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| 1. The Fact of Resurrection | (v. 1-34) |
| 2. The Manner of Resurrection | (v. 35-58) |
| The resurrection of Christ | (v. 1-11) |
| • The recipients of the gospel | (v. 1-2) |
| • The content of the gospel | (v. 3-8) |
| • The preachers of the gospel | (v. 9-11) |
| Results of denying the resurrection | (v. 12-19) |
| Resurrection and programme of God | (v. 20-28) |
| Resurrection and daily living | (v. 29-34) |

1-34 THE FACT OF RESURRECTION

The testimony of the gospel, Error in doctrine: denying the resurrection (vv. 12 & 35)

There was not always a denial of the resurrection of Christ at Corinth

e.g. v1 “*ye received*” the gospel v1 “*ye stand*” eternal security.

v2 “*ye are saved*” from sin (past, present, future)

v1) “**Declare**” – making known unto you the “gospel” (good news for lost sinners)

“**I preached**” – announced as glad tidings unto you – in v. 3 we see the content

“**ye received**” – a past single action of acceptance at conversion of the truth of the gospel which was preached

“**ye stand**” – the present position resulting from the past act of receiving, the result was a standing before God, **eternal security**.

v2) “**Saved**” – “*ye are being saved*” – past, present, future

“*if ye keep in memory...unto you*” – or “*if ye hold fast...you*”

- Holding fast demonstrates the reality of faith – proof of their salvation

“*unless ye have believed in vain*” – never any true salvation in their lives

- Evidenced by them letting go of the truth

v3) “**first of all**” – primary importance given here to “*that which I also received*”

- Paul’s apostleship was direct from God – Gal 1:1
- Paul’s commission to serve was from Christ – Acts 26:16

- The Lords supper was from the Lord – 1 Cor 11:23
- The gospel was received by revelation of Jesus Christ – Gal 1:12
- The rapture was received by the word of the Lord – 1 Thess 4:15

“*Christ died*” – -Fact -History
 “*for our sins*” – -Purpose -Doctrine
 “*according to the scriptures*” – -Testimony -Prophecy

The word “**OUR**” in this verse would confirm a substitutionary death.

“*according to the scriptures*” – the bible tells of his atoning death

- Psalms 22 Isaiah 53:5-12. John 19:36-37 Matt 26:54

We can see types speaking to the death of Jesus Christ:

-The Passover -The Offerings -The Day of Atonement

DEATH:- “*Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures*”

- Recognition of our guilt and position as a sinner before God
- Perception of the love of God towards us (Rom 5:6-8)
- Death of Christ was foreordained (1 Pet 1:20)

v.4) **BURIAL**

“*He was buried*” – in a sealed tomb demonstrating the fact and finality of death and fulfillment of scriptures. Matt 12:40 “*Jonas was three days and three nights in the whales belly; so shall the son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth*”

His death was necessary for resurrection

His resurrection was necessary for our salvation

RESURRECTION

“*He rose again*” – “He hath been raised” - evidence of acceptance by God

- Acts states that God raised Him from the dead. (2:24; 3:15; 4:10; 5:30; 10:40; 13:30)
- Paul states He was raised by the glory of the Father (Rom 6:4)
- Peter states He was quickened (made alive) by the Spirit (1 Pet 3:18)
- The gospels give the impression that He arose in His own inherent right.

* The entire Godhead was active in the resurrection of Christ

The Facts: “according to the scriptures”

- He died – men buried Him
- He rose – men saw Him alive on the third day (Luke 24:21)
- Stone was rolled away (seal broken, soldiers fled)
- Tomb was empty
- Linen clothes lying in their place

- Napkin by itself

OT examples of His resurrection:

Psalm 16:10 *“Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell”*. Isaiah 53:10 *“an offering for sin” ... “he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand”*

V.5) Paul has already proved to the believers at Corinth the truth of resurrection by relaying first hand information direct from God. He confirms resurrection is according to the scriptures.

Paul now proves with eyewitnesses the fact of resurrection.

1. **“Cephas”** – Peter was the first apostle to have seen the Lord risen and was still present to give testimony to the fact.
2. **“the twelve”** – refers to the apostolic group not necessarily the number of men since Judas and Thomas were missing.
3. v.6) **“five hundred”** – the largest group of witnesses chosen before God of whom most were still alive to give testimony to the fact. No mistaking with this number of witnesses.
4. v.7) **“James”** – now convinced of the deity of Christ and his faith is firmly based on his witness of the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ.
5. **“All the apostles”** –
 Matt 28:16 – in a mountain. Commissioned to make disciples – go into all the world
 Acts 1:3-12 – on the mount of olives. Commanded to wait for the promise of the Father
 John 21 – by the sea. To work with the flock of the Lord – said to Peter *“feed my sheep”*
6. v.8) **“last seen of Paul also.”** Unworthy to be numbered among the apostles

v9) **“Least” and “not meet”** – Paul considers himself this way because of his pre-conversion life.

- Phil 3:6 *“concerning zeal, persecuting the church”*
- 1 Tim 1:13 *“who was before...a persecutor”*
- Gal 1:13 *“how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it”*
- Acts 8:3 *“Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and ... committed them to prison”*

v10) **“by the grace of God”** – Paul attributes everything in his life to the grace of God

“I am what I am” – evidence of the grace of God, all he is can be traced to power outside of himself.

“not in vain” – Gods grace was not wasted on Paul as seen in his life and zeal in labour.

“I labored more abundantly” – The power of Gods grace.

- Paul approached the gospel with the same zeal that he once persecuted it with.
- He preached in the uttermost parts of the earth, risking his life doing it. (2 Cor 11:23)

- He was a preacher but also a laborer, taking the cares of his converts upon himself.

“*yet not I, but the grace of God*” – Paul ensures credit goes to where it belongs, the source of his enthusiasm and zeal is Christ and Gods grace.

v11) **Unity among the apostles:**

- They all preached the same gospel
- They all believed the same gospel
- Their preaching brought forth the same believing in Christ

The goal was to preach:

He who died for our sins has been raised again for our justification and sits enthroned at Gods right hand in His glorified body.

v12) Paul has set out the **truth** and **validity** of the **gospel** and its **preachers** and now moves to address the problem at Corinth regarding the **resurrection of the body**.

He takes a logical step by step approach to confirm the outcome of the false doctrine and reinstates confidence in the evidence of the resurrection of Christ.

The believers in Corinth in v.1 received the preaching, which teaches as in v.3-4 "*Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again the third day according to the scriptures*".

If Christ rose from the dead? then it must also be concluded that others can also be raised.

v.13) **The denial that others will rise is in the logical conclusion that Christ is not risen.**

v14) **if Christ is not risen then is our:**

- Preaching vain – empty message with no reality
- Faith is vain – faith takes its character from the message it believes
- preaching of no substance - the message is void of reality - faith is of no real value either

v15) “**false witnesses**” – They were deceivers and liars, publicly misrepresenting God and ultimately attacking the integrity of Deity. The apostles could not be trusted on fundamental truth let alone on other matters and should be discredited. Furthermore, the witnesses of v.5-8 are also liars and deceivers.

v16) **see v.13**

v.17) “**faith is vain**” – different than v.14, here it is lacking in result.

- Proved to be fruitless, faith is meant to be a benefit to us but that is impossible if the object of our faith (Christ) is dead. Our faith is empty – can have no results.

“**in your sins**” – no resurrection implies no atonement

- Denying resurrection is to deny the doctrine of atonement
- No hope of forgiveness of sins, No hope of eternal life – why did Christ die?

The resurrection is Gods approval of the work of Christ on the cross – Christ is vindicated in resurrection

v.18) “**Perished**” – those who trusted in Christ and died are in hell if Christ was not raised for their justification.

v.19) “**Miserable**” – “pitiable” - if Christ be not raised

- No resurrection insinuates that we have been led astray
- The life and sufferings of a believer are in vain, we are still in our sins
- What fools we are if our hope in Christ only endures for this life and is crushed at death when we receive the sentence of eternal damnation.

What gospel can be preached if Christ rise not!

Note:- v.20-28 can be in parentheses

v20) **Paul declares with confidence and authority, the truth of resurrection, the clear and logical facts regarding our risen Lord.**

“**firstfruits**” – Paul has in view (Lev 23:10-11) the sheaf of the firstfruits being offered to the Lord on the “*morrow after the Sabbath*”

- This guaranteed the rest of the harvest
- The first of the harvest – Christ, the first to rise in power and glory, alive for evermore
- A pledge of the harvest to come – Christ’s resurrection is a pledge of our resurrection guaranteeing our redemption.

Firstfruits – order in time

First born from the dead – pre-eminence, priority – accomplished pattern to be followed.

v.21) **Agency – Man. Paul contrasts the two men (ADAM & CHRIST)**

“*by Adam came Death*” – Man brought death through sin which caused Gods sentence to be pronounce upon all men.

The consequences of sin and death are far reaching (Rom 5:12)

v.22) **Two groups.**

First ALL – Association – ADAM – the world

Second ALL – Association – CHRIST – believers in Christ

v23) **Paul reveals the prophetic programme: Gods order of things**

1. The resurrection of Christ – “firstfruits”
 2. The coming – “they that are Christ’s”
 3. The end of the world order V.24
1. The whole programme rests upon the fact of Christ’s resurrection. He was the **firstfruits**; securing our resurrection.
 2. They that are Christ’s at His coming – *“the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we which are alive”* 1 Thess 4:16-17

Paul purposely omits the:

-Tribulation -Public advent of Christ -Millennium -Final rebellion

This brings our minds from the resurrection of Christ to our resurrection and then to the END.

v24) **“the end”** – Paul would be referring to the end of the world-order, the absolute end of the universe. The earth and the heavens shall pass away (Rev 21:1) (Heb. 1:10-11)

“the kingdom” – the kingdom of our Lord will be handed back to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all.

But first He will put down or abolish:

- All **RULE** – Human sphere – dictatorships and democracies
 Spirit realm – demons under the authority of...
- All **AUTHORITY** – Human sphere – those who exercise the rule; authority of a nation.
 Spirit realm – Satan, who has given these demons areas to ...
- All **POWER** – Human sphere – the means by which rule is maintained.
 Spirit realm – exercise their influence over nations.

v25) **“He must reign”** – it will be Gods king placed in authority, reigning in righteousness

J.Hunter – Christ as son of:-

Abraham, He shall claim the land. **David**, He shall claim the throne. **Man**, He shall claim the earth

“enemies under His feet” – enemies are powerless

Rev 20: -Binding of Satan -Subduing of Nature -Judgment of Man

v26) **“Death”** –

- death is cast into the Lake of Fire
- death is conquered in the resurrection of Christ for the Christian

v27) **“He hath put all things under His feet”** – quote from Psalms 8:6

Reference is to the supremacy of Adam over creation. Here, Christ, supreme over all things
“all things” – Nothing excepted but God only

Universal sovereignty belongs to Christ, but does not infringe on sovereignty of the Father.

v.28) **Christ’s work as the divine executor of the Godhead is now complete**; the estranged creation brought into harmony with God. Christ now places Himself in subjection to God.

Christ will withdraw His display on earth, thereby subjecting Himself to the will of God. Then will end the first earth. The eternal state is instituted and the Godhead will be all in all.

v29) **“baptized for the dead”** – s/b “baptized in place of the dead”

- Filling up the ranks of testimony
- Baptism is a public confession of faith in Christ

BUT IF THE DEAD RISE NOT

- Baptism is a misleading picture if the dead rise not, since they should not come back out of the water and would drown
- Baptism is placing a public target on your back for those who would hate Christ and persecute those who stand for Him.

v.30) **see (2 Cor 11:23-26) Paul’s sufferings and dangers faced.**

- I am more of a minister (Paul writes, "speaking as a fool")
- In labours more abundant
- In stripes above measure
- In prisons more frequent
- In deaths often

There is no logic to risk our lives and stand in jeopardy every hour for a lie.

v.31) *“I protest, brethren, as surely as I glory over you – which I may justly do in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.”*

- Paul was daily ready to die for the gospel, just as certainly as he gloried over his converts (despite everything there was to be disappointed in).
- He counted his life not dear unto himself, ready to not only be bound but to die for the name of the Lord Jesus.

v32) **“Beasts”** –

- figurative language of his enemies
- savage and heartless – without conscience
- single minded to destroy – abolish

Why be a martyr for a hoax.

“let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die.” Direct quote from (Isa 22:13)

- This is something someone did that had no concern or thought about death, enjoying the pleasures of this world today, consider death tomorrow

v33) **“communications”** – “company” or “associations”

“manners” – “a settled habit”

Bad company ruins good morals

Evil friendships destroy useful lives

Frequent rehearsal of error places us in danger of being misled

Doctrine and practice are linked – bad doctrine leads to sin

V34) **“awake”** – sober up

We are linked with the risen Christ and should live under His control

“some have not the knowledge of God” – ignorant of Gods truth

- refers to the false teachers
 - destroying the gospel
 - discrediting power of God

Paul has reconfirmed the gospel exposing the error of the false teachers causing shame to the Corinthian believers.

Key verses for this section are 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

1. The Fact of Resurrection (v. 1-34)

2. The Manner of Resurrection (v. 35-58)

- The difference between this body and that body (v. 35-41)
- The transformation of the body (v. 42-45)
- The pattern to be observed (v. 46-49)
- The need for change (v. 50)
- The description of change (v. 51-54)
- The celebration of change (v. 55-57)
- Paul's appeal to demonstrate reality of faith (v. 58)

V.35) We commence with two questions regarding the manner of resurrection.

1. *How are the dead raised up?* – In what condition will the dead be raised up?
2. *With what body do they come?*

Paul, having proven the fact of resurrection will begin to answer these questions.

V.36) Paul brings out the principle of resurrection in nature where we see the necessity of death in resurrection.

“*fool*” – “unthinking one”

They would be very familiar with the process of agriculture, why would the resurrection of man be any different.

“that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die”

- The seed is destroyed in order for new life to appear
- *“quickened”* – brought to life or given life
- The seed does not have the power of life in itself

V.37) **Paul illustrates in this analogy from agriculture:**

- A seed goes into the ground and must die a rot away before it can rise up into a fuller life (not as a seed) as a green blade...a strong stalk...a head of wheat.

V.38) *“Pleased”* or better rendered **“His will”** not His pleasure but His will

God as the creator willed what should be, and the processes of nature conform to that divine plan.

We can see in Gen 1:12 “seed after his kind”

V.39) *“all flesh is not the same flesh”* – we never pass from one flesh to another.

- The idea of evolution can be stopped right here at this verse

The bodies we have been given are specific to our needs in our environment.

V.40) *“celestial”* – heavenly bodies

- Resurrection body will be suited to the realm of glory, present with our God
- *“terrestrial”* – earthly bodies
- Earthly bodies not suited for heaven, bound by earthly things
- The Lord Jesus came and took upon Himself the form of an earthly body

V.41) **Paul now brings in view the difference in glory of the celestial orbs** that we would all be familiar with seeing and admiring in wonder.

V.42-44) *“so also is the resurrection of the dead”*

- We are all saved by the same grace
- We will all be raised through the same grace
- We will all be changed at the coming of the Lord

Paul illustrates in four contrasts the transformation of the body:

Lets first look at the thought of use of the word “*sown*” in place of **buried**; Paul wants to move us forward in our minds to the harvest in resurrection. We can think of the coming of the Lord when we will be caught up together.

corruption – incorruption

- The body in death will decay, decompose, disintegrate

dishonor – glory

- The present body was dishonored by the presence and practice of sin a
- Glory is the opposite of such activities and thus the resurrected body will be free from the power

weakness – power

- The human body is marked by weakness – we get sick, exhausted, injured
- Raised in power – underlines the new body will be marked with inherent power.

natural – spiritual

- The present body with our senses is suited to express the life of the soul
- The spiritual body is a body suited to express the spirit – (not a body made of spirit)

Col 2:9 “*in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily*”

V.45) “*the first man Adam was made a living soul*” quote from Gen 2:7

- Adam was formed out of the dust
- God breathed life into Adam and he became a living soul

“*the last Adam was made a quickening spirit*”

- Christ in resurrection was made a life giving spirit
- Being linked with Christ in resurrection

V.46) **Natural first – Spiritual after**

- Natural life before spiritual
- Natural body before spiritual body
- First man before the second man

V.47) “*The first man is of the earth, earthy:*”

- Origin-out of the earth – formed from the dust of the earth (Gen 2:7)
- Association-earthly – after sin came in he will return to the dust of the earth (Gen 3:19)

“*the second man is the Lord from heaven.*”

- Origin-out of heaven – His body had been prepared by God (Heb 10:5)

- Association-heavenly – He tasted death to deliver believers, characterized by the first man, from eternal judgment separate from God to eternal peace in God's presence.

V.48) “*The earthy*” – refers to Adam

- In association with Adam – linked by nature
“*the heavenly*” – refers to Christ
- In association with Christ – union with Christ by salvation

V.49) “*we have borne the image of the earthy*”

- We have possessed the same body and nature as Adam
“*we shall also bear the image of the heavenly*”
- In resurrection we shall have bodies like Christ

V.50) “*flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God*” – refers to those who are alive when the Lord comes.

Scriptures would tell us that the life of the flesh is in the blood.

“*kingdom of God*” – refers to heaven itself

“*neither doth corruption inherit incorruption*” – corruption refers to those who have died.

We would see the need for change, as bodies suited to this world can never pass over to the resurrection world.

V.51) “*mystery*” – not mysterious but a secret not known to all

- the mystery is not the fact of resurrection, rather the fact that **not all believers will die but all will be changed.**
“*we shall not all sleep*” – the idea that sleep implies an awakening later of the body
“*we shall all be changed*” – from natural to spiritual

There are two qualities of the new bodies to be understood:

FIRSTLY:

- Individuals will be recognizable in glory
This will again follow the pattern of Christ
- He was born of a woman at birth
- No human involved at His resurrection

- His resurrected body was recognizable by the witnesses

SECONDLY:

- It will be eternal
 - Just as when we were saved, can never be lost or taken away

V.52) “**In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,**” – an indivisible point in time

- The dead will be raised and we shall all be changed in this moment

“**at the last trump**” – trumpet of God in 1 Thess 4:16

- The blast would be seen as concluding a programme

This was a commonly used expression in connection with the Roman army.

1. Disassemble the tents and prepare to depart
2. Fall into line
3. March away

For the Christian we have heard the sound of the trump before.

1. Gospel awakening us out of our sin
2. Take your place in fellowship with God's people (not a requirement to be raised)
3. Summoned – “*caught up together...to meet the Lord in the air*” (1 Thess 4:17)

Lets also mention four lasts in this chapter:

1. Last witness (v8)
2. Last enemy (v26)
3. Last Adam (v45)
4. Last trump (v52)

“***the dead shall be raised incorruptible***”

- The last trump shall sound
- The dead according to God's order of things shall be raised first incorruptible

“***we shall be changed***” – we who are in Christ will be changed – this leads to v53

V.53) Two groups in this verse:

1. ***“corruptible must put on incorruption”***
 - a. corruptible refers to the **dead in Christ**
 - b. they will be raised incorruptible
2. ***“this mortal must put on immortality”***
 - a. mortal refers to those **believers still** alive but who are still subject to death under the Adamic sentence
 - b. we must put on immortality

Rom 8:10-11 *“And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you”*

V.54) in v53 we have the standpoint of things before the change but in v54 we have **the standpoint of things after the change.**

The saying that is written is made up of two quotations from the OT

- ***“Death is swallowed up in victory”*** – Isa 25:8
 - the first resurrection would then cause death to give up the bodies of the saints and has been vanquished by the power of God, so the kingdom (victory) may be seen.

V.55) ***“O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?”***

Paul has clearly provided a different rendering of Hosea 13:14 *“O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction”*

First question we could see it in application to **those still alive never having felt the sting of death.**

Second question we could see it in application to **those who have been raised**, death would have to acknowledge in yielding up its victims, the absolute power of God.

V.56) ***“The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.”***

- The reign of death is based on the power of sin *“death by sin”* (Rom 5:12)
- When sin was dealt with (on the cross), death loses its power
- The strength and power of sin is the law, which has set unobtainable standards
- But Christ has not just redeemed us from sin and death but from the curse of the law

V.57) ***“giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ”***

- A wonderful thought of salvation requiring nothing on our part for its victory

- But the victory is ours as the promise of God and will be demonstrated in us.

V.58) “**my beloved brethren**” – there is assurance of Paul’s affection for them.

- V1) “Brethren”
- V31) Paul rejoices over his brethren at Corinth
- V50) “Brethren”
- V58) “My beloved brethren”

“*Be kindly affectioned one to another with **brotherly love**; in honour preferring one another*” Rom 12:10

Paul is encouraging the saints to be:

“**steadfast**” – “grounded and settled” Col 1:23

- Where faith is fixed

“**unmovable**” - opposite “not moved away from the hope of the gospel” Col 1:23

- How faith is fixed

“**abounding in the work**” - energy and power for the work of the Lord

- Why faith is fixed

“**Labour is not in vain in the Lord**”

“**Labour**” - doing of the work

- The toil, energy, strength devoted to the work

“**vain**” - empty

- The truth of resurrection has been established and thus the work and labour will be productive and bear fruit.

“**in the Lord**” - under His control and strength and for His glory.

Key verse for this section is 1 Corinthians 15:58