

A New Song of Resurrection Victory

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1 Corinthians 15:50-57

I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. ⁵¹ Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, ⁵² 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. ⁵³ For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. ⁵⁴ 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." ⁵⁵ "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" ⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul says Jesus was the fulfillment of the prophecy in Isaiah:

Isaiah 25:8

He will swallow up death forever; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the Lord has spoken.

The most important and dramatic days on planet earth and human history are three in number.

They were the crucifixion of Jesus and three days later the resurrection of Jesus.

In three days God paid for the penalty of mankind's sin, broke the power of that sin, and overcame in himself the power of death.

Resurrection life swallowed up and defeated the pandemic of death that plagues Adam's race.

This is our great celebration today - as we focus upon the resurrection of Jesus, the sting and victory of death are defeated.

Now there are many things resurrection means. Many glorious realities that it confirms:

1. The resurrection fulfills multiple prophecies in the Old Testament of an anointed One who will not see decay –

Psalms 16:10

For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption.

2. The resurrection fulfills the prophetic hope of an eternal kingdom –

2 Samuel 7:12-13

When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³ He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

3. The resurrection confirms and seals that Christ's death is the atonement for the sins of man –

1 Corinthians 15:14

And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain.

4. The resurrection is the heavenly resume, qualification of the Man whom God has appointed to judge the whole earth –

Acts 17:30-31

The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, ³¹ because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.”

5. The resurrection of Jesus confirms the amazing reality that there is a global resurrection coming one day –

1 Corinthians 15:20-23

But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹ For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. ²² For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. ²³ But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ.

All these are glorious truths about the resurrection.

But our meditation today reaches to the original warning from God himself to Adam.

Genesis 2:16-17

And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

Genesis 3:22-24

Then the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever—" ²³ therefore the Lord God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. ²⁴ He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.

Adam and Eve, the first "living ones," in an act of disobedience became the first "dying ones."

Satan came to kill.
Sin was the means.
Death was the end.

Sin must be defeated - and was!
Satan must be defeated - and was!
But the last enemy to be defeated is death –

1 Corinthians 15:26

The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

So as a global funeral continues, what are we to think of resurrection?

What does it mean to we who are caught in this dark age between the "comings"?

What am I to do with resurrection as I still attend funerals and as many pass through the shadow of death?

I'll tell you what we do in this despairing, depressed, and hopeless generation which is perishing in this Age of Death - We sing a New Song of Life among the dying!

A song of faith!
A song of hope!
A song of victory that is already but not yet!

"Death is swallowed up in victory"
"O death, where is your victory?
O death, where is your sting?"

Let us sing it with an unrelenting focus on Jesus the firstborn from the dead –

Colossians 1:18

And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.

Let us sing it by declaring that we shall never die in Christ:

John 11:25-26

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, ²⁶ and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

Let us sing it by breaking our agreement with the slavish fear of death because of what Jesus did.

Hebrews 2:14-15

Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.

Let us sing it by our faith and fellowship with the Resurrecting Holy Spirit that dwells in our bodies

Roman 8:11

If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

Let our lives resound with the heavenly melody that first rang out from a tomb in Jerusalem.

It is Easter, Beloved, let us tune our lives to the Resurrected One and let us sing with all of our hearts:

"Death is swallowed up in victory"
"O death, where is your victory?
O death, where is your sting?"