

## I. INTRODUCTION.

### A. Scripture text: **1Corinthians 15:1-8**.

Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, [2] by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. [3] For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, [4] and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, [5] and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. [6] After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep; [7] then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles; [8] and last of all, as it were to one untimely born, He appeared to me also.

### B. (Show PPT slide of past and future lessons in this series).

### C. Five main points in this chapter:

1. The Gospel of the Risen Christ (see 1Cor. 15:1-11).
2. The Consequences of Denying the Resurrection (see 1Cor. 15:12-19).
3. The Consequences of Christ's Resurrection (see 1Cor. 15:20-28).
4. Answers to Problems of the Resurrection (see 1Cor. 15:29-49).
5. Events of the Resurrection Day (see 1Cor. 15:50-58).

## II. THE GOSPEL OF THE RISEN CHRIST (1Cor. 15:1-11).

### A. See **1Cor. 15:1,2**.

The brethren had received the gospel; they were standing in the gospel; they were being saved by the gospel; if they held fast to the word preached to them (1Cor. 15:1,2). Those outside the church who do not obey the gospel are perishing, but those who have obeyed are saved by the cross (1Cor. 1:18).

### B. See **1Cor. 15:3,4**.

Paul had received this word or gospel by revelation (Gal. 1:12; 1Cor. 2:6-16). Because of this revelation Paul knew many things about the death of Christ. He knew that Christ died for our sins and this was prophesied in the OT. He knew that Christ was buried and on the third day rose again. The resurrection of Jesus was also something taught in the OT.

### C. Three important things (**1Cor. 15:5-8**):

1. In these verses Paul lists those individuals who were witnesses to the bodily resurrection of X. They include Cephas, the Twelve, five hundred brethren at one time, James (possibly the Lord's brother), all the apostles, and Paul.
2. When Paul mentions that some of the five hundred brethren are asleep, he is speaking of physical death. In death the body sleeps, while the soul is still awake, active in the presence of God in Paradise (see Lk. 23:43).
3. In 15:8, Paul is simply saying that he was one called to be an apostle in a different way than the other Twelve.

### D. See **1Cor. 15:9-11**.

Paul felt that of all those who wore the name of being an apostle he was the least deserving. He felt this way because unlike the Twelve, he persecuted the church. But now by God's grace he is able to labor, even to the point of weariness for the cause of Christ.

## III. THE CONSEQUENCES OF DENYING THE RESURRECTION (1Cor. 15:12-19).

### A. See **1Cor. 15:12**.

In this verse we see the reason for the writing of this section of the letter. Some of the brethren in Corinth were saying that there was no resurrection of the dead. They were not specifically speaking of the resurrection of Christ, rather were saying there is no such thing as anyone being resurrected from

the dead. Paul does not take time to mention the general resurrection here or in 1Th. 4:13-18. Jesus did speak of the resurrection of all the dead in Jn. 5:28,29.

B. See [1Cor. 15:13-17](#).

Paul now argues that if there is no resurrection from the dead that even Christ has not been raised. And if Christ has not been raised then the preaching of the apostles (and anyone else for that matter) is in vain, a person's faith in Christ is in vain, and the apostles are a group of liars (false witnesses) because they are going around preaching the resurrection (Ac. 17:18).

C. See [1Cor. 15:18,19](#).

If there is no resurrection of the dead then there is no hope for those who have already died. They have perished for all time. Because of the what the apostles go through for the sake of the salvation of souls (4:9-13) they are of all men to be pitied if there is no resurrection to confirm their work.

#### IV. THE CONSEQUENCES OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION (1Cor. 15:20-28).

A. See [1Cor. 15:20-22](#).

If Christ is the first fruits of those who are asleep by His resurrection, then there are more to be resurrected. The first fruits always suggest more to come. Christ's resurrection is a pledge that on the final day, when the end comes, that those who are asleep, physically dead, may be resurrected also. Notice the brief contrast of Adam and Christ (also found in Rom. 5).

B. See [1Cor. 15:23,24](#).

Here is what is to happen on the final day, the resurrection day; X being the first fruits of the resurrection has already been raised so when He comes those who belong to X will be raised from the dead. Paul does not take time to mention that those outside of X will be raised but he does believe this according to Ac. 24:15. When X comes a second time, the dead in X shall be resurrected and this signifies the end of time as we know it. Jesus will deliver up the kingdom of God out of the kingdoms of the world to the Father (Eph. 5:27).

C. See [1Cor. 15:25-28](#).

X abolishes all rule, authority and power because He rules the kingdoms of the world with a rod of iron, and treads the wine-press of the wrath of God (Rev. 19:15). Jesus rules the kingdom, however, with a scepter of righteousness (Psa. 110:1-7). X reigns on His throne now, awaiting the time of His return to abolish all the enemies of righteousness, and the last enemy to be abolished is death. It will be abolished by the resurrection of all the dead.

#### V. ANSWER TO PROBLEMS OF THE RESURRECTION (1Cor. 15:29-56).

A. See [1Cor. 15:29](#).

This is a difficult verse, no doubt. Some think Paul was discussing baptism by proxy. But, it has been proved beyond doubt that the practice of vicarious baptism did not originate until centuries later than the time of this epistle.

An interpretation that better fits the context is that if the dead are not raised, why be baptized in view of their condition? If the dead are not raised, why be baptized in view of their perished condition (15:18)? Again, one must believe in the resurrection of Christ for baptism to have any power and effect (15:17; 1Pet. 3:21).

B. See [1Cor. 15:35](#).

The apostle asks two questions here:

1. "How can God raise the dead?" The answer is in 1Cor. 15:36-38.

2. "What kind of body will the resurrected body be?" The answer is in 1Cor. 15:39-49.

C. See [1Cor. 15:36-38](#).

Answer to the first question, "How can God raise a dead body?" How foolish to ask when the proof is all around you. God can do it in the same way He allows a seed to die, be buried in the ground and then raised as a new plant.

D. See [1Cor. 15:39-49](#).

Now Paul begins to answer the second question concerning what kind of body, will the resurrected body be? First he appeals to the fact that there are different kinds of flesh in the world. It should not surprise us then to know that our resurrected body will be different from our earthly body. The burial of the body and the resurrection of it is likened to sowing; sown in corruption, raised in incorruption; sown in dishonor, raised in honor; sown in weakness, raised in power; sown as a natural, physical body, raised a spiritual body. The body will be raised on the final day, but it shall be changed (Phil. 3:20,21; 1Jn. 3:2).

## VI. EVENTS OF THE RESURRECTION DAY.

A. See [1Cor. 15:50-58](#).

A mystery is something yet to be revealed. We do not fully understand all of the things about the resurrection on the final day, but that's because it is a mystery. The resurrection of the dead is yet to be revealed to us; hence it will always remain a mystery. Not everyone will go through the process of physical death. Some will be alive at the second coming of Christ. But everyone, whether physically alive or dead will be changed. This must take place because we cannot enter into the heavenly places with our present physical bodies.

This change will be as quick as the blinking of an eye. At the time of the end, the last trumpet will sound (a wake-up call for the dead who sleep in the graves), and all will be changed (1Th. 4:13-18).

Again we see that the physical body and the spiritual body are contrasted with the words perishable and imperishable; mortal and immortality. Physical death is swallowed up victoriously! The final enemy has been overcome!

## VII. CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

A. As is always the case with prophecy, the admonition is to those living in the present. In speaking of these future events the brethren need to be reminded of their everyday responsibility in preparation for that day to come (1Cor. 15:58).

[Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not \*in\* vain in the Lord.](#)

B. Two basic requirements for this work that is not in vain:

1. Conviction (steadfast, immovable).
2. Zeal (always abounding).

Our work is not in vain because there will be a resurrection from the dead.

C. Are you ready for the great resurrection?

D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians, erring Xians.