

Elementary Truths of Christianity – Resurrection of the Dead Part 2

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- In part 1 of this 2 part sermon, we noted that according to the Hebrew writer, there are elementary truths that the Christian must know before reaching maturity
 - Hebrews 5:11-6:3
 - They all revolve around Christ
 - And this should come as no surprise
 - 1 Corinthians 3:11 describes Jesus as the foundation
 - Repentance from acts that lead to death
 - Faith in God
 - Instruction about baptism
 - Laying on of hands
 - The resurrection of the dead
 - Eternal judgment
- This is just common sense – with everything, one must learn the basics before being mature at anything
 - Math takes time and practice to get good at
 - Even sports are the same way
 - It should not surprise us that the Hebrew writer is telling us that Christianity is no different
- In this sermon, we are going to go over part 2 of the resurrection of the dead
- Now that we have the background of a few examples of the dead being raised physically and the 2 unique circumstances from part 1 of this sermon, let's discuss the resurrection of the dead that the Hebrew writer is discussing here – the resurrection of the dead on the last day
 - Matthew 24
 - As Jesus and his disciples leaving Jerusalem one day, Jesus makes a comment about the temple (vs 2)
 - This was very direct and could not be missed – clearly a reference to the destruction of the temple which his disciples did not even miss (at least Peter, Andrew, James, and John did not miss this – Mark 13 account)
 - Keep in mind, they did not have the completed NT at this time as we do, so his disciples and apostles missed more of the things like this than they caught onto
 - This led to the following questions in vs 3
 - When will this happen? (destruction of temple)
 - What will be the sign of your coming? (establish your earthly throne)
 - What will be the sign of the end of the age? (end of Roman rule in Judea)
 - Disciples did not understand what they were asking

- Likely thought they were asking of one event (Jesus would come and establish an earthly kingdom, destroying the temple and forcing the Romans out of Judea)
- This is clearly not what Jesus was referring to as evident by His answer to these questions
- He goes on to explain details of the destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD in vs 4-35
 - He refers to “those days” three times in the first 35 verses
 - In this response, He answers the question of “When will this happen?” – the destruction of the temple that is, as it was destroyed in the 70AD destruction of Jerusalem
- In vs 36, Jesus starts to speak of a different event
- Notice the difference – He starts talking about “that day” (vs 36)
 - Now He begins to answer the second 2 questions although He was not necessarily answering what was asked, because what was asked was done so in ignorance
 - They didn’t know what they were asking
- What will be the sign of your coming and the sign of the end of the age?
 - There will be no sign
 - At that time, only the Father even knew when that day was going to be (Jesus Himself did not even know at this time, nor did the angels) – but notice that God knew
 - And He still knows today
 - The rest of Matthew 24 and 25 discusses at length the fact that we must be ready for this last day
 - For those who are ready, this is truly going to be a glorious day
 - But for those who are not ready – you’re going to wish this day would have never came
- So let’s examine the Scriptures to see what we are told about this day
 - John 5:24-29
 - The Jews were angry with Jesus – vs 16 says that they were persecuting Him
 - Jesus broke the rules of the Sabbath in their mind
 - And He equated Himself to be the Son of God the Father
 - The Jews obviously didn’t like that – they wanted to kill Him for it
 - I guarantee they regret those actions now as they know that Jesus is the Son of God now – but at the time, they were blind to this fact
 - Nevertheless, the verses we just read are part of Jesus’ response to them
 - Jesus says of those who believe in God the Father (the one who sent Jesus), he will have eternal life – he is no longer on the road that leads to death, but he is on the road that leads to life (Matthew 7:13-14)

- Keep in mind from previous lessons, belief is not mere mental assent – but true belief doesn't occur until you put your faith into action (James 2:22)
- Jesus goes on to say that a time is coming and has now come in which the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God – and those who hear will live
 - Well, how do they hear now? It's not the last day yet
 - In these verses (24-27), He's discussing His ministry
 - Those who heed His teaching, they will live eternally – those who do not are dead
 - But the time is coming in which the dead will hear the voice of Jesus
- And He expands upon this in verses 28-29
 - Don't be amazed at this – because there will be a time when all in the graves will hear His voice and they will come out
 - Those who have done good will rise to live, those who have done evil will rise to be condemned
 - So there is some details of the resurrection of the dead
 - All dead will hear, and all dead will rise
 - Whether you rise to condemnation or life depends on if you did evil or good while you were alive
 - While you're alive, you control your own destiny in the sense that it is your choice to be obedient to God or not
 - But you only have this life to make that choice
 - Once your dead, case closed – you cannot change your decision at that point
- **John 11:24**
 - This is an excerpt from the account of Jesus raising Lazarus
 - Martha clearly knows that Jesus is the Lord, but she hasn't fully grasped at this point what His purpose is in full
 - This is evident by the fact that numerous times in this story, she's focused on the here & now (vs 21, vs 24, and vs 39)
 - "Jesus, if you'd have been here, Lazarus wouldn't have died"
 - "Jesus, I know Lazarus is going to rise again in the last day"
 - "Jesus, you can't go in the tomb – it stinks, he's been dead 4 days"
 - This is also evident by her encounter with Jesus in Luke 10:38-42
 - Jesus and some disciples were in her house talking with her sister Mary and all Martha could think about was "this house needs to be clean – we have visitors"
 - Do you think Jesus cared about a clean house?
 - Don't you know that Jesus had a reason for not getting there in time to prevent Lazarus' death?

- Do you think Jesus cares if the tomb stinks?
- Jesus lived, died, was buried, and arose with our eternity in mind
- He was not focused on the here and now
- And Martha just didn't understand it at this time
- But in her confusion, she does give details pertaining to our subject matter
- Apparently she had heard Jesus teach on this subject before and she did understand the following
 - Vs 24
 - Again, there will be a last day
 - And the dead will rise on the last day

○ 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

- Paul did not want the Thessalonians to be ignorant of this subject, because this is an elementary truth of Christianity as we're studying (Hebrews 5:11-6:3)
- Don't be ignorant of those who fall asleep (referring to physical death of course)
- Also, don't grieve like the man who did not die in the Lord, and therefore has no hope (1 Corinthians 15:19 also discussed this thought)
 - Death is certainly a morbid thought, but it is a mere stepping stone to eternity
 - For the Christian – it is the greatest stepping stone you will ever take
 - But if you aren't a Christian – you're going to be wishing you had another chance to make the decision you can make now to submit to the Lord
- Jesus died and rose again – God will do the same for those who died while in Him
 - Romans 6:1-11 confirms this for us as well
 - We clothes ourselves with Christ through baptism (Galatians 3:27)
- Here's the order of events on the last day – at least all the details that we know according to 1 Thessalonians 4
 - The Lord Himself will come down from heaven with a loud command – there's not going to be anyone who doesn't hear this – mankind is going to know when this happens – the voice of an archangel and a trumpet call will signify His coming (vs 16)
 - Acts 1:9-11 talks about this as well
 - He was taken up and a cloud hid Him
 - And just as He was taken into heaven, He will come back in the same way (vs 11)
 - 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10 also discusses this
 - He will be revealed from heaven in blazing fire with His powerful angels

- Again, does it sound like anyone on earth is going to not realize this is happening?
 - For those who are His – they will rise with Christ, but those who are not His will be punished
- Back to 1 Thessalonians, when Jesus returns in His glory, the dead in Christ will rise first (vs 16)
 - The resurrection we've mentioned from the previous passages – the dead in Christ will be first to rise
- And those who are still alive and in the Lord will be caught up with them in the clouds and meet the Lord in the air
 - Much like Matthew 24 and 25, 1 Thessalonians 5 goes on to tell us that we do not know when this day will be
 - But we need to be ready for it
- So now we know a little bit of the details of the order of events and as much of an understanding as we can about what will happen
- But what will some of this look like
 - 1 Corinthians 15
 - Vs 12-23
 - Apparently some members in the Corinthian church thought that there would be no resurrection of the dead
 - But Paul corrects this
 - He says if the dead are not raised, then Christ wasn't raised (vs 16)
 - And if Christ hasn't been raised, your faith is futile – you are still in your sins (vs 17)
 - There would be no point in being a Christian if Christ wasn't raised
 - I'm wasting my time preaching to you right now
 - And all the dead in Christ would be lost eternally
 - But Christ was raised (vs 20)
 - Just as death came through a man (Adam), resurrection also comes through a man (Jesus)
 - Christ first and then those who belong to Him will follow (vs 23)
 - Vs 35-58
 - So we're told a little bit about what the resurrection body will be like
 - The exact details of how the resurrection body will differ from our current fleshly bodies, we cannot be sure of course – but we know there will be a difference and death is the beginning of the difference (vs 36)
 - Paul compares this to a seed – when you plant something, you do not plant the end product – but a seed and it grows into the end product
 - So this fleshly body will clearly not be the resurrection body

- God gives the body as He had determined – to each kind of seed, He gives its own body (vs 38)
 - 1 Thessalonians 5:23 describes the whole person – the complete person as consisting of spirit, soul, and body
 - If you remember in Luke 8:40-56 when Jesus raised Jairus' daughter from the dead, her spirit returned to her body and at once she stood up (vs 55)
 - So when this girl died, her spirit left – whatever that means exactly, I don't fully know – but I know it did because Luke 8 tells us so
 - So there's clearly differences between our fleshly bodies and the resurrection body being discussed in 1 Corinthians 15
- Not everyone has the same earthly body – some are big, some are small
- And just like that – there are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies
 - Just as the earthly body has its splendor, so does the heavenly body – a different kind of splendor though (vs 40)
- This heavenly body will be imperishable (vs 42)
 - Our earthly bodies age and decay
 - Not so with the heavenly body
- The heavenly body is glorious, powerful, and spiritual vs the earthly body being dishonorable, weak, and natural (vs 43-44)
- Paul continues this analogy using Adam and Jesus (the last Adam)
 - Adam came first – he was natural and all he did was bring death
 - But the last Adam – Jesus – came and brought life
 - Just as natural came before spiritual in this comparison, so it does with the natural body vs the spiritual body (the earthly body vs the heavenly body) (vs 44-49)
- This perishable body cannot inherit what is imperishable – so our bodies must be changed (vs 50)
- Then vs 51-58 contain some good pieces of information
 - Vs 51 – not everyone will die, but we will all be changed
 - So those who are still living on that day – when the Lord comes back, they will be changed but not dead
 - And this is going to happen in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye – so you better be ready (vs 52)
 - In a split second, we will all be changed on that day – perishable for imperishable, mortal for immortal
 - And in doing so, death will be defeated (vs 54-56)
 - Death will have no power over the imperishable just as it had no power over Christ

- The conclusion of 1 Corinthians 15 – thanks be to God as He gives us the victory through Jesus (vs 57)
- But we have yet another warning – we need to be ready (vs 58)
- Don't let anything move you – stand firm unto the end and you will receive the crown of life (Revelation 2:10)
- You should be sensing a theme here – BE READY, because whether you are alive or dead when this day happens, it's going to come in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye
- And if you aren't expecting His return, it's going to come like a thief in the night
- Submit your life to Christ now while you still have the chance
- You can do so by following God's plan of salvation
 - **Step 1: Hearing the gospel** – *Romans 10:13-17*
 - Gospel = Jesus Christ died for our sins, was buried, arose, and appeared to many – *1 Corinthians 15:1-8, Romans 1:16*
 - **Step 2: Believing the gospel** – *Mark 16:16, John 3:16*
 - **Step 3: Confession that Jesus is Lord** – *Romans 10:8-10, 1 John 1:9*
 - **Step 4: Repentance of sins** – *Luke 13:3, Acts 2:38*
 - Repentance: a turning away from sin, disobedience, or rebellion and a turning back to God. Change of mind that produces a change in action.
 - **Step 5: Baptism into Christ** – *Galatians 3:27, Acts 2:38, Romans 6:1-10, 1 Peter 3:21-22*
 - Baptism: immerse or submerge
 - **Step 6: Live faithfully** – *Revelation 2:10*