

# Outline

## I. Introduction: The Resurrection is crucially important and should permeate all our thinking.

This sermon has essentially one point: the Resurrection of Jesus from the dead is very, very important. And yet it also has thousands of points—I sketched out about 20 preparing this sermon—because the implications are so wide-ranging. What I want to do today is to show how important the Resurrection of Jesus was to the apostle Paul, and then to step back and look at how the Resurrection fits into the flow of the whole Bible, and how it affects absolutely every part of life and indeed of all reality.

I also hope to “flesh out” a little what life will be like after our resurrection. I thought of telling you that I don’t expect to live in heaven forever, but then I thought that might be too provocative. But you’ll see what I mean.

[comments about using the projector]

## II. The resurrection is crucially important (1 Cor 15:1-19).

### A. The gospel is most important.

1. “But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, **let him be accursed**. 9 As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, **let him be accursed**” (Gal 1:8-9)
2. “of first importance” (1 Cor 15:3)

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### B. The resurrection is at the heart of the gospel.

1. Paul’s summary of the gospel: **Jesus died/was buried, rose/appeared** (1 Cor 15:1-5ff)
2. Implication if the resurrection is not true: “your faith is vain,” “you are still in your sins,” they **lie** about God, we have no hope (1 Cor 15:12-19)
3. “If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that **God raised him from the dead**, you will be saved” (Rom 10:9)

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### C. Why is Jesus’ resurrection so important to the gospel? Why isn’t enough that he died for our sins?

Jesus’ resurrection is the fitting response to his **perfect obedience**, it **vindicates** him as Savior, and it proves that he has the **power to give life**.

1. We did not do the righteousness God required, and in fact did unrighteousness, so we deserve only judgment and death. As a consequence, death has reigned since Adam’s and Eve’s sin. This is why Jesus had to die—to pay the penalty of death for us who believe.
2. Jesus did all the righteousness God required and no unrighteousness, perfectly pleasing his Father, so he deserves life and blessing. But if he had stayed dead, we could rightly assume that he wasn’t really righteous and deserved death after all.
3. “God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was **not possible** for him to be held by it” (Acts 2:24).
4. So we know that our faith is not in vain, and that we are no longer in our sins, because Jesus did rise from the dead. He not only saved us from God’s righteous wrath, he also got for us all of God’s blessing.

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### III. The wider significance of the Resurrection

But as amazing as our redemption is, there's more to it than that. Jesus' resurrection foreshadows our own resurrection with a new kind of body, but also a new world where there is no curse.

#### A. Creation's fate is tied to mankind's fate.

1. Creation: "very good" (1:31); man, dominion (1:26), Garden, tree of life (2:8-9), perfect, enjoying God
2. Creation corrupted: the Fall to the present
  - a) "you will surely die" (Gen 2:16-17)
  - b) "lest he eat from the tree of life and live forever" (Gen 3:22-24)
  - c) even Noah, Abraham, Moses and David died
3. the ground cursed because of Adam (Gen 3:17-19)
4. corroborated: Gen 6:5-8
5. "all creation groans" since our fall and until our resurrection (Rom 8:19-23)

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#### B. Creation & New Creation: bookends of the Bible

The Bible ends where it begins. The first and last two chapters are about creation.

##### 1. Similarities

- a) context: the creation of heaven and earth (Gen 1; Rev 21)
- b) a place of blessing for man to live
- c) river flowing through the city (Gen 2:10; Rev 22:1-2)
- d) the tree of life (Gen 2:9; Rev 22:2)

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##### 2. Differences

- a) no curse (Gen 3:17 vs Rev 22:3)
- b) no death or even the possibility of it (Gen 2:17 vs Rev 21:4)
- c) no night ("evening and morning" in Gen 1 vs Rev 21:25; 22:5)
- d) no need for the sun—God is their light
- e) no sea (Gen 1:9 vs Rev 21:1; cf. ch. 20 for a reference with a negative connotation where the sea holds the dead; also cf. the Flood)
- f) they will see his face (Rev 22:4); even Moses "the friend of God" didn't see God's face (Ex 33:20)
- g) no temple (Rev 21:22)
- h) a different Adam, Jesus the "firstborn" or "firstfruits" of the new creation

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So the curse will be undone, everything will be transformed—not just our bodies, but the whole universe! Jesus' death and resurrection affects everything.

Our destination is not heaven but the New Earth to live in God's presence, with new bodies that will **see** God's face, **eat** from the tree of life and the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, and **hear**, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

#### IV. Application

Earlier I said that this sermon has essentially one point, that the Resurrection of Jesus is very, very important. But when I sketched out some applications of this point, the list grew quickly until I had something like A through Q, covering the way we suffer, the way we do missions, our friendships, our marriages, our parenting, our work, the environment, social justice, health and healing, war, all mankind, the earth, and the entire universe! Isn't that what we should expect, since "All the promises of God find their Yes in him" (1 Cor 1:20)?

But in the interest of time I'll just give one example.

A. Marriage: "in the Resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage but are like angels in heaven" (Matt 22:30). Marriage will be replaced with something greater that marriage only points to. Single or unhappily married, your longings in this life will be transposed and fulfilled. And those happily married in this life will find that the best moments of their marriage here were mere echoes of the grand Marriage to come.

We will spend our whole lifetimes here and in the new creation tracing out and enjoying the ramifications of the Resurrection on every area of life!

WARNING: Resurrection and new creation do NOT imply that we detach from this world! We live as exiles in this world, not in isolation but living here as we will in the new creation.

#### V. The resurrection of the unjust (John 5:29; Acts 24:15; Rev 20:5-6, 13)

One more thing I must mention. It is not just believers that are resurrected—unbelievers are too, right before the new creation. Listen to Jesus:

John 5:25-29: Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. 26 For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. 27 And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man. 28 Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice 29 and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and **those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.**

Have you done evil? Bow before Jesus and beg his forgiveness! There is still time! If you're worried but you don't quite understand what it's all about, talk to somebody and dig into a Bible and figure it out. The stakes could not be higher—enjoying God forever in the new creation, or suffering the punishment you deserve forever.

#### VI. Summary

Are you starting to get an idea for what a stunning victory Jesus has won? Are you starting to see how radically the resurrection changes everything? It affects us in every conceivable way! What hope he gives us! "The sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us" (Rom 8:18).

#### VII. Pray: cross, promises, warning, conduct, hope, conversion

#### VIII. Sing

#### IX. Benediction

"Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it...The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you" (1 Thess 5:23-24, 28)