

The Resurrection and the Church
I Cor. 15:12-23; Rom. 6:1-14; Col. 3:1-4
April 8, 2007

I. The Resurrection of the Dead (I Cor. 15:12-23)

A. The Idea of First fruits (vv. 20, 23)

1. In gardening – necessarily implies that more are coming

2. In sacrifice – representative of total harvest

“[The first fruit sacrifices] are not offered up for their own sake, as it were, but as representatives of the total harvest, the entire flock, and so forth. They are a total expression of recognition and thanksgiving that the whole has been given by God.”¹

B. Union of Christ’s resurrection and believers’ resurrection

1. The idea of the first fruits (v. 20, 23)

“The resurrection of Jesus has the bodily resurrection of ‘those who sleep’ as its necessary consequence . . . the actual beginning of the general event.”²

2. Federal head (vv. 21-22) – solidarity, organic connection

See vv. 45, 47-49

3. Paul’s argument in vv. 12-20

“Throughout the governing presupposition is the unity of the resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of the believers. The one cannot be had without the other; indeed the one is given with the other. Consequently, belief in the one necessarily implies belief in the other.”³

4. Two episodes of the same event

II Cor. 4:14 knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence.

II. The Resurrection Life (Rom. 6:1-14)

A. Participation in Christ’s death

1. Not metaphorical (vv. 1-2)

Gal. 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

2. Likeness of his death (v. 5) – likeness, not identity

Rom. 8:3b By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh

3. Old man (sinful mode of existence, bondage) crucified (v. 6)

“ . . . he once died to sin (considered as an authority that exercises power, asserts its claims), freed himself from it and escaped it by his death, just as now by having risen he lives for God, at his command and for his service.”⁴

B. Participation in Christ’s resurrection (v. 8)

¹ Richard B. Gaffin, Jr., *Resurrection and Redemption: A Study in Paul’s Soteriology* (Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1987), 34.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid, 40.

⁴ Herman Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1975), 208.

1. **permanent resurrection (vv. 9-10)**
2. **indicative→imperative; position→ responsibility (v. 10→v. 11)**
 What command? Consider yourselves dead to sin
 “what has taken place once in Christ must thus be actualized in a new way of life”⁵
3. **certainty of the promise as the basis for the command (vv. 11-12)**
 “‘As alive from the dead’ believers are no longer to place themselves at the disposal of sin, but of God. They must fight their battle in the certainty that their enemy has been overcome. For they no longer live under the rule of the law, but under that of grace (Rom. 6:12ff).”⁶

C. By Christ’s resurrection a new creation

II Cor. 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

“The salvation thus described does not consist only in a new relationship, but that a restoration of the whole of life in the most inclusive sense of the word results from it and has been given with it.”⁷

III. Raised with Christ (Col. 3:1-4)

A. Already . . . not yet

1. **you have been raised (v. 1)**
2. **your life hidden with Christ in God (v. 3)**
3. **you will be raised in glory (v. 4)**

B. Put off . . . put on (vv. 9-10)

1. **you have put off your old self**
2. **you have put on your new self**
 “Since this is the case, Paul is saying in effect, do not practice those sins which are after the pattern of the old man but behave as new men, as indeed you are.”⁸

3. **implies progress – “being renewed in knowledge”**

Eph. 4:24 and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God, in true righteousness and holiness.

IV. Application

A. Take confidence in the power of the resurrection

Rom. 6:10 So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

B. Stop making excuses for your disobedience

“When we die to sin we die to its power. We must not dilute the force of this proposition.”⁹

C. Act on the power of the resurrection

Rom. 6:12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions.

⁵ Ibid, 209.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid, 205.

⁸ John Murray, *Principles of Conduct: Aspects of Biblical Ethics* (Grand Rapids, William B. Eerdmans, 1957), 214.

⁹ Ibid, 220.