 1 Corinthians 15, if you are there still in Romans, because we come to verse 22, “For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ will all be made alive.” Union with Adam, all who are in union with Adam die. All who are in union with Christ live. All who are in union with Adam are so by natural descent. All who are in union with Christ are so by spiritual descent.

Or to put it another way, all in Adam are in Adam by natural generation. All who are in Christ are in Christ by spiritual regeneration. All who are in Adam have the common factor of sin. All who are in Christ possess the common factor of life. All in Adam die. All in Christ live.

So you can’t ask the question... What is the effect of Christ’s death on our death? What is the effect of Christ’s resurrection on our resurrection? We die in Him, we rise in Him. The impact of the resurrection, He is the firstfruits, He is the One who guarantees our resurrection.

So we meet the Redeemer. Now the redeemed. Verse 23, “But each in his own order.” It doesn’t all take place at once. There is an order, *tagma*, a military term referring to a detachment of soldiers marching in sequence, in order. There is a sequence, there is an order, there is a lineup, there is a process.

First, Christ the firstfruits, verse 23. Christ the firstfruits, He comes first. Then after that, those who are Christ's and when is our resurrection? What does it say at the end of the verse? At His... what... at His coming... at His coming. That's why Erich Sauer said, "We live between those two Easters, between the resurrection of Christ and our own resurrection, and in the middle are all the spiritual resurrections that occur at salvation. It is one harvest, in a sense, it is the resurrection unto righteousness, it is one harvest but Christ is the firstfruits followed afterward by the rest of the harvest. And the rest of the harvest comes at His coming... at His coming."

The Christian hope, of course, is the coming of Christ at the end of the age. The word here is *parousia*, or *parusia*, as you sometimes hear it pronounced, *parosia*, it literally has the idea of presence, arrival, so that the fulfillment of resurrection for all the redeemed will occur when Christ arrives when He comes. Right now, the bodies stay in the graves and decay, right? And believers who are with the Lord, absent from the body, present with the Lord, are called spirits of just men made perfect. They're there in personality but not in physical form, not even glorified physical form. You say, "Are they wandering around, floating around waiting for their bodies?"

Well I suppose in one sense from our perspective they are, but in another, since heaven is a place where no time exists, there's no such concept as waiting. I can't go beyond that. What is the coming of Christ? Now you're in to eschatology. Does eschatology matter? I am always amazed by the people who think it's something you should avoid. I don't know about you but very often when I read a book, I read the end before I read the beginning because I'm more interested in how it ends than how it starts. And I feel the same way about the Bible. Get to the end as fast as you possibly can and don't tell me when I get there that this is just one big blur, never intended to be understood by anybody. I don't think God writes that way.

And I don't think that He receives glory by having people ignore the end.

Now this is not a technical term, necessarily here. It's not a specific term. Doesn't identify a specific moment in the eschaton. It is a kind of non-technical reference to the fact that at the coming of Christ, there will be a great resurrection of the godly of all the ages. And Scripture speaks of it. I won't take you through all the passages, but in the New Testament it is called the resurrection of the just. It is called the out-resurrection of the dead. It is called a better resurrection. It is called a resurrection of life and it is also called the first resurrection. The second resurrection is the resurrection of the unjust to damnation. The first resurrection is the resurrection of the redeemed, including Christ, the firstfruits, and the rest at His coming. And this is where we have to talk for just a moment about the components of this resurrection.

I believe the first event that triggers the end is the Rapture of the church... the Rapture of the church. Look at 1 Thessalonians chapter 4, and this event is a signless event. There are no signs before this. And we'll see more about the Rapture, so I won't spend a lot of time on it, later in the chapter.

However, verse 14 tells us if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, if you believe that, that means that you qualify on the basis of Romans 10:9 and 10 to be saved. So if you're a believer, believing in the resurrection of Christ, "Even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus, for we say this to you by the Word of the Lord that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord...there's that same word *parousia* again...will not precede those who have fallen asleep, for the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with a voice of the archangel, with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with Him in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and so shall we always be with the Lord. Therefore, comfort one another with these words."

Now, we have gone through that in careful minute detail in the past, and important to do that, important to understand that, but that is describing the event called the Rapture of the church, the catching away of the church, believers being taken into heaven. It is the same thing referred to in 1 Corinthians 15 that's going to happen in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. Dramatic change. This is the first event at the coming of Christ, the Rapture of the church. It is signless. It happens at a moment you really don't know, you don't expect. There are no signs leading up to it. This is not describing the day of the Lord event. This is not describing Christ's return to judge and establish His Kingdom. There's no judgment in these Rapture passages. This is the catching away, or the snatching away of the church. Only those who are in Christ, God is going to take us, He will descend from heaven and the dead in Christ will rise and then we who are alive and remain, who are also in Christ, will be caught up.

So the resurrection will happen in the future, at the Rapture, when Christ snatches away His redeemed. And then comes a period that we call the Great Tribulation, a period of judgment on the earth, Revelation 5-19 describes it in detail. Daniel talks about it as well in detail. It is a period that is described as a sequence of judgments that start out as seals and then trumpets and then bowls, telescoping these judgments that come upon the Earth. At the same time, there's a great work of salvation and redemption going on on the earth along with the judgment.

But at the end of that period of time, the end of that seven-year Tribulation, there will also be another part of the resurrection, another part, if you will, of the harvest. And that part of the harvest is described in the twentieth chapter of Revelation which describes the end of the Tribulation and the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom, and it says "The rest of the dead didn't come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection." Now we've gone all the way to a third element of it.

You have the first at the Rapture. You have the second at the return of Christ. And I don't think I told you, that's Daniel 12:2, at that time after the Tribulation, a deliverance and a resurrection will take place, Daniel 12:2. And then a thousand years later, another resurrection. Why? Because people will continue to die, believing people in this age, they will die in the time of Tribulation, some of them killed

by the Antichrist, and they will even die during the thousand year millennial reign because it's an actual time period on earth where living people went into the Kingdom because they were believers, they had children, families developed, there were unbelievers born into those families who wouldn't repent. They rebel at the end of the thousand years. There is death during that period, although people live a lot longer than normal. So we have the first resurrection with four parts... the resurrection of Christ, the resurrection of the church at the Rapture, the resurrection of the Old Testament and Tribulation saints at the end of the Tribulation period, and the resurrection of those born and dying in the Kingdom, and there will be many of them at the end of the Millennial period. That's the final phase.

Now all of that is compressed, if we can go back to the text that you're looking at in 1 Corinthians, all of that is compressed in three words, "At His Coming....At His Coming." Those are the stages in the resurrection of the redeemed. It is Christ's resurrection, guarantying the further resurrection of all believers in those three phases. Now we all understand that. And we don't need to dig any deeper into that because Paul doesn't. Let me take you to the heart of his passage, which is the third point, the redemption... the redemption.

The Redeemer and His resurrection, the redeemed and their resurrections are implied in His coming. We split them out into those three phases as we understand eschatology. But let's go to the redemption. And the redemption is bound up in one phrase, "Then comes the end...the end." *Telos*, the finale, end is just a little too banal for the word *telos*. The goal, the purpose, the reason, the design of history, the goal, the objective, the consummation of all things, that's what this is about. When He, that is Christ, hands over the Kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power, for He must reign until He has put all enemies under His feet, the last enemy that will be abolished is death, for He has put all things in subjection under His feet.

That is just a glorious portion of Scripture. That's the goal, that's the consummation. Do you want to know what the purpose of creation is? What the purpose of redemption is? What the purpose is for God to tolerate everything He has tolerated through all of human history? It is so that He can give to His Son a Kingdom, so that He can give to His Son a Kingdom made up of people who will love Him, and worship Him and adore Him and serve Him forever and ever in perfect joy, perfect peace, and with perfect purity. That's the goal. Christ is capturing His Kingdom. It is a Kingdom of resurrection human beings, the redeemed of all the ages. The church, the Old Testament saints and Tribulation saints, and then the saints who die during the Millennial era, they're all raised now, they're all in heaven. Then comes the end.

We know the Millennial Kingdom ends when Peter says, "The elements melt with fervent heat, the universe implodes atomically. It is uncreated just as it was created." It goes out of existence and in its place is a new heaven and a new earth. And that is when He hands over the Kingdom to the God and Father. When? Not until, listen, He has abolished all rule and all authority and power. He must reign

until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The plan of redemption, redemption itself is not complete until there is no more enemies of God and Christ in existence to tamper with His purposes. They will all be cast forever into the Lake of Fire, they will be bound there with Satan and his angels for whom it was originally created, and they will dwell there forever, never again to impede the purposes of God. When that happens, the language is comprehensive.

When He has abolished all rule, all rule, that means there's no other rule other than Himself. He is called in Revelation King of... what... King of Kings, Lord of Lords. When He has abolished all authority. When He has abolished all other power. When He has destroyed all His enemies, put them under His feet. That's a very graphic picture. Kings are on elevated thrones, their enemies were below their feet. When He is sovereign over everything, when there is no other ruler, no other power, no other authority, Christ reigns and Christ reigns absolutely supremely with His saints.

Every enemy human, every enemy demonic, every ruler, every authority, every source of power abolished. And He will reign. And that's at the end of the Millennial Kingdom because even in the Millennial Kingdom there's a rebellion. We read that in Revelation. There's a rebellion of unbelievers who come against the Lord and He destroys them and that's it, that's the final destruction. He sets up His absolute rule, His absolute rule. And it is an everlasting rule. A precursor to that, of course, is in the time of Tribulation in Revelation 20, you can read it for yourself, I won't take time to do that, but in Revelation 20 we understand that Christ takes full rule. In fact, it starts in Revelation 19 which describes His coming as King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, and how He seizes the beast and the false prophet and all of them are thrown into the Lake of Fire which burns with brimstone. This is really the end. This is His reign on earth in that Kingdom.

Verse 6 of 20, "He will reign, Christ will, with His saints who are part of the first resurrection for a thousand years." So He reigns with His saints for a thousand years. The end of the thousand years, it says in verse 7, He takes Satan, throws him into the Lake of Fire and brimstone and leaves him there forever. And just like that, the Great White Throne appears and heaven and earth flee away. And then the resurrection of the unjust, the resurrection of the damned, they're all judged, given bodies fit for hell, and cast into the Lake of Fire. Then a new heaven and a new earth and Christ and God dominate in glory.

This is where history is going. This is where we're going, by the way. The picture continues. The last enemy that will be abolished is death. He abolishes death when He abolishes all His enemies at the end of the Millennial Kingdom. And then we have this wonderful description in verse 27 and following, "For He has put all things in subjection under His feet but when He says all things are put in subjection, it is evident that He has accepted who put all things in subjection to Him." That's referring to God. Just to say, "Wait a minute, God is not subjected to Christ. All things are subjected to Christ, everything but God is under His dominion, even death... even death."

The resurrection of Christ then guarantees our resurrection and ultimately guarantees the abolishing of death. Christ then takes everything that has been put under Him, verse 26, "When all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him so that God may be all in all."

This is such a powerful, powerful statement. What it says is this, when the Son has received the redemption, when the Son has received His redeemed humanity, if you will, His bride, when all enemies are destroyed and He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords, sovereign of the universe, when everything is under Him, except God Himself, He will then take the Kingdom, all that the Father has given to Him, and He will give it back to the Father in a reciprocal act of divine love that God may be all in all. Here in a wonderful inter-Trinitarian way beyond our comprehension, the Father who ordained redemptive history to gather a bride for His Son, a Kingdom for His Son, when the Son receives that Kingdom which is a gift of the Father's love, in a reciprocating act of love, the Son hands the Kingdom back to the Father. The grandeur of this crowning event can hardly be fathomed.

Sometimes we think about salvation in very personal terms. But it's better for us to think about salvation in these vast and almost incomprehensible terms, that salvation while you're involved in it by the grace of God, it's really not about you, it's about the infinite love, the limitless love of the Father for the Son and wanting to give to the Son a gift of His love which is a redeemed humanity that will love Him and adore Him and worship Him and praise Him and serve Him forever. And the Son recognizing that all the redeemed are gifts from the Father, even says, "All that the Father gives to Me will come to Me." The Son when He receives them all, gives them back to the Father. Everything is restored to God that He may be all in all. The Son has come as a servant of God into the world to take back to God souls redeemed. He has conquered death, He has by His own resurrection provided a full resurrection for all who believe. And when all are gathered into His arms, as it were, He will take them all and present them to the Father and will Himself subject His own life to the Father.

Does Christ no longer reign? Of course He reigns. He sits at the right hand of the Father and reigns. And Revelation 11:15 says He'll reign forever. And Luke 1, the angel said when He was being announced He was going to be born, His Kingdom will never end, that He will reign forever and ever.

If you read the **third** chapter of Revelation...well, you could actually start maybe in the third chapter, "He who overcomes," verse 21, "I will grant with him to sit down with Me on My throne as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne." They rule together. In some way they have distinct roles and even the Son gives glory to the Father. But they reign and rule together. That is why in chapter 4 and 5, they are equally praised. For example, you have, "Holy, holy, holy," verse 8 of chapter 4, "is the Lord God, the Almighty who was and who is and who is to come. Worthy are You," verse 11, "our Lord and our God to receive glory and honor and power for You created all things and

because of Your will, they existed and were created.” This is a glimpse of heavenly worship.

And then down in chapter 5 verse 9, it refers to Christ, “Worthy are You to take the book and break its seals for You were slain and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.” Verse 12, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.” And then it comes together in verse 13, “Every created thing in heaven and on earth, under the earth, on the sea, all things in them, I hear saying, “To Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever, and the four living creatures kept saying Amen, and the elders fell down and worshiped.”

God is all and all in the end because the Son gives back what the Father has given to Him in submission. It’s a magnificent picture of the final paradise gained and it all happens simply because of the resurrection of Christ. Well that only brings us to verse 29, much more to come.

Father, we thank You for our time tonight in Your Word. We thank You for opening it up to us and giving us a glimpse of the glory of our future of which we are not worthy, we are undeserving. Even though we have been redeemed and walked with You for a long time, we have never done anything that could earn our salvation. We don’t deserve it now anymore than we did when You gave it to us by grace. And it will always be that way, so that we will celebrate Your grace forever. We thank You that because Christ rose, we will rise one day and our body will be like unto His glorified body, we’ll live in Your presence forever. This is our great hope. Help us, Lord, to live in the light of that hope. He that has this hope in himself that one day he’ll be like Christ, purifies himself. It is a purifying hope to realize what we will be, like the One whose life we share and whose resurrection we participate with. Encourage us with these things, we pray in Your Son’s name. Amen.

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