

***Pastor Jeremy M. Thomas***  
***Fredericksburg Bible Church***  
*107 East Austin*  
*Fredericksburg, Texas 78624*  
*830-997-8834    jthomas@fbgbible.org*

**B0520 – May 22, 2005 – Major Bible Themes**  
**Chapter 10 – God the Son: His Resurrection**

Let's begin this morning with the most important NT passage on resurrection; 1 Cor 15. You should memorize the fact that when the resurrection is under question or investigation 1 Cor 15 is a key passage. I try to tell you each week key passages that you should put to memory and this week that key passage is 1 Cor 15.

**1 Corinthians 15:3-8** <sup>3</sup> For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup> and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, <sup>5</sup> and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. <sup>6</sup> After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep; <sup>7</sup> then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles; <sup>8</sup> and last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also.

**1 Corinthians 15:12-26** <sup>12</sup> Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? <sup>13</sup> But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised; <sup>14</sup> and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain. <sup>15</sup> Moreover we are even found *to be* false witnesses of God, because we testified against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised. <sup>16</sup> For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised; <sup>17</sup> and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins. <sup>18</sup> Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. <sup>19</sup> If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied. <sup>20</sup> But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. <sup>21</sup> For since by a man *came* death, by a man also *came* the resurrection of the dead. <sup>22</sup> For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. <sup>23</sup> But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming, <sup>24</sup> 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. <sup>25</sup> For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. <sup>26</sup> The last enemy that will be abolished is death.

**1 Corinthians 15:35-57** <sup>35</sup> But someone will say, "How are the dead raised? And with what kind of body do they come?" <sup>36</sup> You fool! That which you sow does not come to life unless it dies; <sup>37</sup> and that which you sow, you do not sow the body which is to be, but a bare grain, perhaps of wheat or of something else. <sup>38</sup> But God gives it a body just as He wished, and to each of the seeds a body of its own. <sup>39</sup> All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one *flesh* of men, and another flesh of beasts, and another flesh of birds, and another of fish. <sup>40</sup> There are also heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is one, and the *glory* of the earthly is another. <sup>41</sup> There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory. <sup>42</sup> So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable *body*, it is raised an imperishable *body*; <sup>43</sup> it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; <sup>44</sup> it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual *body*. <sup>45</sup> So also it is written, "The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL." The last Adam *became* a life-giving spirit. <sup>46</sup> However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual. <sup>47</sup> The first man is from the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven. <sup>48</sup> As is the earthy, so also are those who are earthy; and as is the heavenly, so also are those who are heavenly. <sup>49</sup> Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the image of the heavenly. <sup>50</sup> Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. <sup>51</sup> Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, <sup>52</sup> in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. <sup>53</sup> For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. <sup>54</sup> But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP in victory. <sup>55</sup> "O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?" <sup>56</sup> The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; <sup>57</sup> but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

## I. Fact and Meaning of Resurrection

Interestingly, the resurrection is mocked at by unbelievers even though Paul says it is not incredible that God raises the dead (Acts 26:8). The fact is, the resurrection of all men is more certain than death and taxes. Some have not died (e.g. Enoch, Elijah, and all who are living at the Rapture) but all will be resurrected, the wicked to everlasting punishment and the righteous to everlasting life (Dan 12:2; John 5:28-29). Further, resurrection is more certain than the law of gravity, which as we sit here this morning is being confirmed billions and billions of times over. But gravity is not always in effect (e.g. Peter walking on the water, Jesus' ascension, et. al.). So, resurrection is not a hypothesis, theory, principle, or law, it is an absolute. It is more certain than death, taxes, and laws of nature. Thus it was not incredible to Paul that God raised the dead. Paul realized that we do not live in a natural and impersonal universe but in a supernatural and personal one. However, the reason unbelievers mock the resurrection is because the idea of someone rising from the dead is contrary to the natural man's *naturalistic* presuppositions. A presupposition is a basic mental framework, a lens *per se* that all men possess and look at the world through. The problem is that unbelievers are depraved so the glasses they are looking through are darkened so that they misconstrue almost the entire meaning and interpretation of reality. Therefore, when the depraved mind suppresses his knowledge of God he must presuppose that the universe is impersonal and governed ultimately by Chance. On those naturalistic presuppositions, even if an unbeliever accepts the resurrection of Jesus Christ, on the basis of modern historical canons, it still amounts to nothing more than a freak of nature. It cannot prove that Jesus is God. It may surprise you to know that unbelievers can grant the resurrection and yet remain unbelievers. You may have thought that if a person accepted the resurrection as a historical fact that you have won him to Christ. That is certainly not true. Many unbelievers have granted the undeniable fact that Jesus Christ rose from the dead. There is simply too much historical evidence to deny it. But what meaning or significance is attached to the resurrection is a wholly other issue. Both the fact of the resurrection and the meaning or significance of the resurrection find their source in God's infallible word. It must be interpreted through the lens of an omniscient person (God Himself) rather than through the lens of depravity. I hope you see by now why we started Major Bible Themes with chapters regarding the word of God as a revelation of God, inspired by God, inerrant, and infallible. We're getting facts from God but not only facts, we are also getting interpretations of those facts. If we don't have the word of God we may have all the extra-biblical evidences for a resurrection (Josephus, Tacitus, et. al.). But we would still lack the significance or meaning of it. It could still be open to interpretation and assigned as a freak of nature. So, my point is that we not only have to have the resurrection as a historical fact but we must also have the interpretation of that resurrection from an infallible source, and that is the word of God. Otherwise, we may each impute to that event our own meaning and we need not conclude that Jesus was the Son of God.

## II. Scriptural Proof

### A. In the Old Testament

Let's turn to the biblical evidence for resurrection, beginning in the OT.

#### 1. Explicit<sup>i</sup>

As early as Job who lived around the time of Abraham (2000-1800BC).

**Job 19:25-27** "As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives, And at the last He will take His stand on the earth. <sup>26</sup> "Even after my skin is destroyed, Yet from my flesh I shall see God; <sup>27</sup> Whom I myself shall behold, And whom my eyes will see and not another.

Job affirms that his Redeemer presently lived in his day, that his Redeemer will take His stand on earth (rule), and that even after entropy has decomposed the chemicals that make up his body, yet in his flesh he shall see God who is identified with his Redeemer. That's a resurrection, when the present body decomposes and then is recomposed.

Jesus proved the resurrection to the Sadducees from Exodus 3:6 when He quoted it in Matt 22:32.

**Matthew 22:31-32** "But regarding the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God: <sup>32</sup> 'I AM THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, AND THE GOD OF ISAAC, AND THE GOD OF JACOB '? He is not the God of the dead but of the living."

**Exodus 3:6** <sup>6</sup> He said also, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob."

The Sadducees rejected the resurrection and only accepted the first five books of the Bible. Therefore, Jesus, who also accepted these books as authoritative revelation of God quoted from Exodus 3:6 to prove the resurrection. Exod 3:6 is God's affirmation of the Abrahamic Covenant, an eternal covenant. If the covenant is eternal and the promises were made to men then these men must be resurrected in order to enjoy the promises else God is a liar.<sup>ii</sup> Christ believed in the resurrection of both the good and the evil (John 5:28-29) just as was revealed to Daniel (Dan 12:2)

David clearly believed in resurrection. This Psalm was quoted by Peter on the Day of Pentecost and applied to Jesus Christ (Acts 2:27).

**Psalm 16:9-10** <sup>9</sup> Therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will dwell securely. <sup>10</sup> For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; Nor will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.

Presupposes resurrection of both David and his Redeemer.

Another key passage is in Isaiah 26:19. This passage affirms clearly a physical, bodily resurrection. It's very important to affirm a physical, bodily resurrection, not just resurrection, not just bodily resurrection. Many theologians have a slick way of pulling one over on their congregations. They can talk all day long about bodily resurrection on Easter and everyone thinks they believe in it but they don't. I would say that if the minister does not say physical, bodily resurrection then he doesn't believe in it. He only believes in the spiritual resurrection of Jesus. What they mean is that Christ may have had a spiritual, immaterial body but it was certainly not something that could be seen, felt, and heard. That's a virtual denial of the resurrection. So, you have to find out, in these last days, as the church is heading further into apostasy, if your minister really believes in the physical, bodily resurrection or not. Leave the church if he can't affirm that.

**Isaiah 26:19** <sup>19</sup> Your dead will live; Their corpses will rise. You who lie in the dust, awake and shout for joy, For your dew *is as* the dew of the dawn, And the earth will give birth to the departed spirits.

Not only did the OT affirm a physical, bodily resurrection but also the physical bodily resurrection of all men.

**Daniel 12:2-3** <sup>2</sup> "Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace *and* everlasting contempt. <sup>3</sup> "Those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.

## 2. Types

### B. Resurrection in the New Testament

## 1. Christ's Predictions of His Own Resurrection

After the nation of Israel rejected the Messiahship of Jesus (Matt 12) He pronounced judgment on that generation (Matt 12:41, 42, 45). It was...

**Matthew 16:21** <sup>21</sup> From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day.

But "Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "God forbid *it*, Lord! This shall never happen to You."<sup>22</sup> Peter's perspective was one of focusing only on Christ's sufferings and death. <sup>23</sup> "But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's."

## 2. All Men Will be Resurrected

The NT, consistent with the OT affirms that all men will be resurrected, not just the good but also the evil.

**John 5:28-29** "Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, <sup>29</sup> and will come forth; those who did the good *deeds* to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil *deeds* to a resurrection of judgment.

Revelation 20:4-6 proves the same thing and helps with the timing of these resurrections.

**Revelation 20:4-6** <sup>4</sup> Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And I *saw* the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their 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 on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. <sup>5</sup> The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. <sup>6</sup> 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.

It is important at this point to dispel the common notion that the wicked will be annihilated; totally destroyed. This doctrine has become more popular in recent years and is standard

doctrine in Seventh Day Adventism. No doubt fueled by the horror of the thought of eternal punishment, but never once does Scripture affirm the total extinction of the wicked but rather their eternal conscious punishment. The resurrection of the righteous is distinguished from that of the wicked in that the righteous are raised to perfect life while the wicked are raised to experience death in fullest sense. Their resurrection is not an act of God's redemption but of His sovereign justice.

### C. Proofs of the Resurrection of Christ

As per proofs of Christ's resurrection 1) He appears 17 different times to men and women who touched Him, heard Him, and saw Him.<sup>iii</sup> 2) 3,000 believed in the resurrected Christ on the Day of Pentecost and certainly these men were in a position to investigate such a claim. Thomas, Jesus' own apostle, was skeptical of the claim. It is naive to think that ancient men would not be skeptical about such a claim as resurrection yet 3,000 believed and numerous others soon followed. 3) What could possess Jewish men and women to depart from observing the Sabbath (Fri 6pm-Sat 6pm) and begin meeting on the first day of the week (Sat 6pm-Sun 6pm; cf. Matt 28:1; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor 16:2)? Such a radical departure from the Jewish traditions requires a dramatic event! That event was the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

### III. Nature of the Resurrection Body

Besides the centrality and uniqueness of the resurrection claim there is the biblical conception of the resurrection. The resurrection body is both *like* and *unlike* the earthly bodily. In some respects it is like your present body yet in some respects it has a new construction and new abilities. We should remind ourselves that resurrection is not resuscitation. Many people in history have been resuscitated. **Resuscitation** simply means that a person stops breathing for some period of time and then, while in that same body begins to breathe again and later dies (same body subject to death as Lazarus, Eutychus, CPR, et. al.). Second, the resurrection was not a mere spirit or hallucination (e.g. the disciples only thought they saw Jesus) so that Christ's existence somehow continues but only in a spirit body. Lastly, resurrection is not the same as re-incarnation. **Re-incarnation** means that the person takes on an entirely new body and that new body is subject to death. Instead, **resurrection** is the transformation of the old body into a new body that is no longer subject to death. This transformed body has flesh and bone, but no blood, it was observable to three senses; sight, sound, and touch.

**Luke 24:39** "See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have **flesh** and bones as you see that I have."

In Luke 24:42-43 Jesus rejects the Hallucination or Spirit Theory. The resurrection body can eat though we are never told that it is necessary to eat to be sustained,

**Luke 24:42-43** They gave Him a piece of a broiled fish; <sup>43</sup> and He took it and ate *it* before them."

I think we will need to eat in our resurrection bodies. True humanity is always dependent on God (we will eat hidden manna; Rev 2:17 and from the tree of life; Rev 22:2). With all these similarities there were also differences for it was not mere resuscitation of the same body. Instead it had new abilities. Jesus' resurrection body could appear and disappear,

**Luke 24:31** Then their eyes were opened and they recognized Him; and He vanished from their sight."

This demonstrated that Jesus' resurrection body could pass through material objects,

**John 20:19** So when it was evening on that day, the first *day* of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace *be* with you."

It is apparently privy to other dimensions that we cannot presently detect. Therefore, we conclude that...

"The resurrection body of Jesus was a bodily resurrection; but his resurrection body possessed strange powers that transcended physical limitations. It could interact with the natural order, but it at the same time transcended this order."

In conclusion, our resurrection body will be like His resurrection body. It is not up in the air as to what we will be like. The tomb was empty so that it was obvious that His physical body was transformed into a physical body fit for heaven. The previously existing material was used to compose His physical body fit for heaven. In the same way, our present physical bodies will be transformed into a physical body fit for heaven. A good example is the rapture when our bodies will not be left behind but caught up and transformed into a material fit for heaven and God's presence. Therefore, our resurrected bodies will be like our earthly bodies; recognizable and engaging in similar activities but also unlike; not

dependent on things of the natural order and possessing new abilities. We will be fit for heaven, complete as body and spirit composing a human soul.

#### **IV. Reasons for the Resurrection of Christ**

There are at least seven reasons for the resurrection of Jesus Christ. *First*, He was resurrected because of who He is (Acts 2:24). He was sinless in both person and nature and death could not hold Him because of His sinlessness. His resurrection occurred by the agency of both the Father and Himself (Acts 2:24; John 10:17-18). The Spirit's role is less clear (cf Rom 1:4; 8:11; 1 Pt 3:18). *Second*, Christ was resurrected in order to be the firstfruits of resurrection. The firstfruits in ancient Israel were the first harvest and signaled that there would be a larger harvest that followed. Christ was the first resurrected and inasmuch it is proof that there will be a larger group resurrected in the future. *Third*, His resurrection and subsequent ascension made Him head of the Church which is His body and to which He sovereignly bestows spiritual gifts for the building up of the body of Christ to a mature man. This relationship of Christ as head of His body is unique to the Church. Israel did not enjoy this spiritual relationship. *Fourth*, Christ's was resurrected because of our justification. Turn to Rom 4:25, an oft misinterpreted or overlooked verse. Notice, we were not justified because He was raised but He was raised because we were justified. Our justification was the cause of His resurrection. If we had not been justified it would have meant that His sacrifice was not accepted by God and thus He would not have been resurrected. Thus, as Godet so aptly put it, "For this resurrection is the incarnation of my justification".<sup>iv</sup> *Fifth*, Christ arose in order to give those who believe in Him resurrection life (eternal life). This life is imputed to those who believe in them at the moment they believe. *Sixth*, the same power which resurrected Jesus Christ is available to you as a believer to live the new life (Eph 1:19-20). And *seventh*, finally, at the end of the Great Tribulation, Jesus Christ will return to sit on the throne of David and rule eternally, His glorified humanity appearing to all men, mortal and immortal and all angels, as the author and perfecter of our salvation and the perfect, righteous judge.

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<sup>i</sup> Other important OT references to resurrection; Psalm 17:15; 22:22; 49:15; Daniel 12:13

<sup>ii</sup> The Sadducees rejected all resurrection. The Pharisees rejected the resurrection of the wicked (Berkhof). Jesus believed in resurrection of all men as did Daniel (12:2; John 5:28-29).

<sup>iii</sup> These 17 appearances and their order are delineated by A. T. Robertson, *A Harmony of the Gospels*.

<sup>iv</sup> Godet, Frederic, *Commentary on Romans* (Grand Rapids, Kregel, 1977), 185.

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