

# Why the Resurrection Matters

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Date: 05 April 2026

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[ 0 : 00 ] Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.

For I delivered to you, as of first importance, what I also received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.

Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep.

Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.

For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God, I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain.

[ 1 : 19 ] On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. Whether then it was I or they, so we preach, and so you believed.

Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised.

And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain, and your faith is in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified that God, we testified about God, that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise, if it is true that the dead are not raised.

For if the dead are not raised, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile, and you are still in your sins.

Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.

[ 2 : 43 ] But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead.

For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order, Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming, those who belong to Christ.

Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father, after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.

The last enemy to be destroyed is death. Here ends the scripture reading. Thank you very much, Joan, for reading.

This morning we celebrate one of the most controversial aspects of our faith. And that is the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

[ 4 : 02 ] And the reason it's controversial is that there are some people who deny with hostility. And there are some who doubt with sincerity whether Jesus Christ has risen from the dead.

And while I pray that all of us believe that Christ indeed has been risen from the dead, it wouldn't surprise me if there are some who at least doubt that Jesus has risen from the dead, whether present or listening online.

And perhaps even there might be some who deny it outright and say that Christ has not risen from the dead. So it would not be surprising to me because one of Jesus' own disciples, who walked with him for three years, who saw his miracles firsthand, who heard him repeatedly say he was going to die, and on the third day rise again, that disciple doubted the resurrection of Jesus.

He doubted the testimony of the women to whom Jesus first appeared, and then he also doubted the testimony of his fellow disciples to whom Jesus later appeared.

And so considering the doubts of Thomas 2,000 years later, it is no surprise that there would be people who doubt or deny the resurrection of Jesus.

[ 5 : 38 ] But people who are questioning and doubting or denying the resurrection of Jesus, they're not just doubting or denying the resurrection of Jesus specifically.

They are doubting or denying the resurrection of the dead generally. They're saying the dead don't rise at all.

When you're dead, you're done. That's it. So make the most of this life because there's nothing else to come. It's not just Jesus' resurrection they're denying.

They're denying resurrection in general. And in this passage that we have come to this morning, the Apostle Paul makes a case for the resurrection generally.

And then from that, he makes a case for the resurrection of Christ specifically. Actually, I said it the opposite way.

[ 6 : 50 ] He makes a case for the resurrection of Christ generally, for the resurrection generally, by making a case for the resurrection of Christ specifically. So put it another way, what Paul does is he makes the case upon which we, as God's people, can have a hope for our own resurrection by looking to Christ's resurrection.

And he helps us to believe that the one who said he would rise and rose is the one who said he will come and he will come again to receive his people to himself.

And so I want us to consider this passage this morning, but first, let me pray for us. Heavenly Father, would you draw near to us in ways that only you can and in ways that you know that we need, ways we need corporately and ways we need individually.

Lord, I pray that you would help me to be faithful in proclaiming your word this morning. And I pray that all of us would hear the truth of your word concerning the resurrection, the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and from that, the general resurrection that will come at the end of the world.

And so, Lord, would you help me to proclaim your word faithfully, help us to hear your word, and then to respond to it. We ask that you would do this in Jesus' name.

[ 8 : 45 ] Amen. Amen. A faithful reading of this passage will show that the primary issue that Paul was addressing is the fact that there were people in the Corinthian church who denied the resurrection from the dead.

And in responding to them, the Apostle Paul helps us to see that it is a serious denial, and it has far-reaching implications.

It is far-reaching implications. To deny that Christ, to deny resurrection from the dead, is with far-reaching implications, and it is no light denial.

So the Apostle Paul dedicates time to address this issue in the Corinthian church. And the way Paul argues for the truthfulness of the resurrection of the dead is by arguing for the truthfulness of Christ's own resurrection.

In other words, what Paul does is he proves the resurrection from the dead by proving Christ's resurrection from the dead.

[ 9 : 57 ] And he does so making three logical arguments. Paul makes three logical arguments in this passage before us to establish the truthfulness of the resurrection of the dead by arguing for the truthfulness of Christ's own resurrection.

So in our remaining time, I want us to consider these three arguments that Paul makes. First, the Apostle Paul argues that the resurrection of Christ is a historical reality.

It's a historical reality. He makes this argument in verses 1 to 11. Notice he begins in verses 1 and 2 by reminding the Corinthians of the gospel that he had preached to them.

The word gospel means good news. And Paul reminds them of this good news that he preached to them and this good news on which they stood, which they stake their faith.

And he assures them that they are being saved if they hold on to this gospel. Otherwise, he says, you have believed in vain.

[ 11 : 18 ] And notice in verses 3 and 4 how Paul spells out the gospel. And he calls the gospel the matter of first importance. To the Apostle Paul, there was nothing more important than the gospel.

And brothers and sisters, it should be the same for us. There should be nothing more important than the gospel. There's no other body of information that is as important to know as the gospel.

Paul says, it is the matter of first importance. And brothers and sisters, this is why, this is why we endeavor to center on the gospel.

This is why we seek to preach the gospel. We want to sing the gospel. We want to counsel with the gospel. We want to apply the gospel to our lives.

We want to live the gospel. Because it is the matter of first importance. We are richer for doing so, and we are poorer when we don't do so.

[ 12 : 23 ] And notice how Paul points out three foundational aspects of the gospel. First, he says that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scripture. Then that he was buried.

And then that he was raised on the third day according to the scriptures. Notice the first aspect of the gospel. It is not just that Christ died.

It is that Christ died for our sins. And brothers and sisters, this is an aspect of the gospel that we need to keep to the fore of our minds.

We need to keep it on the shelf of the affections of our hearts. Christ didn't die for his own sins. Christ died for your sins, and he died for my sins.

This is the first plank of the gospel, and it is good news because it reminds us that we have a substitute. It reminds us that we have someone who went and took our place in the point of our greatest need.

[ 13 : 34 ] Christ paid the penalty for our sins, and that penalty is death. In verses 3 and 4, Paul tells us that Christ fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies through his death, burial, and resurrection from the dead.

But it's clear from what Paul goes on to say that there's really only one aspect of the gospel that is in doubt or dispute. It's not the death of Christ for sinners.

It is not his burial. The aspect of the gospel that is in dispute is the resurrection of Christ from the dead. That is where Paul zeroes in.

And the truth is, no one who has any sense of history will deny the historicity of the man, Jesus Christ, that he lived. And no one who takes the time to study would deny that there was this man, Jesus Christ, who lived and then who was crucified.

That's not in dispute. What is in dispute is did this man, Jesus Christ, arise from the dead? And so starting in verse 5, the apostle Paul begins to make a historical argument for the fact that Jesus Christ rose from the dead.

[ 15 : 04 ] And he points to a list of historical appearances that Jesus made after he arose from the dead. He starts in verse 5. He says that Christ appeared to Cephas, meaning Peter.

And in verse 5, he also says, then Christ appeared to the 12. And then in verse 6, Paul says that Christ appeared to almost 500 believers at one time.

500 people gathered in one place bore witness that they saw the risen Christ. And Paul makes a startling claim, he says, and many of them are alive today.

So he's saying, I'm not writing after people are dead that nobody could refute what I'm saying. He says, these people to whom Christ appeared, this 500 people to whom he appeared, many of them are alive today.

And they could counter, they could refute what I'm saying if it were not true. And Paul was not in the corner writing this. The gospel writers also had written this.

[ 16 : 16 ] Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John had written this. And so there were many people giving this same account, this undeniable account, of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

And Paul is saying this can be proven. Paul was writing some 30-odd years away from the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ and the others as well.

So this is not a long period of time. Those of us present this morning, we could remember independence. We could remember when independence they happened. I know some of you, that's just pure history, but there are some of us who were present.

And if somebody came and tried to write an account of independence and they call it the Bahamian Revolutionary War and that we won our independence from Great Britain by fighting them when they came into Nassau Harbor, we would say, that's crazy.

That never happened. You would not try to write a story like that when people are still alive. And so Paul is saying what I'm saying is credible. There are witnesses who are still alive to the fact that Jesus rose bodily.

[ 17 : 36 ] And he goes on in verse 7 and he says, and then he appeared to James and then to all the apostles. And verse 8, Paul says, and then Christ appeared to me.

Now what's his point? What's Paul's point in giving us this catalog of appearances of the Lord Jesus Christ? He's saying this is a historical fact.

You shouldn't be disputing this. This is a historical fact. So what we see is that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is both an essential part of the gospel and it also is a historical fact.

Notice how Paul concludes this first part of his argument that Christ's resurrection is a historical fact beginning in verse 8. He writes, Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.

For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God, I am what I am and his grace toward me was not in vain.

[19:02] On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though I was not, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.

Whether it was I or they, so we preach and so you believe. Paul says, whoever was preaching, this is what we preach.

We preach this matter of first importance that Christ died, that he was buried, and that he rose from the dead. Paul is not alone in preaching this.

He was not alone in risking his life to preach this. The resurrection of Christ is a historical reality.

Paul then moves to the second part of his argument, which is found in verses 12 to 19, in which he establishes that the resurrection of Christ is a theological necessity.

[20:08] And this is my second point. The word theology simply means what we believe about God. Everyone has a theology about God.

You believe something about God. Even people would say, I'm atheist. Well, they have a belief about God. They say God does not exist, and that is a theology. So, we are all theologians in that respect.

We all have a belief about God. Those of us who are believers, the source of our theology is God's word, the Bible. Let's look at the theological argument that Paul makes, starting in verse 12.

He writes, Now, if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?

But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain, and your faith is in vain.

[21:18] we are even found to be misrepresenting God because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise, if it is true that the dead are not raised.

For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile, and you are still in your sins.

and then those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. Now again, remember the issue that Paul is addressing.

Paul is addressing this issue as to whether there is a resurrection of the dead of anybody. And his first point, in this second part of his argument, is that if there is no resurrection from the dead, then not even Christ has been raised from the dead.

And that's logical. If you say that no one can be raised from the dead, then not even Christ has been raised from the dead. And Paul states this two times, first in verse 13, and then he says it in verse 16, because this is a logical argument that he wants them to see.

[22:38] And what he does is he goes on to show that if this is true, we have a theological crisis. If it is true that the dead are not raised, it is therefore true that Christ can't be raised, and therefore we have a theological crisis.

Paul says first the preaching of the gospel is in vain, because it would mean that an essential part of the gospel that Christ raised on the third day is not true, and therefore the gospel is not gospel, it is not good news, because it means that the one who died for our sins is still dead, and there is no indication that his death did what it was supposed to do, and that was to free us from our sins, to be the basis upon which God would be able to forgive us.

And so Paul says it would mean that those who believe the gospel have an empty faith, because they believe something that is not entirely true. And he says preachers like me would be misrepresenting God, because we are preaching a part of the gospel that is not true, to say that Christ arose from the dead when he couldn't arise from the dead, because you say there's no resurrection from the dead.

So not even Christ has been raised. And here's the theological crisis that Paul gets at. He states the theological crisis that without the resurrection, there can be no forgiveness of sins.

Look again at how he says that in verse 17. He says, Now why is this true?

[ 24 : 48 ] The reason is that the death of Christ was supposed to pay the penalty for our sins. The wages of sin is death.

And Christ is our substitute, died in our place, and he was buried. So what is the evidence? What is the evidence that God accepted Christ's substitutionary death for our sins on our behalf?

What is the evidence that he actually accepted it? Suppose Jesus had remained in the grave and he had not arisen.

it would mean that he didn't do what he said he came to do, and that is to give his life as a ransom for many, and repeatedly said he was going to rise again on the third day.

It would be impossible to have genuine faith in Jesus if he says, I came to give my life as a ransom for many, I'm going to die, I'm going to be crucified in Jerusalem, but I'm going to rise again on the third day.

[ 26 : 04 ] The third day goes and comes and he doesn't rise. How could we possibly believe, have any genuine faith in what he actually did?

So what is the evidence of our forgiveness? The evidence of our forgiveness is found in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. God demonstrated his acceptance of Christ's substitutionary death on behalf of sinners, that the just payment for our sins had been paid by raising him from the dead.

Christ died, and, you know, we could read these as just historical details in the crucifixion account, but they verified that Jesus was dead.

They verified that he was dead before they took him, off of the cross. And so Jesus was dead, and that is what he came to do. He came to die for our sins, and he died.

And God demonstrated his acceptance of Christ's death by raising him from the dead. And therefore, it's evidence and proof the price has been paid.

[ 27 : 21 ] Because Christ died. He died for three days. He was in the grave. And God raised him up to life as evidence that he accepted the just payment for our sins by raising Christ from the dead.

In Romans 4.25, the Apostle Paul tells us that Christ was delivered for our trespasses, and he was raised for our justification.

He was raised for our justification. In Christ's resurrection, God justifies us and declares us not guilty and righteous because of what Christ has done.

Christ paid the price in his death for our sins. Brothers and sisters, those of us who have put our trust in Christ, the penalty for our sins has been paid, and it's been demonstrated because Christ died, was buried, and God raised him from the dead as proof of his acceptance of what Christ has done.

God justifies us, and to justify is to declare righteous. The Bible says that God justifies, who does he justify?

[ 28 : 49 ] The ungodly. And the only way that the ungodly can be justified is not by anything on the ungodly, it is to be away from the ungodly, and this is the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ, his resurrection, God declares us, righteous in his sight.

He declares that all of our sins have been paid for by the Lord Jesus Christ, all of them, without exception, past sins, and present sins, and future sins.

And sometimes we struggle with this in terms of believing that Christ has already paid for all of our sins, but if he hasn't paid for present and future sins, who's going to pay for them?

We can't. When Jesus said it is finished, it's finished. He doesn't do part and then leave a part for us, he did it all.

Our job is now to believe, and he gives us faith to believe. believe. But brothers and sisters, that's the good news this morning.

[ 30 : 07 ] The good news is that Jesus Christ was delivered up for our trespasses, and God raised him for our justification as evidence that the price for sin had been paid.

Paul goes on, and he tells us in verse 18, that those who have died in Christ, he's still making this argument, he says, if Christ has not been raised from the dead, then those who have died in Christ have perished forever.

Why? Because it means that their sins still stand as a record against them. because it is only through Christ's resurrection that anyone can have a hope of future resurrection because their sins, at least a glorious resurrection, because their sins have been forgiven and they've been declared righteous in God's sight.

So if Christ has not been raised, then the dead have no hope because they're still in their sins and they have eternally perished.

Paul says in verse 19 that if Christ did not rise from the dead, then believers in Christ are to be the most pitied people in the whole world.

[ 31 : 41 ] Why? Because we're living our lives for Christ, believing that we have been forgiven of our sins, believing that we've received eternal life, and believing that if we die, our death is not final, that one day we will be raised from the dead to a glorious resurrection to be with our Lord eternally.

Paul says, but if Christ has not risen from the dead, then there is no hope of future resurrection when we die as believers.

Paul says that we are the most pitiful people on the earth if that is so. Because at least the unbelievers who are going to face the same outcome that we would face if Christ didn't rise from the dead, at least they're eating and drinking and being merry and making the most of this life because this is it.

But he says these believers, they are living in this world as not a part of it. and they're saying no to ungodliness and yes to righteousness and they are living their lives and giving themselves as a holy sacrifice before the Lord.

And then they die and it's hopelessness for them. They have no hope just like the unbelievers. Paul says if that's true, we are to be the most pitied people on the planet.

[ 33 : 12 ] So brothers and sisters, what the apostle Paul does is he helps us to see that the resurrection of Christ is a theological necessity. It is a necessity for the faith that we profess.

Paul's argument is that our entire faith is founded upon the truthfulness of the resurrection. The truthfulness of Christ's resurrection from the dead.

And see, both of these go together. Paul is saying we cannot have a hope for future resurrection if Christ himself has not been raised.

If Christ has not been raised from the dead, then Christianity is a wholesale fraud. We're still in our sins. We have a futile faith in a dead man.

And we're living futile lives that one day will end in nothingness. brothers and sisters, the good news this morning is that Christ has been raised from the dead.

[ 34 : 22 ] And the Christian faith is not a fraud. And we believe in Jesus Christ, the one who was dead and is alive. And he is alive forever more.

And so we have a hope. We have a hope beyond this life. We have a hope in the face of death. We have a hope that if we were to die before Christ returns, he would raise us up at the last day. And we have the hope of eternal life with him.

So, brothers and sisters, before us in this passage, the apostle helps us to see that the resurrection of Christ is a historical reality. He helps us to see that it's a theological necessity.

And then last, he helps us to see that the resurrection of Christ provides us with eschatological certainty.

[ 35 : 25 ] And this is the third part of his argument, my third and final point. This word eschatology, it seems like a big word, but really all it simply means is last.

Just last things. It simply means how God is going to wrap up human history. This world, as we know it, life as we know it, one day will come to a conclusion.

And the Bible teaches us how that conclusion is going to come. and this is an area of theology where it's just the doctrine of last things.

It's a study of these last things, how the world is finally going to wrap up. Paul makes this argument in verses 20 to 26.

20. Look again at how he starts it in verse 20. Let me say this before we look at it in any detail.

[ 36 : 29 ] Paul is addressing believers, not unbelievers. Paul does not have unbelievers in view. He is talking to us about the resurrection from the perspective of believers.

And if you forget that, you'll be confused about a lot of things as it relates to how history is going to wrap up.

There is a resurrection for unbelievers as well. Paul is not casting his eyes on that in this particular part. There's, the Bible tells us, is a resurrection to damnation.

But what Paul is talking about here is he's addressing the Corinthian church, addressing believers, and he's talking to them about a glorious resurrection that awaits those who belong to Christ.

And let's look at what he says now starting at verse 20. But in fact, he says, Christ has been raised from the dead. The first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.

[ 37 : 36 ] You know, Lazarus rose from the dead, but he died again. he's saying that Christ is the first of this kind to rise never to die again.

Christ, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. Verse 21, for as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead.

For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order, Christ the first fruits, then at his coming, those who belong to Christ.

Then comes the end when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power.

For he must reign until all his enemies, sorry, for he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.

[ 38 : 52 ] The last enemy to be destroyed is death. So Paul begins his eschatological argument in verse 20 by stating as a fact that Christ has been raised from the dead and refers to Christ as the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.

Paul refers to the first fruits and he's drawing on just Old Testament history, when in the time of harvest the people of Israel were commanded that they were supposed to bring a sheaf of grain from the first harvest and they were to bring it before the Lord and present it before the Lord and what that did was it symbolically indicated that the whole harvest belonged to the Lord.

God's and what Paul is likening the resurrection of Christ to is that first sheaf and he's saying that's the first of the whole harvest of resurrected righteous people that God will have.

He says Christ is the first fruits of that. Because you have first fruits, there will be more fruits that will actually come. Paul's point is that the resurrection of Christ is not separate from the resurrection of Christ's own people.

There is undoubtedly an intervening time. The harvest is happening now. The first part of the harvest has already happened in the person of Jesus Christ in his resurrection from the dead.

[ 40 : 36 ] and the rest of the harvest will happen. The only difference is the order. Paul tells us Christ is first.

So the harvest, God's harvest, begins with Christ. Paul emphasizes this in verse 23. Again, look at what he says, but each in his own order, Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ.

So in this statement, Paul is affirming both the fact of Christ's resurrection and the fact of future resurrection to those who belong to Christ. It's very helpful to think of human history as two bookends.

And human history is bookended by two men. On the front end, it's Adam, and on the back end, it's the Lord Jesus Christ.

Later in 1 Corinthians 50 and 45, Paul refers to Jesus Christ as the last Adam. So there's the first Adam, and there's the last Adam.

[ 41 : 50 ] It's helpful to think of human history in this way, because all of us are connected to these two men, the first Adam and the last Adam.

The first Adam disobeyed God. And in his disobedience, he brought death to himself, and all who were in him, he brought death to the entirety of the human race.

The last Adam obeyed God. And in his obedience, he brought life to all who are in him, all who he represented, all of the entirety of the redeemed community, the redeemed race.

in his obedience, Christ brought life to all of them. All human beings are connected to the first Adam biologically.

On the other hand, only those of us who have put our trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, the last Adam, are connected to him redemptively. And he has brought us from spiritual death to spiritual life, that spiritual resurrection.

[ 43 : 08 ] We've already experienced, those of us who trust in Jesus, we've already experienced the spiritual resurrection. We've come from death to life spiritually. life spiritually. And it's on that basis that we one day, should we die and experience physical death, we will rise to a physical life and physical resurrection in a new body.

Notice in verse 3 that Paul tells us that the resurrection takes place at Christ's coming. time. In verse 24 he says, then comes the end, meaning the end of the world, the end of the age, the end of

human history, when Christ delivers the kingdom to the Father and defeats and destroys all his enemies.

Now we're told in verse 26 that the last enemy to be destroyed is death. And that's a cue to us, that's a cue to us to say, look, when you see death destroyed, there no more enemies. You cannot have other enemies after the last enemy.

The last enemy is death. So here's the critical question. When and how is death destroyed?

He says the last enemy to be destroyed is death. When and how is death destroyed? We didn't read it, but you can turn there.

[ 44 : 44 ] Starting at verse 50, Paul tells us the answer to both of these, to this two-part question. Starting in verse 50, Paul writes this.

I'll let you turn there. 1 Corinthians 15, starting in verse 50. I tell you this, brothers, flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.

Nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold, I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep. We're not all going to be dead when Christ returns, but we shall all be changed.

In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.

For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory.

[ 46 : 09 ] O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting? Ask again the question, when and how will death be destroyed?

The answer is right here, at Christ's resurrection, through the resurrection from the dead. I'm pretty sure most of us have been infernals, where we've heard this passage quoted as if it has already happened, and that death has already been swallowed up, victory has been accomplished over death, this thing of death has already been removed.

No, it hasn't happened yet. Paul tells us that this happens when, at Christ's return. death will be swallowed up in victory, and the sting of death will be removed.

And here's what he's simply saying to us, brothers and sisters. when Christ returns, and we who belong to him are raised from death into a glorious resurrection, we will die no more.

Death has been finally defeated, there is no more death. And we see these almost as a puzzle as we look in parts of scripture that talks about the return of Christ and the new heaven and the new earth that he's going to usher in.

[ 47 : 41 ] The Bible says there is going to be no more death. Death is finally destroyed when Christ returns at the resurrection. And brothers and sisters, we should see this, that until then, death continues to reign.

Death is over all of us until Christ returns. It's just a matter of when and how. And so this does not become fulfilled until the day of Christ.

But our eschatological certainty is this, those of us who belong to Christ, we know, we don't need to know all the details of how the world is going to end. But praise God, we know this one detail.

Praise God, we know that those of us who belong to Christ, if we are living, we are going to be caught up with the Lord when he returns. And if we are dead, we know that he is going to raise us from the dead and we will never die again because death has been defeated in the resurrection of God's people.

Brothers and sisters, this is good news for us. This is good news for us. The good news is that whether we live or we die, we are the Lord's. And if there's ever a time that we should think about death, it should be on this day when Christ rose from the dead and gives us a promise for our own resurrection and that we can live life with the assurance, go to sleep, I know that if we die, we are the Lord's.

[ 49 : 14 ] I know that whatever comes our way, however we meet our death, we are the Lord's. The Lord will one day raise us from the dead. And that's our eschatological certainty.

though there are a lot of things of the end we may not understand, we understand this, brothers and sisters. Christ will raise his people from the dead.

Once again, the Apostle Paul, in this part of his argument, is addressing believers. He's not addressing unbelievers. Yes, unbelievers will be raised from the dead for the judgment, for the great judgment, and that great judgment, God will do two things through Christ.

He will punish the wicked and he will reward the righteous. It's that simple. Those of us who belong to Christ, our sins have already been judged in Christ.

Christ. And we need not fear all these myths that people talk about, oh, on the day of judgment, you know, all your sins are going to be recorded and put on the screen for you.

[ 50 : 36 ] No. They've been put on Christ's back. He has borne them for us. And the Lord, in his word, gives us many descriptions of how he deals with our sins.

He casts them into the sea of forgetfulness. He separates them from us as far as the east is from the west. But not so for those who have not put their trust in Jesus Christ.

Sin, brothers and sisters, will be punished in one of two places. On Christ's back on the cross or on our own backs in hell. And if Christ is not our sin bearer, what we're saying is, I will be my own sin bearer.

God's love. And so to those of you who have not yet put your trust in Jesus, I say to you this morning, come to Jesus.

I say to you this morning, trust all that the Lord is doing, all that you're experiencing this morning, that the Lord, a merciful Savior, caused you to be here this morning, to hear this good news, that there is a Savior who is a substitute for sinners, that they can be made right before a holy God.

[ 51 : 53 ] And I encourage you to hear the good news and believe the good news and obey the good news and turn from your sins and turn to the Savior and you will find that he will abundantly pardon all of your sins.

No matter how great he will abundantly pardon. My prayer this morning is that you trust in Jesus. So brothers and sisters, how should we live in light of Christ's resurrection?

And how should we live with the hope of our own resurrection? The Apostle Paul tells us in verse 58, he says, therefore my beloved brothers, be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

And here's why it's not in vain, because Christ rose. He rose from the dead and he gives us a hope for our own resurrection from the dead.

Let's pray. Oh, Father, we are so grateful that you sent your Son, the only one in the entire universe who could be our substitute.

[ 53 : 30 ] He came as a man, the God man, was able to mediate between a holy God and sinful men and women like us.

Oh, Lord, we thank you that he not only lived, but he died for us and rose for us, and therefore we have hope of a future resurrection for ourselves.

would you cause these truths to go deeper in our hearts this morning, and for those who have yet to believe, would you bring them to faith, bring them to saving faith, that they too may believe and rejoice in the risen Savior.

We ask all this in Jesus' name. Amen.