

The Resurrection Plan

1 Corinthians 15:20-28 - John MacArthur

Take your Bible now and let's look at *1 Corinthians Chapter 15* again, this wonderful chapter on resurrection. You might as well get comfortable. You might as well determine in your mind you're going to be here a while. There's 58 verses. We're just in verse 20 today and following. And we're just going to have a great time nailing down this whole theme of resurrection.

This is one section where I feel very frustrated, because I don't feel that my puny little mind can grasp the grandeur of it and even less, can my limited vocabulary express the grandiose concepts that are here in this passage. I wish there was some way to visualize, some way to get a grip on thrust of this section, verses 20 to 28. We're going to be looking at this morning.

Now, this is just part of our continuing study of *Corinthians*. We'll soon be done as we go through 16, that's it. But God has blessed us so much in the years that we've been studying together here.

Eric Sauer, great theologian said this, "The present age is Easter time. It begins with resurrection of the redeemer and ends with the resurrection of the redeemed. Between lies the spiritual resurrection of those called into life through Christ. So we live between two Easters and in the power of the first Easter, we go to meet the last Easter."

The last Easter, what is the last Easter? It's what's fulfilled when we all get to heaven. We sang about it this morning. And there are four great promises connected with the last Easter in the Bible. There are many, many details, but four major elements. Let me remind you what they are. The last Easter will first of all involve what Paul calls the judgment seat of Christ.

Jesus says, "*Behold I come quickly and My reward is with Me to give to every man according as his works shall be.*" So that's going to be part of it, and we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ says Paul in *2 Corinthians 5:10*. The judgment seat of Christ where we receive rewards for our service.

The second element of the last Easter is what you might simply call the marriage supper of the lamb. After we have been rewarded by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Bible tells us in *Revelation 19*, "that we'll be called to a great supper, we who are the bride, the church, joined together with the bridegroom who is Jesus Christ consummating the spiritual marriage and we'll have a marriage supper that'll end all." Great glorious time. That's *Revelation 19*.

So the last Easter promises the judgment seat of Christ, the marriage supper of the lamb. Thirdly, the coming earthly kingdom. In *1 Corinthians 6*, we studied some months ago that we will rule with Christ in His kingdom. And so we anticipate that, a time of rewards, a time of great fellowship with Christ, and a time to return to earth to reign with Him in His kingdom.

But there's one more event. The fourth event is really the key to it all, and that's what the Bible calls the resurrection. That's got to come first, before the judgment seat of Christ, before the marriage supper of the lamb before the coming earthly kingdom for us, there's going to be a wonderful resurrection.

This is the climax of redemptive history, and it is also the theme of *1 Corinthians 15*. Now remember some among the Corinthians were denying the resurrection of the body. They had bought the Greek philosophy that dead people don't rise. In fact, verse 12, Paul confronts them with that. "*How say some among you that there is no resurrection of dead men.*" Some were saying the dead don't rise.

But Paul tackles that here and he gives us the greatest chapter ever penned on bodily resurrection. And he inextricably ties two together, the resurrection of Jesus and the resurrection of the believer. Both are really one in the same. Now, you'll remember that his argument follows a very logical procedure. He begins in

the first 11 verses without even announcing the problem that he's discussing. Without even discussing what they said about dead men don't rise. He just begins with the first 11 verses by reminding them that they already received, believed in, stood on, and were saved by the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ.

He just reminds them that they are already believers in bodily resurrection, at least the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ. You already believe that he says. And they were all probably saying, "Amen, brother, amen." And then the point is in verse 12, "*Now if Christ has preached that He rose from the dead and the assumption being and you already believe that, why are some of you saying there is no resurrection from the dead when you already believe Christ rose from the dead.*" That's the beginning of his argument.

Well, one of the responses to that might be well, we do believe Christ rose from the dead, but that doesn't have anything to do with us. That was unique. That was a onetime deal. That was a one shot effort. Christ rose from the dead, right, amen. Physically? Oh yeah. Literally? Oh yeah. Bodily? Right. But it just really doesn't have anything to do with us.

Oh? That's what Paul attacks in verses 20 to 28. It doesn't? Watch verse 20, "*Now is Christ risen from the dead.*" That's an affirmation of what he said back in verses 1 to 11. And it doesn't stop there, "*He is the first fruits of them that slept.*" In other words, he's saying, you can't just say oh yes, Christ rose, we believe that, but it has no impact on us. His bodily, literal, physical resurrection was believable, but that doesn't mean we will rise.

Paul says, listen, "*Not only is Christ risen from the dead, but He is also the first fruits of them that slept.*" In other words, he is the first fruits of resurrection, you will be the following harvest of resurrection. Now that's what he goes into in verses 20 to 28. He says, If you deny the resurrection of the body, you are really in trouble. If you deny the resurrection of the body, then Christ isn't risen, the gospel is useless, faith is empty, apostles are liars, we're all in our sins, dead men are damned, and Christians are the most pitiful people in the world.

So you don't want to do that. So I know you want to believe Christ is risen. So in verse 20 he says, "*Now we know Christ is risen,* but don't stop there and say it has no impact. *His resurrection is just the first fruits of a whole harvest of resurrection yet to come.*" You see you've got to have that, he says. You can't just stop with Christ. He was raised to be the first fruits of all us in resurrection life.

Now with that in mind, let's look at the text. We find here simply three things. Three major elements of the impact of resurrection. First he deals with redeemer, secondly with the redeemed, and thirdly with the restoration. The redeemer, the redeemed, and the restoration.

Now, the resurrection of Jesus Christ was very, very, very unique. And that's where he begins. Let's look at the first point, the redeemer. "*Now as Christ has indeed risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept.*" Now he affirms again that Christ has risen. That's a fact they already believe from verses 1 to 11, he reminded them they believed it. In verses 12 to 19, he showed them they better believe it or they've lost everything. So now reaffirming Christ is risen from the dead. Now you drop out the words "and become" because they don't appear in a better manuscript. "*Now as Christ has indeed risen from the dead, the first fruits of them that slept.*" Now what were the first fruits?

Leviticus Chapter 23:10 required at Passover that before the harvest could be made, before you could harvest your whole field and bring your crop in, you had to cut down the first fruits of barley in that case, and you had to bring it in a sheaf all wrapped up, present it to the priests. That was before you could harvest. Before the harvest could be made, the first fruits had to be given.

Now when you planted your crop, you usually planted your crop in somewhat of a progression, so that when your fields of grain came in, it would come in a little like this, because what you had planted earliest would come in first. And this was one way to hedge against problems. You might encounter a

storm by planting a little early. You might gain some rain by coming a little later. So very frequently they would plant in a slower way so that the crop might come in at little different times and hedge a little bit against what might be the elemental involvement.

So what happens here is that the first crop that comes in, you know that's good, that's there. And to show your love to God, you take the first part rather than stashing it away in case the rest doesn't come, you give it to God as an act of faith. You've given right off the top the very best you have. And you can't harvest the rest until you've done that at Passover, *Leviticus 23:10*. And the whole point that he's making here is just as the full harvest could never be made until the first fruits was given so we will never rise until Christ has risen. That's his point.

It is the resurrection of Christ and He comes out of the grave and He offers Himself to God and then in that offering He secures for us our resurrection. . The redeemer, the redeemed, and the restoration.

That's what he's saying.

In other words, now watch people, you can't have Christ being raised and it have no impact or no effect. Christ is raised not in isolation, He is not a piece of grain grown in a special garden, He is not a piece of grain, a seed that falls into the ground and dies and grows up in a greenhouse. He is just a part of the whole harvest resurrection and He was thrown into the ground in terms of the seed that dies. He springs forth to life and becomes the guaranty of the rest of us who fall into the ground and die and shall also rise in life.

You can't isolate that. They must go together. Now, here we see the first fruits. People say well does that mean that Christ is the first to ever rise from the dead? No, no, it doesn't say He is the first to ever rise from the dead. Some people in the Old Testament, right, rose from the dead. Elijah brought a boy back to life. You have resurrection. Jesus Himself.

The New Testament records that He brought back to life three different people. Gyrus' daughter, the son of the widow, and Lazarus. He is not the first out of the grave. He is the first fruits. He is the guarantee of resurrection harvest. By the way, let me give you an interesting footnote. Every other person in the Bible who was ever raised from the dead, died again, except Jesus. Okay?

So His resurrection was the only one where He was raised to glory. You say what about Enoch and Elijah? Well, they never died any time. They just took off one day. Took a walk with God and walked right up into heaven, but they never died. Of those that died, only one has risen never to die again and that's Christ. And that's because He was the first fruits. He was the unique one whose resurrection was a resurrection of life that could never be killed which is passed on to the rest of the field of grain, the rest of us who will be raised in the days to come.

So Christ had a unique resurrection. You say well, John, what about *Colossians 1:18* where it says "*He's the first born from the dead.*" Or what about *Revelation 1:5* where it says "*He's the first begotten of the dead.*" The word first born and first begotten in the Greek is *prototokos*. It doesn't mean first in terms of one, two, three, four, five. It means the primary one. It means the best one. It means the greatest one.

Christ is not the first person to rise from the dead. He is the greatest person whoever rose from the dead. That's what Paul is saying. He is the...He is the *prototokos* of all of whoever risen. The greatest, the best. And He is the first fruits, that is He is the guarantor of the ultimate resurrection harvest. Those are the uniquenesses. Now he says then look Christ rose and He is the first fruits or the guaranty of them that slept. Now who are those that are sleeping?

Now, this is not talking about soul sleep, and it's not talking about the folks that are taking a nap, it's talking about death. But it's talking about the body. They referred to death from the physical as the sleep of the body. The soul went right to be with the Lord. When any Christian dies, now mark this,

since Jesus' death and resurrection on through history, when a Christian dies, the moment he dies, he's in the presence of Jesus Christ. "*Absent from the body, present with the Lord,*" 2 Corinthians 5:8.

Paul says in *Philippians 1:23*, he says, "*I'd like to stay with you far better to depart and be with Christ.*" The believer goes immediately to be with Christ in his spirit, but his body sleeps in the grave awaiting resurrection. It's really a beautiful term. It's better than saying and become the first fruits of them that rotted in the ground.

It's just a nice way of saying it. They were sleeping waiting resurrection. Now you say oh my. The argument's going to be what are you...you're saying that resurrection of one person can have such an effect on all other people, that everybody who ever slept in Christ, everybody who ever was a believer who died, everybody ever put in the grave that belonged to somebody who loved God, they're all going to come out of the grave just because of what Jesus did? How can the resurrection of one man have such an impact on all those other people.

Glad you asked. Verse 21 and 22 answers it. He says, let me give you a principle. "*For since by man came death. By man came also the resurrection of the dead.*" Now stop there, there's a principle. Who was the one man whose one act brought death on human race? Who was it? Adam. Do you realize that one man doing one thing...Adam...simple man. God created man, Adam. God created woman, Eve. Said don't do that. Eve said, I think I'll do that. Adam says, you did it, I'll do it too. They did it. You know what happen? The whole pile of us went.

That's right, we were all bound up in the loins of Adam. When Adam sinned, we all fell. When Adam died, we all died and every one of us born in the seed of Adam, every one of us with humanity, every one of us with humanness, whoever came into the world came into this world as sinners because we were in the loins of Adam. And when he did his one thing, we all went right down the drain with him. And the death principle passed on all men. *Romans 5, "For that all have sinned in Adam."*

Now, the one act of one man at one time in one point, in one place, in history affected every human being that ever lived. That's Paul's point. Now, if one man can do one thing and cause death to pass on all men, then why can't one other man do one thing and cause life to pass on all men? See his point?

You can't isolate the resurrection any more than you can isolate the act of Adam. This is an analogy that Paul uses in *Romans 5 verses 12 to 20* and develops it fully and beautifully. And it's an analogy that every Christian ought to read and understand. Sometime today or whenever you get a chance, study *Romans 5* and see that great analogy.

By the way, this is the first use of it, because this was written before the book of Romans in Paul's chronological life span. So this is the first use of this analogy. But he says, look one man brought death, and you know no Jew would argue that. Do you know that the Jews actually believe that in what is called racial solidarity that's very...that's a very common belief. They believe that everybody is in the loins of everybody who was the progenitor.

They believe the race was all in Adam's loins. They don't have any problem with that. They believe in solidarity of guilt. We're all sinners and we all have the death principle because we all sinned in Adam. We were all there in his loin. And he's just playing on that same concept and saying the same is true of Christ.

Now, he goes to verse 22 and he gets very specific. He says, "*For as in Adam all die even so in Christ shall all be made alive.*" He says, you don't have a problem with the concept that we all die do you? No, we can't fight that. We know that. The earth is pot-marked with proof of that. Graves all over everywhere. No question about it, we all die. Why? One man did one thing and we all died. Why can't one man do one other thing and we all live?

That's his point. You see it all depends on who that man is, isn't it? Adam stood in a very unique place in human history and so did Jesus Christ. And so Paul says, you can't say I believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, but I don't think it has any effect on anybody else's resurrection. No, no, no, you can't say that.

It does. Now people get kind of choked up at verse 22 and they say that "*For as in Adam all die, even in Christ all be made alive.*" And they always ask this question, does that mean ultimately everybody gets saved? And their thinking is this, it's a parallel. How many died in Adam? All. Then how many are going to live in Christ? All. And so you know what? This drives people to what is known in theology as universalism. And universalism is the idea that everybody's going to get saved in the end.

Everybody's going to get saved in the end. In fact, it's like the head of the American Baptist Convention Evangelism Department said, we don't need to go around the world telling people to be saved. We simply need to announce to them that they already are. See, they get mixed up on the alls.

Now, let me show you what it's saying. Now, we know from other Scriptures that all are not going to be saved, don't we? We know that, because the Bible talks about Hell and it says "*it's a broad road and many there be that go in there at.*" And it's eternal. So we know that. Well, you say what's it saying John? It's simply saying this, by one man all died. By one man all are made alive.

Now watch, it depends upon the link with the man. That's the point. Who died? All who are in Adam. Who live? All who are in Christ. You see the all has to be connected to the individual and his work. Listen by natural descent from Adam, we all die and all who are naturally descendent from Adam will die. And all who are supernaturally descendent from Christ will live. That's the point. It is the all of who... who you're in. All in Adam die. All in Christ live. If you're not in Christ, you're still in Adam, you die. You see?

The first all includes all who are in Adam by the common factor of sin. The second all includes all who are in Christ by the common factor of faith. All who are in Adam die. All who are in Christ live. So Paul's first point is the impact of the resurrection. It deals with the resurrection of the redeemer and it is the first fruits, the guaranty, the source, as Adam was the first fruits and source of death, so Christ is the source of life.

And by the way, the main emphasis he's making here is physical...physical life. There is a spiritual part of it because when Adam sinned, we not only die physically, we die spiritually. And when Christ lives we not only live spiritually, we live physically in a glorified body. But the emphasis he's making here is on the body part of it. Bodies die because of Adam's sin. Bodies live because of Christ's resurrection.

Now, he moves from there from the redeemer to the redeemed, point two in verse 23. As he traces the impact of resurrection. Verse 23, "Following this, he looks to the future now, to the harvest, the first fruits being Christ, later on comes the harvest." And here's the harvest. Every man. Every man? Every man, of course, who is in Christ. Every man in the all of verse 22 and the all are those in Christ. Every man in his own order. Christ the first fruits, now here is very clear. "*Afterward, they that are Christs*.'" Do you see? It isn't everybody, and that's the phrase that qualifies the all of verse 22. The all are they that are Christ's. Not everybody in the world. First Christ and then that's the first fruits, and afterward, there's a time gap, the word afterward is an unresolved time gap. We don't know how long a period. It refers to a time separation, but at a later time "they that are Christ." And when is this going to happen? At, what? His coming.

So Jesus rose from the dead as the first fruits. And when He rose out of that grave, He guaranteed that after a time gap, they that are in Christ would also come out of the grave. And when is that going to be? At His coming. When Jesus comes. The word incidentally coming is parousia. In the Greek it means presence. At His presence when He arrives. When Jesus arrives, resurrection will take place.

There's coming a resurrection and that resurrection is tied to the resurrection of Christ as death is tied to the sin of Adam. Now the Scripture speaks about this resurrection again and again and again, many places. Let me...let me remind you of something. Don't try to follow but you can jot this Scripture down. *Luke 14:13*, *Luke 14:13* says this, "But when thou givest a feast call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind." The verse 14 says, "And thou shalt be blessed for they cannot recompense thee for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."

Now, there's an interesting word by our Lord. He says, look when you see somebody who is poor and crippled and lame and blind, and you're blessed...you know, the implication is give them what they need even though they can't pay you back, the Lord will pay you back. When? At the resurrection of the just. There's coming a special resurrection. It's harvest time folks. A special resurrection of the just. The righteous. They that are Christ's.

In further Scriptures, *John Chapter 5, verse 28*, we read these words. "Marvel not at this for the hour is coming in 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 to the resurrection of damnation." So you have the resurrection of just and the resurrection of life. This is the harvest time.

In *Philippians Chapter 3 and verse 10*, most interesting Scripture, Paul talks about the power of the resurrection, the fellowship of the sufferings. And then he says, "If by any means I might attain unto," the Greek says, "the out resurrection of the dead." The dead are coming out. Sort of a coming out. Graves will unload the righteous dead.

So it is the resurrection of the just, it is the out resurrection of the dead. It is the resurrection of life in *John 5*. In *Hebrews 11:35*, further it says, "That they might obtain a better resurrection." It's called a better resurrection. And finally, in *Revelation Chapter 20, in verse 6*, "Blessed and holy is he that has part in the," what, "first resurrection."

So the Scripture very generally talks about the resurrection of the just, the resurrection of life, a better resurrection, the out resurrection from the dead, and it calls the first resurrection. Now watch this, the first resurrection...there's only two resurrections, the first and the second. The first resurrection is the resurrection of the just, the redeemed. The second is the resurrection of the unjust, the condemned.

The first resurrection the just, the second resurrection the condemned. The first resurrection, now hang on to your hat has four parts. All right, the first resurrection which is the resurrection of the just has four parts. Part one is the resurrection of whom? Christ. Part two is the church resurrected at the rapture. *1 Thessalonians Chapter 4, verse 16*, "The Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, the voice of the arch angel, the trumpet of God, the dead in Christ shall rise." First, the resurrection.

So we have the resurrection of Christ, the resurrection of the church. Later on you have the tribulation time. And during the tribulation time, there's judgment and slaughter and all kinds of horrible things on and a lot of people die in the tribulation don't they? A lot of Godly people die.

At the end of the tribulation, they will be raised and that's part three. If you want to read about that, read the *20th Chapter or Revelation, verses 3 to 5*. It says "There was a resurrection of the souls beheaded for the witness of Jesus and they were raised to live and reign with Christ."

So you have then the resurrection of Christ, part one of the first resurrection. The resurrection of the church, which occurs at the rapture at the beginning the seven year tribulation. The resurrection of the tribulation saints at the end of the seven years, and the fourth part is the resurrection of the bodies of the Old Testament saints. And that occurs at the end of the tribulation simultaneous with the tribulation saints' resurrection. You got that?

You say why are you going through all of that? Well, because it says in verse 23, I've got to be faithful to the text. "Every man in his own order." In other words, there was a sequence. Tagma in the Greek is the

word order. It means sequence. It originally had to do with military lines. And it is...there is a sequence to resurrection. Christ, the church, the tribulation saints, and the Old Testament saints. That makes the first resurrection.

The second resurrection, the resurrection of the ungodly and the condemned occurs 1,000 years later at the end of the kingdom when God gets all the rebels from all over and gathers them together and casts them to Hell.

By the way, the resurrection of the Old Testament saints is promised in *Daniel 12:1 and 2* in a very beautiful way. And I might take just a moment to...to share that with you very quickly. *Daniel 12:1, "At that time,"* and that's talking about the tribulation, *"At that time, shall Michael stand up, the great prince who stands for the children of the people and there shall be a time of trouble,"* tribulation, *"such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time and at that time thy people shall be delivered, everyone that shall be found written in the book. Israel be delivered."*

Now watch, *"And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake some to everlasting life and some to shame and every lasting contempt."* So, Christ is already raised from the dead. That's phase one, right? Phase two is the rapture. We're looking for that, right? Then at the end of the tribulation come the tribulation saints and the Old Testament saints out of the grave. And you know what? That's the first resurrection, that finishes it folks. Resurrection has happened.

Tribulation saints, Old Testament saints, church saints we're all alive. And there doesn't need to be any more resurrection. That's it. But there's one more, of course, the second resurrection at the end of the kingdom. *John 5:29*, the resurrection of damnation.

Discussed in *Revelation 20* where it talks about the great white throne. And so Paul says, look the redeemer, He doesn't come out of the grave in isolation. He is simply the taste, the symbol, the guaranty of the full harvest that's going to come later when the church is raised, when the tribulation saints are raised, and when the Old Testament saints are raised.

And that leads to the third and last stage. The final impact of resurrection, this is great. I call it the restoration. Because it takes everything back to where it began. It restores everything. Paradise restored. Verse 24, *"Then the end."* *"Then the end."* Now for most of us we see, The End. We say oh that's it folks go home. The end of a movie. Lights come on, it's all over, The End. That's not what it means. Telasin the Greek means then the fulfillment or the culmination or the purpose or the goal. Then the thing which God has been pointing to all along, the end. And what is the end? Well, let's find out. When He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God. The end is when we go right back to God, right where we started in the beginning God, then the end God. And everything goes right back to restoration and is restored to God.

The kingdom is given to God. That's the...that's the goal of everything. God created a paradise. Paradise lost. God calls the paradise back. Paradise restored. In the end it will be as it was in the beginning. No sin. God reigning.

Let's go on and see what the verses say. *"Then comes..."* or then literally the goal or the purpose, *"When He shall have delivered,"* and He there is Christ, *"When Christ shall have delivered up the kingdom to God even the Father, when Christ shall have put down all rule and all authority and power, for Christ must reign until Christ hath put all enemies under His feet and the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For God the Father,"* that's the He there to help you understand it, *"For God the Father has put all things under Christ's feet."* Stop right there.

Now, do you see what's going to happen here. Now watch this, I'll give it to you in a nutshell, real quick. Christ takes the kingdom. Christ subdues all other kingdoms, all other rule, all other authority, all other power. He establishes the kingdom, He builds the kingdom, He squashes all rebellion,

and then in the end He takes the kingdom and does what with it? Presents it to the father. That's what these verses are saying.

Now, follow this great, great truth here. This is the consummation of everything people, everything. And you have Christ reigning here. First, Christ has to come. Then there's resurrection, and when the resurrection happens then Christ begins at the end of verse 24 to rule the earth. And He puts down all rule and authority and power.

Now it takes Him a while to do this. First phase of the resurrection in the future is what? The church, right? And after the church is raptured, then Christ begins to work on this world. Read what happens in *Revelation Chapter 5*, Christ takes the title deed, the scroll. You know the seven sealed scroll? He takes the title deed to the earth in His hand and He begins to unroll the scroll. And what it is it's the title deed to the earth, and as He unrolls it and breaks the seals, it pictures Him taking back the earth back, to God, back from the usurper.

And you read *Revelation 5 through 19 through Chapter 20* and that whole thing discusses how Christ takes the earth back and begins to establish His rule and how He subdues all authority and all power and all dominion and all rule. How He squashes all rebels. How He crushes all rebellion. And even at the end of the kingdom Satan is loose for a little time, he brings a worldwide rebellion. Christ puts that rebellion out and all rebels are finished and all dominion is broken and He reigns supreme. And that's what verse 25 says. *"He will reign continually through that 1,000 years, until all enemies are put under His feet."*

Putting under the feet is a term that came to do with subjection because kings were always elevated on high seats and subjects always came and were below their feet when they bowed to them. And so Christ will be the king and all others will be broken and bowed and there will be no other rule and other authority and no other power. In other words, the world will be totally ruled by one person, Jesus Christ.

And we will be co-regents with Him as we carry out His orders. And He'll go all through the tribulation, gaining that role of king. All through and then finally when the kingdom begins after He crushes the end of the tribulation, after He wins the battle of Armageddon, He returns to earth, He wipes out the enemies, He begins to reign and even during that 1,000 years there will be rebellion. We know it. Why? Because He has to rule it with what? A rod of iron. Which means there's got to be rebellion going on, but He puts it down and puts it down and finally Satan, who has bound for the 1,000 years, is released at the end. Read the *20th chapter of Revelation* and it explains it all. And He then squashes that rebellion and all enemies are subject to Him. There are no more enemies.

And the last enemy, verse 26, *"to be destroyed is death itself."* He destroys death. What a great thing. He squashes every enemy. He already won the victory over death in the grave didn't He? *Hebrews 2:14 and 15* says, *"That He already destroyed him who had the power of death, Satan, on the cross. And when He came out of the grave He broke the shackles of death."* So He's already gained the victory over death, but ultimately He will destroy death. There will be no more death. And in *Revelation 21* it says there will be no more crying, there'll be no more pain. There'll be no more sorrow. There'll be no more death.

The last enemy. Christ will rule. This is talking about the 1,000 year marvelous millennial kingdom on earth. Now watch, you say but after He rules, what does He do? Verse 24, *"Then the end He will deliver that kingdom to God the Father."* Now watch, That is the millennial kingdom phasing into the eternal state. The 1,000 year millennial kingdom then phases into the eternal state. The new heaven and the new earth.

In *Chapter 5 of Revelation*, John is looking at the vision in heaven and he's looking around somebody says, *"Who is worthy to take back the earth?"* And they look around and they can't find anybody. And all of a sudden the Lamb comes forth and they begin to cry, *"He is worthy. He is worthy."*

And Jesus Christ takes the assignment from the Father to redeem the earth and He goes about and does it and when He's all done, when He's all finished, He's finished coming as a baby, He's finished living as a man, He's finished dying, rising, coming back, He's finished fighting the enemies of Satan and all the other world enemies. He's finished with all the rebellions. He's squelched all the enemies. He's crushed all the foes. It's all done and He reigns as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. And He's got all the redeemed and they're all gathered together and all the ones who are unbelieving are gone and they're judged and they're all away and all that's left are the redeemed, then He gives it all to God and says here, I did my task.

He gives it to the Father and that's what the Bible calls the eternal state, the new heaven and the new earth. No more rebels, gives it all to God. All things in the kingdom are under His feet.

There's an interesting footnote in verse 27 I'll call your attention to. He says, "*God the Father's going to put all things under His feet in that kingdom...*" but He has one thing, but when God the Father says all things are put under Christ, it is obvious," manifest means obvious, "it is obvious that He," that is God the Father, "is an exception."

In other words, somebody might say well, when He puts all things under Christ, does that mean God the Father goes under Christ? No, no, that's...that's an exception. That's just a little footnote so you're clear on that. God is not subject. But all other things. So in the kingdom Christ rules. *Matthew 28:18, Jesus said, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and earth."*

And that's right. In *John 5* He talked about the fact that God the Father gave Him the authority and the right to reign and judge. And He will reign. *Psalm 2:6* said it. *Psalm 8:6* said it. *Psalm 110:1* said *He will reign until He put all enemies under His feet*. Those are all Messianic quotes right there in verse 27 and verse 25.

And so He squashes every enemy, and everything is subject to Him except God Himself, verse 27. And then He gives it all to the Father, verse 24. At the end of it all, He gives it all to the Father. And what is the kingdom that He gives to the Father? Listen beloved, what is the kingdom that He gives to the Father? I'll tell you what it is. It's people, that's all. Redeemed people.

Now listen to me, if there is no resurrection, then Christ didn't rise. If Christ didn't rise, then He cannot take the earth and give it to the Father, right? Then you say, but He did rise. It's the rest of us who don't. If we don't rise, there are no subjects for the kingdom. That's His point.

You see resurrection is that which makes the whole finale a reality. As all died spiritually and physically in Adam, so all live spiritually and physically in Christ. And if there's no physical life, then there's no millennial kingdom. And if there's no millennial kingdom, there's no restored earth. And if there's no restored earth, then God lost it in the garden and never got it back again.

Can't be, can't be. And so you see, the resurrection of Christ has ramifications. We rise and that means that He can reign and we can reign with Him in the earthly kingdom and then when it's all done and all enemies are destroyed, He can give us all the Father as a glorified humanity in resurrection form.

And when He does that, verse 28 describes it. "*And when all things shall be subdued to Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject to Him,*" that is to the Father, "*that put all things under Him in order that God may be all in all.*" You know what's so beautiful about that people? Christ in His incarnation form even in that day acts out the role of humility in submitting Himself to the Father.

Always the servant from the time He was given a body and He came into the world until the time He presents it back to God. He is the servant fulfilling His tasks. And then He gives it back to God and you say oh, and then God is all in all. Doesn't Christ reign anymore? Oh yes. You say, Christ is going to keep on reigning? Yeah, because when He was born in *Luke Chapter 1*, it said, "*Fear not Mary, for thou hast favor with God and behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb and bring forth a son.*"

Shall call His name Jesus. He should be great. Be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His Father, David," now listen to this, "and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever and of His kingdom there shall be," what, "no end."

He will reign forever, forever. *In Revelation Chapter 11, verse 15, it says, "He will reign forever and ever."* You know what I love? I'll illustrate it. *Revelation 3, He says, "To him that overcomes will I grant to sit down with Me in My throne and whereas My throne, My throne is in the Father's throne."* Do you see what Jesus is saying? Ultimately, My throne and the Father's throne is your throne. *In other words, all things return to God as in the beginning we were all coming out of God. In the end we all return to God and we reign with Him in common life.*

No wonder Jesus said, *"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I made everything and all things resolve in Me."* That's where history's going. It came from God, it goes back to God. And resurrection makes it happen. When God made a humanity, He made a humanity of righteousness with a plan that they would dwell with Him forever. When they lost that righteousness, He didn't give up the plan. He will raise them to a new humanity of righteousness and gain them back into His presence.

That's history. That's history. That God may be all in all. Everything goes back to Him. And not in a mystical Greek, philosophical way are we...do we float back into some deity, but we are united with God by the common life that flows through us. And we sit with Him on His throne with Christ who is in the same throne and the Holy Spirit no doubt is there as well.

Great, great reality. Well, let's pray. Thank you Father for showing us today that history is going where it's going, and that all those things that were once promised as man came out of your very essence. And then lost in sin will be regained and the restoration when all things are given back to you. Father, we long for the day when God is all in all, when the Son and all that the Son has won the kingdom itself shall be given to you and we shall be lost in your presence forever.

Thank you that you're in control and you made it and you will restore it. The plan will come to fulfillment. Father, as we think about it in general, we can't help but think about it in specific and realize that there might be some dear folks here who've never known Jesus Christ. Who've never put their faith in Him. Who consequently are not a part of the plan. They're not going to be in the first resurrection, they're not going to be in the kingdom, they're not going to be in that great host of people given back to the Father. They're going to be in the resurrection of the damned, because they've not put their faith in Jesus Christ.

Oh Father, may this be the day they put their faith in Him. For those of us who are Christians, help us to live like kingdom citizens. Help us to be worthy of the calling to which we're called. Amen.

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