

## THEN COMETH THE END

### **TEXT: I COR. 15:1-28**

#### **Introduction:**

1. First Corinthians 15 has been called "the great resurrection chapter of the Bible" (cf. 15:12-19).
2. The first eleven verses present the Gospel message (cf. 15:1-4). This is the full Gospel, and the only true Gospel.
3. These Scriptures declare the Gospel and the evidence for the truthfulness of the Gospel (15:5-8).
4. Verses 12-19 reveal the essential nature of the resurrection of Christ, and they affirm its importance.
5. The resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ is the guarantee of the resurrection of all believers (15:20-23).
6. Furthermore, all men (not just believers) will be resurrected -- "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (15:22).
7. Our Lord said in John 5:28, 29, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."
8. Revelation 20 gives the proper sequence -- the saved will participate in "the first resurrection" (the resurrection of life), and the lost will be resurrected after the millennial kingdom (the resurrection of damnation).
9. Daniel 12:2 says, some shall awake "to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."
10. This is what the apostle Paul means when he says in I Corinthians 15:23, "But every man in his own order..."
11. "Then cometh the end..." (15:24).
12. People often speculate about "the end of the world." We should avoid speculation and study carefully what the Bible has to say.

#### **I. CHRIST WILL DELIVER UP THE KINGDOM TO GOD (15:24).**

1. Many people believe there will be a final "Judgment Day," and that this will take place at "the end of the world."
2. This "Judgment Day" talk is usually very vague, and it is often quite unscriptural.
3. The "end" referred to here in verse 24 is when Christ shall return to reign over all the earth.

4. This is taught all throughout the Word of God. First Corinthians 15:25 says, "For he must reign..."
5. Second Timothy 2:12 says, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us."
6. Psalm 2:9 says Christ will rule with a rod of iron, and shall dash His enemies in pieces like a potter's vessel.
7. Revelation 2:27 says, "And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers."
8. Daniel 7:14 says, "And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."
9. Zechariah 14:9 says, "And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one."
10. During our Lord's millennial kingdom, "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:9).
11. Habakkuk 2:14 says, "For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea."
12. Revelation 20 tells us this kingdom will last for one thousand years.
13. Paul does not refer to the duration of the kingdom, but says, "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father..." (I Cor. 15:24).
14. After the thousand years have expired, the Lord Jesus Christ will deliver up the kingdom to God the Father (15:24).

## **II. CHRIST WILL SUBDUE ALL THE ENEMIES OF GOD (15:24, 25).**

1. The millennial kingdom will be a glorious time when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:9).
2. Isaiah 11:6 says, "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them."
3. It will be a wonderful time. Our Lord will rule with a rod of iron. There shall be peace and prosperity throughout the whole earth.
4. Isaiah 2:4 and Micah 4:3 says the Lord Jesus, "shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

5. Jeremiah 31:34 says, " And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."
6. However, at the end of the millennial kingdom, "Satan shall be loosed out of his prison" (Rev. 20:7).
7. Satan and his wicked allies will be put down by God, and cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:10).
8. Then all lost sinners will have to be judged by God and sent to their eternal punishment in the lake of fire (Rev. 20:11-15).
9. First Corinthians 15:24 says, "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power."
10. "For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet" (I Cor. 15:25).
11. These "enemies" include the antichrist and the false prophet (Rev. 19:20), as well as "the kings of the earth and their armies" gathered at the Battle of Armageddon (Rev. 19:19, 21).
12. "Then cometh the end..." (I Cor. 15:24; cf. II Peter 3:3-14).

### **III. THE LAST ENEMY THAT SHALL BE DESTROYED IS DEATH (15:26).**

1. I once heard some one say, "If I only knew the place I would die, I would be careful never to go there."
2. Inscribed on an old tombstone, in an old graveyard, are these words:
  - "Pause, my friend, as you walk by;  
As you are now, so once was I.  
As I am now, so you will be;  
So prepare my friend, to follow me!"

\* A passer-by read those words, and then added his own words to the epitaph:

- "To follow you, I'm not content,  
Until I know which way you went!"
3. The last enemy is death (15:26).
  4. Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus (John 11:35). Why? Because death is our enemy, and it is His "last enemy" (I Cor. 15:26).
  5. Our Lord saw Mary weeping at the grave of Lazarus, and He saw the Jews also weeping which came with her, and John 11:33 says, "he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled."

6. *Oh, what is this I cannot see,  
With icy hands taking hold of me?  
Oh, I am death, none can excel;  
I open the doors of heaven and hell.*

*Oh, death, oh death, how can it be;  
That I must come and go with thee?  
Oh death, oh death, how can it be;  
I'm unprepared for eternity?*

*Yes, I have come to get your soul,  
To leave your body and leave it cold,  
To drop the flesh off from the frame;  
The earth and worms both have their claim.*

7. Alfred Tennyson was very sad over the death of his close friend and fellow poet, Arthur Hallam. In his grief and distress, he went to the seashore, but found no comfort in the laughter of the children or the sight of the beautiful stately ships out at sea.

8. He wrote his poem, "Break, Break, Break" in 1834 to describe his feelings of grief over the death of his dear friend.

9. *Break, break, break,  
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!  
And I would that my tongue could utter  
The thoughts that arise in me.*

*O, well for the fisherman's boy,  
That he shouts with his sister at play!  
O, well for the sailor lad,  
That he sings in his boat on the bay!*

*And the stately ships go on  
To their haven under the hill;  
But O for the touch of a vanished hand,  
And the sound of a voice that is still!*

*Break, break, break,  
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!  
But the tender grace of a day that is dead  
Will never come back to me.*

10. Other poets have captured that grief. Shakespeare's King Lear carrying the lifeless body of his beloved daughter Cordelia, and crying out:
11. "Howl, howl, howl, howl! O, you are men of stones:  
Had I your tongues and eyes, I'd use them so  
That heaven's vault should crack. She's gone for ever!"
12. Hamlet mourning over the death of his father: "How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable, Seem to me all the uses of this world!"
13. But nothing by Shakespeare or Tennyson can compare with Scripture. Consider David's lamentation over the death of Absalom.
14. Second Samuel 18:33 says, "And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!"
15. Death is our last enemy (15:26). Spurgeon said, "If death is the last enemy, then leave him until last."
16. In the meantime, we must walk with God and not fear death. David also said, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me" (Psalm 23:4).
17. Jesus said, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death" (Rev. 1:8).
18. Death "shall be destroyed" (15:26). Revelation 20:14 says, "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire."
19. Revelation 21:4 says, "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."
20. There are no funeral parlors in heaven.
21. There are no caskets in heaven.
22. There are no graveyards and cemeteries in heaven.
23. There will be no more tears and crying and sorrow in heaven.

### **CONCLUSION:**

1. Revelation 20:12 says, "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God..."
2. A number of years ago a preacher preached a message entitled, "Dead, Doomed and Damned."

3. I am not sure if the message was as good as the title, but it certainly was a good title. Those at the Great Throne Judgment will be dead, doomed, and damned.
4. In fact, lost sinners are dead, doomed, and damned right now. They just don't know it.
5. They are dead in trespasses and sins.
6. They are doomed to eternity in hell.
7. Jesus said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:15, 16).
8. "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John 3:18).
9. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36).
10. The Lord is coming soon. Are you ready?