

# That God May Be All in All

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[0:00] 1 Corinthians chapter 15, we're going to read verses 12 through 28 regarding the resurrection of the resurrection of the dead.

! This is God's word starting at verse 12. 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.

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.

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.

[1:30] For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive, but each to his own order. Christ the firstfruits, then it is 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. For God has put all things in subjection under his feet.

But when it says, all things are put in subjection, it is plain that he is accepted who put all things in subjection under him.

When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him.

[2:31] That God may be all in all. We all have bad dreams from time to time.

Kids, maybe you've had bad dreams. Maybe dreams that were a little scary. Sometimes we have recurring bad dreams. I have a recurring bad dream.

It's not one filled with fear so much as it is anxiety and worry. I regularly dream that I come to preach without any notes.

That I have forgotten them at home. And somehow it's never here where I could, if we had to, pop home and grab some notes. But it is far from here. I come with nothing.

That horrible feeling. That pit in your stomach. But it's just a bad dream. I thank the Lord that I've never actually had the experience of forgetting to prepare to preach.

[3:25] Though I have forgotten announcements once at our previous church and had to retrieve those. But that's not anything near as important as forgetting the notes for a sermon.

I've had that dream many times. But always a bad dream that I've woken up from. And just for that fleeting moment, it really did feel like, even after I woke up, that this had happened.

That pit in my stomach perhaps still remained for a few seconds after waking up. And then reality sets in. And there's a wave of relief. That was just a bad dream.

Well, the last time that we were in 1 Corinthians was like a bad dream. A bad dream where we experienced a world in which Christ had not been raised from the dead.

It was this terrible alternate reality with all kinds of terrible consequences. And while we were in that passage, while we were in that bad dream, that feeling of dread and despair should have been felt in the pits of our stomachs for just a brief moment.

[4:30] But then, like waking up from a bad dream, we're back in reality tonight. And what a relief! Because this is reality. Jesus Christ has been raised from the dead.

Praise the Lord. That is the universe that we live in. So last time we were in 1 Corinthians, we considered the bad dream. If the good news isn't true, then here is all of the bad news that follows. If Christ hasn't been raised, then we saw six terrible consequences that would follow. Well, this week we're awake. We're back in reality. The good news is true.

Christ has been raised. And here are the four joyous consequences that follow. So last time, it was six terrible hypothetical consequences.

Tonight, it is four joyous real consequences. And they each begin with the letter C. So here is the first joyous real consequence that we can see together tonight.

[5:33] Christians will be raised from the dead. We who are in Christ will be raised from the dead. If Christ has risen, then we will rise as well.

And we see that in the first three verse, four verses together. Verse 20. But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead. The first fruits 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 first fruits. Then at his coming, those who belong to Christ. Christ. So right away, Paul deals in reality with us.

He corrects the error of the false teachers in the church that we were introduced to last week. They had been teaching that there's no resurrection of the dead at all. No general resurrection of the dead.

[6:35] And yet Paul is saying, no, those who have fallen asleep will awake again. Now just to be clear here, Paul is not talking about the false doctrine of soul sleep.

Where the soul enters into this dormant state until reunited with the body. Now as Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5.8, We would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord.

Not unconscious with the Lord, but at home with him. In his presence in heaven. Enjoying him. And worshiping him. The soul does not sleep upon death.

When Paul talks about those who have fallen asleep here in 1 Corinthians, he simply means they've died. But like sleep, it won't last forever. The dead will awake. The dead will be brought back to life.

And of course, the proof of this is in the resurrection of Jesus Christ himself. He died. His body brought down from the cross.

[7:36] He was bound in linen cloths with that carefully prepared mixture of myrrh and aloes. He was laid in a tomb. And that stone rolled in front of it.

He was most certainly dead. And by the power of God, his body and his soul were reunited again. He rose from the dead. And if he did, well, so too will all others who have died.

Believers and unbelievers alike. Now, Paul doesn't speak directly about the resurrection of unbelievers here in 1 Corinthians 15. When we learn of their resurrection in other places in Scripture, they too will be reunited with their bodies at the final judgment.

But here in 1 Corinthians, Paul's focus is on those who belong to Christ. His focus is on us who are Christians. Because Christ was raised from the dead, so too will we who are in Christ be raised as well.

Now, Paul teaches us here that there is a clear order of operations in this. Like doing a math equation. First, multiply and divide. Then add and subtract.

[8:48] The order matters in math. The order matters in resurrection. First Christ, then us. And we also see here, as Paul is talking about order, he's also talking about representation.

There's a relationship between order and representation. There's a logic to it, which is this. The representative comes first. It's the representative and then everyone else.

Well, we see that in verses 21 and 22. Both in the sad reality of death and in the joyful reality of resurrection. These two contrasting realities, death and life.

But both are introduced through a person, a representative. And there's a clear order here. The representative and then everyone else.

Through one man came death and through one man will come resurrection from the dead. But it is certainly not the same man, is it? And this is a similar passage to Romans 5.

[9:58] Paul applies the same kind of logic in Romans 5 that he does here. Death in Adam, life in Christ. Adam was our representative there in the Garden of Eden.

And when he fell into sin, well, we did too. And when we all did, we all died spiritually. And eventually, we all die physically.

Death came through Adam to all of us. Now, in like fashion, Christ, he was our representative on the cross and in the tomb.

And having been made alive again himself, so too all who trust in him will be made alive as well. Spiritually, we've been brought to life. But physically, we will be brought back to life again as well if the Lord does not return before.

In Adam all die, believer and unbeliever alike. But in Christ shall all be made alive. Though Paul qualifies here in that statement when he says in verse 23, those who belong to Christ.

[11:04] All who belong to Christ. We will be made alive again physically as Christ has been made alive again physically. To enjoy eternal life, body and soul.

So through Christ, we've been brought to physical, to spiritual life now. But one day, we will be raised to physical life again as well. Christ first, and then us who belong to him.

He's our representative. He's our second Adam. He's our better Adam. He's our representative.

Through the first Adam, we died.

But through the second, we are made alive again. And as our representative, Christ goes first. So his resurrection, and then ours as well.

That's resurrection logic for you. Now there's also this apologetic aspect to this logic. Because Christ has been raised, we can have this sure, confident hope that we will be raised as well.

[12:06] Now remember this false doctrine that was being promoted in the church. Saying there was no resurrection of the dead. Well, a false doctrine is certainly easier to convince people of when it relates to something that has not happened yet.

So to deny the resurrection, say, of us as believers, or even of unbelievers of all people. Well, that's easy to do in some sense when the resurrection of all of those people has not happened yet.

But it's still to come. Minus the glimpse of it that we see in Matthew's gospel after Christ died. But the resurrection of the dead in totality, that hasn't happened yet.

It's hard to prove the reality of something that hasn't happened. But here is something that has. Christ. He has been raised from the dead.

We don't have to look forward in time. We can look back and we can see very definitively, Christ is alive. He didn't recover from serious injuries that He sustained on the cross.

[13:10] He wasn't resuscitated in the tomb. He was raised from the dead. His body glorified. He was raised from the dead to never die again.

And as verse 20 says, very important for us to see, He is the first fruits of the dead. The first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.

And so by that, Paul means the first with more to come. The term first fruits, that's an agricultural word. And it means exactly what it says.

The first fruits of the harvest, they would be the first and the best of the crops. Now in the Old Testament, God gave very specific instructions for when the Israelites were to bring these first fruits to Him.

They were to give them to God as an offering. We see this very clearly in the book of Deuteronomy, chapter 26. Beginning in verse 1, this is what we read.

[14:13] When you come into the land that the Lord your God is giving you for an inheritance, and have taken possession of it and live in it, you shall take some of the fruit, first of all the fruit of the ground, which you harvest from your land that the Lord your God is giving you.

And you shall put it in a basket. And you shall go to the place that the Lord your God will choose to make His name dwell there. And you shall go to the priest who is in office at that time and say to Him, I declare today to the Lord your God that I have come into this land that the Lord swore to our fathers to give to us.

Then dropping down to verse 10, that faithful Israelite was to pray this to God. And behold, now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground which you, O Lord, have given me.

Now each year, the Israelites would then gather in Jerusalem to celebrate the first harvest of the year. The first harvest would actually be in the spring.

It would be a harvest of grain. God instructed the Israelites to celebrate this first harvest and to give to Him. It's called the Feast of Firstfruits.

[15:26] You can read all about that in Leviticus 23. The Israelites were actually to bring the sheaf of the firstfruits of the harvest to the priest. And the priest would then wave it as unto the Lord.

This very visible expression of gratitude to God for providing for the people. It was an opportunity as well for the people to continue to trust God.

Here were the firstfruits of the harvest that they were giving to God. There wasn't much that was ready yet to harvest. Remember, this is spring, and here they were giving that initial harvest to God, trusting He's going to continue to provide for us.

Trusting that indeed there was more where this came from. They would be trusting God to bring forth an even more abundant harvest in the coming year.

This festival, this Feast of Firstfruits, was held every year, two days after Passover. Passover was on Friday.

[16:28] The next day was the Sabbath. And as Leviticus 23 says, the Feast of Firstfruits was then the next day after the Sabbath. In other words, when Christ rose from the dead, it was no ordinary day even for the Jewish people.

It was no ordinary Sunday. It was the day of the Feast of Firstfruits. The Jewish people would have been gathering to celebrate that festival that very day, to celebrate the firstfruits of the harvest in Jerusalem.

And all the while, outside of Jerusalem, in a tomb with the stone rolled away, the firstfruits of a far greater harvest came forth.

Did you know, interestingly enough, the Feast of Firstfruits, it is today, in the year 2026, for some Jewish people, according to what tradition you follow.

Not always is that the case. But in God's providence, today, as we're looking at 1 Corinthians 15, considering the firstfruits of the dead, the Jewish people are considering their own firstfruits.

[17:37] far less significant. Oh, how it pales compared to Jesus Christ, the firstfruits of the dead. Jesus, He was the firstfruits, not of grain, but of the resurrection.

There's more where this came from. Jesus is the proof that God will bring forth an even more abundant harvest from the grave.

He's the first, and He's the best. But He is not the only. He's not the only one who will be raised. Oh no, there is more to follow. Jesus Christ is just the beginning.

And what a harvest there will be on that final day. When Christ returns in His glorified body, we all will come up out of the ground with our glorified bodies as well.

Just as Paul says in Philippians 3, verse 21, He will transform our lowly body to be like His glorious body. His great power will be put on display to make our bodies to be like His.

[18:44] To raise us from the grave. To raise us in glory. No longer natural bodies which waste away, but spiritual bodies which will never decay.

He possesses the power to bring about that great transformation of His beloved people. And at the same time, He possesses the power to bring about the defeat of His enemies.

And that's the second joyous, real consequence of Christ's resurrection that we see in this passage this evening. Christ will reign over all His enemies.

Beginning in verse 24. 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. So this really is a momentous two-fold event at the end of the age.

[19:52] We see here the resurrection of those who belong to Christ. And we see the destruction of all those who oppose Him. Every rule. Every authority and power.

It's clear that Paul is not just talking about human opposition to King Jesus, but spiritual opposition as well. Do you hear the hints of Ephesians 6.12?

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

Every rule, authority, and power in the heavenly places and on earth will be destroyed by Christ. Not one enemy left who will stand against Him on that day.

Not even death itself. As verse 26 says, the last enemy to be destroyed is death. Fully.

[20:58] Finally. On that day. Christ will destroy death. By His death, the writer of Hebrews says, we've heard it once, let's hear it again, Jesus destroyed the one who has the power of death.

That is the devil. So at the cross, Jesus dealt the death blow to Satan as He hung and died. But at His return, in victory, Christ will fully and finally defeat Satan and all of His forces of evil.

Even death itself, destroyed. Swallowed up in victory, as Paul will go on to say later in chapter 15. It's a well-known verse. Perhaps maybe a little less well-known is that those words that Paul says aren't actually original to him.

He's quoting Isaiah. Isaiah 25. God will swallow up on this mountain the covering that is cast over all people. The veil that is spread over all nations.

He will swallow up death forever. And the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces. Death is very much so rightly described as this covering cast over all peoples.

[22:13] It envelops everyone. It is looming for everyone. It is inescapable until it itself is swallowed up.

Death and the great sorrow that comes with it swallowed up in victory. Every tear wiped away from our eyes. And as Revelation 21 promises, death will be no more.

Neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore. Christ will conquer His every enemy, even death itself, on that coming day of His return.

The return of the King in victory. And Paul here really does use kingly language to describe all of this. He says in verse 25, For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet.

That is the language of Psalm 110. Paul clearly has that psalm on his mind. A psalm of David, which begins with David saying, The Lord says to my Lord, that is God the Father, says to God the Son, the King of Heaven, says to His Anointed One, Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.

[23:34] Right now, Christ sits at the right hand of His Father. As Hebrews 10.12 says, But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, He sat down at the right hand of God.

So Christ, He accomplished that work upon the cross. It is finished, and having risen from the grave and ascending into heaven, He sat down. He's enthroned on high at God's right hand.

But He won't stay there forever. No, He is waiting to return. Hebrews 10.13 goes on to say, Waiting from that time until His enemies would be made a footstool for His feet.

So from the time that Christ ascended into heaven and sat down there at the right hand of His Father, He has been patiently waiting to come back.

So yes, He is reigning in heaven right now at the right hand of the Father. But He will return to earth to reign until He has put all of His enemies under His feet.

[24:43] That is the ultimate posture of victory. Standing upon your enemies. Your foot upon His chest. They've been beaten. They've been subdued.

They've been put in subjection. We actually see this very thing in the book of Joshua. As the Israelites entered into the land and they conquered the inhabitants of the land.

In Joshua 10, there's these five Amorite kings who were defeated. And beginning in verse 24, this is what we hear. And when they brought those kings out to Joshua, Joshua summoned all the men of Israel and said to the chiefs of the men of war who had gone with him, Come near.

Put your feet on the necks of these kings. And then they came near and put their feet on their necks. And Joshua said to them, Do not be afraid or dismayed.

Be strong and courageous. For thus, the Lord will do to all of your enemies against whom you fight. This is what King Jesus will do to His every enemy.

[25:50] He will tread upon Him. He will tread upon them. And that will be to our great joy. Not because we delight in the death of sinners, but because evil will be defeated.

And righteousness will prevail. King Jesus will tread upon His enemies and He will reign. He will bring peace. He will bring joy and justice and righteousness all through the land.

Now the wording here in 1 Corinthians, it might be a little confusing. When we hear that He must reign until He has put all of His enemies under His feet, that certainly sounds like Christ will stop reigning once He's finished that work.

But that's certainly not the case. It's not as though He will set aside His kingly office. It's not as though He'll vacate His rightful throne once the work of conquering His enemies is finished.

Now the emphasis here is on that active work of Christ to bring His enemies under His rule.

Augustine said, He reigns forever.

[27:01] However, in respect to the war waged under Him against the devil, this conflict will obviously continue until He has put all His enemies under His feet.

But afterward, there will be no conflict since we shall enjoy an everlasting peace. In other words, Christ won't let up until that final victory is realized.

Now we've been camping on the enemies of Christ. All of His enemies will be subjected to Him. But it's not just His enemies who will be brought under His rule.

No, it's all things. And we see that next joyous real consequence of the resurrection of Christ.

Creation will be restored. Creation will be restored.

Beginning in verse 27. For God has put all things in subjection under His feet. But when it says all things are put in subjection, it is plain that He is accepted who put all things in subjection under Him.

[28:08] When all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subjected to Him who put all things in subjection under Him. that God may be all in all.

So, all things in subjection under Christ. Now, we can hear that word subjection and it can conjure up negative ideas and rightly so.

We just heard of enemies being conquered, subjected to Christ. But in the best of ways, we will be subjected too. We will gladly be subjects of King Jesus in His kingdom.

He rules us already in our hearts and we long for His return. When His rule is realized over all the earth, that we are citizens of heaven even now where our King sits enthroned.

And when this present earth is freed from all the corrupting effects of the fall, when no more thorns infest the ground, we will rejoice, will we not?

[29:12] Like Psalm 98 says, the sea will roar, the fields exult, the trees of the forest sing for joy, the rivers will clap their hands.

All of creation. Now remember, creation has been subjected to what? To futility, Paul says in Romans 8. That's to say that ever since sin entered into the world, creation has been in bondage. Creation has been affected by the fall, subjected to futility. But Paul is helping us to see here in 1 Corinthians 15, one day creation will be gladly subjected to Christ.

The King will return and He's going to restore all of creation. If death has now cast its covering over all peoples, remember Isaiah 25, well, King Jesus, when He defeats death, He will cast His covering of restoration and authority over all creation when He comes again.

If right now not one inch is missed by death, well, I assure you, when Christ returns, not one inch will be missed in His work of restoration.

[30:33] All of creation will be enveloped. All of creation will be subjected to Christ. This is what Paul means in Ephesians 1 when he talks about the plan for the fullness of time to unite all things in Christ,

things in heaven, and things on earth.

So what is now subjected to futility will one day be subjected to Christ. What now groans over its present subjection will glory in its future subjection.

What is now subjected to corruption, it will be set free, set free from that corruption to be put under subjection to a far greater, far more glorious master.

That is Christ. All of creation will be restored and all of creation will rejoice when the Son appears in His glory. That's the third joyous, real consequence related to the resurrection of Christ.

Here's the fourth and the final. The Creator will be supremely glorified. The Creator will be supremely glorified. Back to verse 28 again.

[31:55] When all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subjected to Him who put all things in subjection under Him that God may be all in all.

So consider the first coming of Christ. When Christ came as a servant, when He humbled Himself, He subjected Himself to the will of His Father.

and at His second coming, when Christ returns again as a triumphant King, then too will He still humble Himself and subject Himself to the will of His Father.

Never once will the man Jesus Christ ever be guilty of going rogue. No, He and the Father are one and we see it even as He is exalted to the highest place, even as all of creation is put under the feet of Jesus, subjected to Him, His Father is not.

Never once does Jesus say, My will be done. I have a better will. I have a different will. No, because all along, from the very beginning, from the foundation of the world, before the foundation of the world, this was the plan.

[33:11] The eternal plan of God. The eternal plan of the Godhead. To unite all things in heaven and on earth in Christ. And then for Christ to deliver that kingdom to His Father, just as Paul says in verse 24.

So Christ was not stripped of it. He will not be stripped of it. He will not have it forcibly taken from Him. No, He will deliver it and deliver it to the Father.

Perfect harmony between Father and Son. That was the end goal. And Jesus never once has nor will He ever waver from that goal.

In Paul's letter to the Philippians, we have that wonderful Christ hymn. It's believed to be a song that perhaps even the early church sang in worship. It's rich in theology.

As Paul takes us from the incarnation to the crucifixion to the ascension and finally even to the triumphant return of Christ. on that day that He returns, what will happen?

[34:18] Well, at the name of Jesus, every knee will bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Paul could have ended that hymn right there and we would have thought that is a great hymn.

Wow, Jesus Christ is Lord. Amen! He could have wrapped it up there, but he didn't because the confession of every tongue that Jesus Christ is Lord is not the ultimate final goal.

No, what is it? The glory of God the Father. Every tongue will confess Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

The Father's glory. That is the ultimate end. The glorious complete rule of God over all things. And that's just what Paul has in mind.

That's just what Paul is talking about when he says that God may be all in all supremely glorified as his rule is realized in all its fullness.

[35:28] Even as Christ submits himself to the Father. And as Christ submits himself to the Father, so the Father is supremely glorified.

and the eternal plan of the Godhead, it's perfectly fulfilled. Be sure that is not demeaning to Jesus. You will not find him complaining anywhere in God's word.

I got the short end of the stick in all of this. As though the Father is somehow stealing the spotlight for him. No, the Son is glad to see the Father glorified.

That's been his mission, seeking the glory of the Father. It's to his joy that the Father is glorified.

And guess what? As the Father is glorified, who else is glorified?

Oh, the Son is. The Son is glorified. There will be no greater display than of the Father's glory, of the glory of the whole Godhead, than at the return of the Son.

[36:28] When he fulfills the mission and renews and restores all of creation, then God will be all in all, manifesting his glory unopposed.

There will be no remaining opponents. He'll be preeminent over all. In that day, his glory will fill the earth as the waters cover the sea.

As Romans 11, 36 says, for from him and through him and to him are all things. to him be glory forever.

So let's await that day with great joy because on that day we will be raised from the dead. Christ will reign over all his enemies, creation will be restored, and the creator will be supremely glorified.

All of those joyous, real consequences because 2,000 years ago Jesus walked out of that tomb on that Sunday morning, the first fruits of the dead.

[37:35] Let's pray together. Heavenly Father, we thank you for what a kind providence that you would bring us even to this very text this Sunday evening in our study of 1 Corinthians that we would have opportunity to fix our eyes upon Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, indeed the one who for the joy set before him, endured the cross, despising its shame, that he might sit down at your right hand.

We give you praise that the first fruits of the resurrection have already been harvested. He is alive and well and we rejoice this day in him.

We pray, Father, that you would give us that sure, confident hope, that you would give us such joy at the knowledge of his resurrection, that we are indeed living in reality.

This isn't some happy dream that we're having where we're thinking, oh, how nice it would be and then waking up to find it not true. No, indeed it is true. You've told us in your word, you've raised your son from the dead.

As we heard this morning, we have the eyewitness testimony of inspired scripture. We give you praise for all of that. Now send us from here, we pray, with confidence as we go into the world this week, that we would live to your glory, that we would live to praise you, that we would be a people who rejoice because our Savior lives and so shall we.

[39:06] We pray all of these things in Jesus' name. Amen.