

Living in the Light of Resurrection Hope  
1 Corinthians 15:21-34

**Review:**

Christ the First Fruits - is the promise of more to come! We are the harvest to follow. His resurrection is the basis for a large harvest.

**Hope in What Christ Has Done**

1 Cor. 15:21-28

vs. 21 By a man came death = lit. because of a man death (termination of life - or a death sentence) through man a resurrection (to stand up in death) to a dead body (nekros = body in the state of death)

**Therefore** Christ cancels out (by taking on man and dying and being buried and rising again) what Adam started and we willingly have entered into - the death sentence that came in our inherited position in Adam.

This is a change in Status - or of "being" that is going to be completed with a physical resurrection but has already started with a spiritual one.

Jesus taught both aspects: now and later  
John 11:25-27

**25** Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, **26** and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?" **27** She said to him, "Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world."

**Now:** "I am" is present and this corresponds to "shall never die." (this is a present "life" status brought about by Christ's resurrection so I never will die spiritually speaking (die = separated from God death).

**Future:** "Whoever believes" ("now" has a future reward) "yet shall he live."

**Clothed in Christ - now and ongoing**

Another way to look at this is that we are clothed in Christ in a future/on going way and in a completed status now way at the same time.

Romans 13:14 commands us to "put on the Lord Jesus Christ" as we would put on clothing. This implies the continuing need to clothe ourselves with Christ. His teaching, His thinking, His mindset onto ourselves in an ever needful fashion.

Galatians 3:27 simply says "for as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ." That is a done deal. That is something already accomplished in Christ from the moment we are "baptized" (not the physical going under the water but "being brought (immersed totally) into Christ" at the moment of our new birth.

In these two Scriptures - we have both aspects - the ongoing need of putting on Christ through our future on earth - and the already done, completely completed status of being clothed with all of Christ forever from the moment we come to Him in faith at salvation!

**First Fruits Principle Illustration:**

Christ's own status - is resurrected. He left the clothes in the tomb. No death or death clothes can ever touch Him again.

Because He is the first fruits - we are the resulting fruit - we have put on the raised - never to be touched spiritually with death - Christ now!!!!

Above we looked at Galatians 3:27 - vs. 26 above it says "in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith."

This says in the present we "are" all sons of God...through faith!!!

Therefore Paul continues in Gal 3:28-29 we are all one in Christ NOW and we are the SEED of Abraham NOW!

All because Christ the First Fruit has a harvest to follow in us!!!

## Born Out in a Christians Normal Everyday Life

Move Forward →

Col. 3:1 If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. **2** Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. **3** For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. **4** When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

*Raised* = to be roused from sleep - (different word used here than in 1 Corinthians 15)

We were raised because like Christ we died with Him in our receiving of the gospel - death to self! Our life is now free to be fully hid in Christ's agenda.

**How to Be Born Again** - Die to SELF and be RAISED UP NOW in Christ through...? (the how?)

= the answer is ....simply through faith.

Galatians 3:26 for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith

This has always been the way to God -

modeled in Abraham - Gen. 15:6 And he believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness  
Repeated in Romans 4:3 "for what does the Scripture say, Abraham believed God and it was counted to Him as righteousness."

Scripture is driving home the concept that - though faith we come into a new/resurrected life in Christ.

Jesus said "unless you become like a child" you can not enter the kingdom - a child has all of his faith in his parent.

There is a connection of faith to being clothed with Christ (Gal. 3:27) It means dying to ourselves and putting our faith/trust/belief/reliance totally in Christ!

Taking His offer of new-resurrection clothes (Christ) is illustrated by Jesus in Matthew's gospel.

Matthew 22:1-14

**22** And again Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying, **2** "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son, **3** and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but they would not come. **4** Again he sent other servants, saying, 'Tell those who are invited, "See, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast."' **5** But they paid no attention and went off, one to his farm, another to his business, **6** while the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them. **7** The king was angry, and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. **8** Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding feast is ready, but those invited were not worthy. **9** Go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find.' **10** And those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good. So the wedding hall was filled with guests. **11** "But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment. **12** And he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. **13** Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' **14** For many are called, but few are chosen."

The wedding garments would have been offered at the door to the feast.

By faith the other's who had accepted by faith the invitation and by faith accepted the offer were clothed properly. The harsh punishment dealt at the end showed this man had refused to come in the way - though faith - the only way possible to be there in the king's presence.

We are born under what theologians call a "federal head" in our representative Adam.

We are anthropoid - mankind - and being born in the line of Adam - that is our fate. We are therefore clothed in the death that came upon Adam and the whole race of humanity. These clothes are not acceptable. There is no death in the kingdom of our king.

Thankfully Christ has made a way.

His death, burial and resurrection is the first fruit because it makes a way to be clothed in newness of life that is Christ!!!

By faith alone - we come to Him and then are made partakers in the Second Adam -

1 Corinthians 15:21:b "by a man **has come** also the resurrection of the dead"

Jesus pronounced in John 14 that He alone - was "The Way" and "the truth" and the "life" and that comes because of what He accomplished on calvary and in the resurrection!!!

The "clothes" of Christ are now available. It is free, the only requirement is simple faith in Him!

### **The Future Hope Executed**

vs. 23 - then at His coming those who belong to Christ."

1. - our physical raising will be completed in the future - a blessed hope at His coming. vs. 23

2. - This is followed by the "end" when Jesus will destroy every rule and authority. vs. 24

3. - all enemies under Jesus' feet vs. 25

4. - death destroyed vs. 26

5. - divine order of Christ' victory being accomplished in His father - vs. 27-28

6. - God is all in all - God wins completely and thoroughly!!!

### **The Futility of Not Living in these Truths/Hope**

1 Cor. 15:29-34

vs. 29 otherwise - it is possible even as believers - coming to terms with God by faith - to slip back into less than we are called to be in our daily lives.

Paul explains that he dies daily vs. 31 - that he has fought the beasts of persecution (vs. 32) that his sole motivation is the edification of God's people vs. 31 and that he is in danger at every moment of his existence in verse 30 -

All of these truths are needed as a backdrop for a very curious statement in verse 29 "what do people mean by being baptized on behalf of the dead?" Why are they needed? Because if this is some doctrine (like the Mormons - then we are in the dark because it is not taught anywhere else in Scripture.

What does it mean?

I believe that it is a true statement here, rather than an argument using aberrant practices of "others" (seen in the 3rd person plural of 'people' in verse 29) as was true of some in the area of Corinth at that time.

Why do I believe it is true?

I believe that the baptism that Paul was referring to was not the physical act of immersion in water - because Paul uses baptized as a metaphor for salvation. (like Galatians 3:27)

So following the Paul's logic here - those saved in Christ are coming to Christ because (on behalf of) those who have died as martyr's ahead of them. Seeing people whose faith is genuine and their love for the Lord so real that they are willing to lay down their lives for the sake of the gospel - their blood being the seedbed of real fruit - is a strong argument for the fact that the resurrection is true. It has changed history proving that Christ's life and death were genuine.

This line of reasoning goes perfectly with Paul's next statements about dying daily, being in danger and the futility of that if the resurrection is not also a reality.

Real sinners have come to faith in light of the genuine-ness of those before them who have given their lives for the sake of those who would follow them in faith.

## Flags of our Fathers

Think of it like this - in the confederate vs. union battles in the Civil War - the regimental flags were all important on the battle field. In the smoke and confusion of a battle in those days - men looked for the position of their own unit by seeing their own flag. The flag bearer was vulnerable and unarmed. He was a target of the enemy and sometimes was taken out in order to demoralize the men. If it went down - another by faith would leave his weapons and take up the position of flag bearer. Another's death meant another's "stepping up" and taking the role.

Paul is saying - look at the trail of blood - and the results. How can we live in mediocre and infantile Christianity in light of this - because this trail of blood and faith is proof that the resurrection reality - that its hope is real and based on fact.

Also - our own suffering is proof.

Paul accounted himself as dead already for the sake of the gospel and this gave him the ability to not sweat the dying daily that he was experiencing. This was painful but made possible.

Illustrated in 2 Corinthians 1:8-9

"for we do not want you to be unaware, brothers of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself."

Paul knew the angst of desperation.

What was the solution?

vs. 9 felt could be translated "in ourselves we knew that we had received the sentence of death"

Paul took the knowledge that he had died and his life was hidden in Christ (Col. 3:3) as the very truth needed to combat the "despair" of death type pain that he was called to bear on behalf of the believers and on behalf of those who would come to Christ by witnessing his death daily and his eventual death as a martyr. (probably in the mid 60's during Nero's reign)

Paul's thinking is our model - I have died and my life is hidden in Christ so that the daily dying pain is manageable in this light. My future is certain and if God can use my dying to self and dying to comfort and my hidden life for His glory then I can endure it!!! Even if I die it will be used to cause other's to by faith pick up the Flags of our Fathers in the faith and carry it forward to victory.

"I die every day" is testament to the vitality wrought in Christ's resurrection that is powerful still in me!

The futility of setting our minds on the things of this earth leads to some saying in the Corinthians church, "we might as well party - i.e.. eat, drink for tomorrow we die. This is juvenile Corinthian thinking. Paul had called them immature...babes in Christ and is calling on them for repentance and renewal and revival of who they are in Christ. Paul closes this section of the letter with a strong exhortation: Wake up from your drunken stupor! Don't hang out in your minds with the corrupt of this world. Don't have fellowship with those living in the old dead life!!!!!! Stop sinning! You should be ashamed.

Paul is scolding them as a loving Father would to a stubborn child. He loves them enough to risk losing them with these tough words.

He tells them - "some have no knowledge of God" and this could mean both the fact that the truly dead sinners are longing to see you exhibit a knowledge of God and they are not seeing it. It also could mean they - the Christians in Corinth - were through callousness and spiritual lethargy losing their conscious knowledge of God in their everyday life.

God deliver us from this thinking and deliver us to the reality of a risen Lord Jesus Christ. He is our hope - Christ in you the hope of Glory!

Amen

