



The First Fruits & the Ultimate Goal of History • Part 2

Lesson 6 • 1 Corinthians 15:20-28

Last week we saw that Paul is answering two questions in 1 Corinthians 15:20-28...

#1 What Is the Ultimate Goal of All History?

All things being **SUBMITTED** to God for His glory and the good of His people!

1 Corinthians 15:28

- God's Kingdom **MUST COME** to the Old Creation. 1Corinthians 15:24-28; Revelation 19—20
- So God's Promise **IS FULFILLED** in the New Creation. 1Corinthians 15:21-22, 45-55; Revelation 21—22
"But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells." 2 Peter 3:13

"God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in submitting all things to Him."

#2 How Is the Ultimate Goal of God "Being All in All" Going to Be Fulfilled?

"But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep...in Christ all will be made alive but each in his own order." 1Corinthians 15:20, 22-23

- First fruits is an **agricultural phrase** for the first crop of a full harvest. Leviticus 23:10-11; Deuteronomy 18:4; 26:1-11
Three Major Ideas Are Included in This Phrase:
 - 1) The first of **MORE TO COME** later.
 - 2) The more to come later **WILL BE LIKE** the first to come.
 - 3) The first to come and the more to come later are **ALL DEDICATED** to God's service and glory.
- First fruits in this passage is a **biblical picture** of how Christ's **BODILY RESURRECTION** in the past has already set in motion and absolutely guarantees the fulfillment of God's ultimate goal for all of history by means of **MORE BODILY RESURRECTIONS** in the future...but each in their own order and timing!

As the First Fruits Christ's Bodily Resurrection Is...

1. The **PROMISE** of more resurrections to come in the future. (15:21-22)

This promise of future resurrection to eternal life will be fulfilled for all who are in Christ just as the present judgment of death is being fulfilled for all who are in Adam.

So What's the Big Deal?

- 1) By virtue of being the first to rise from the dead, Jesus is declared to be the rightful **KING** over all things and deserves to be **FIRST** in all things! Colossians 1:18; Revelation 1:5
- 2) Not all human beings will be raised to new life in Christ, **ONLY** those who have fallen asleep (= died) in Christ!

Paul uses being "asleep" **9 times** to refer to people who are dead and every time it refers to believers!
1Corinthians 11:30; 15:6, 19, 20, 51; 1Thessalonians 4:13; 5:10

- 3) All human beings will rise up one day, but only believers will be resurrected to eternal life, while unbelievers will be resurrected to eternal **DEATH**

The OT says so in *Daniel 12:1-2*

Jesus says so in *John 5:28-29*

Paul says so *Acts 24:15*

John says so in *Revelation 20:4-15*

2. The **GUARANTEE** that our bodily resurrections will be like His. (*15:45-50; 1John 3:2; Philippians 3:20-21; Romans 8:23*)

3. The **BEGINNING** of the orderly process of all things being submitted to God. (*15:23-28*)

Overview of How All Things Will Be Submitted to God for His Glory and Our Good through Bodily Resurrection:

- 1) **JESUS CHRIST HAS BEEN RAISED** from the dead to ascend on high and sit at the right hand of the Father's throne, where all things have been subjected under His feet even though we do not yet see all things subjected to Him.
Acts 2:29-36; Ephesians 1:18-23; Hebrews 2:5-9, 14-15
- 2) **SOME TIME AFTER THIS** (over 2,000 years so far) Jesus Christ will come to **RESURRECT** and **RAPTURE** His Church in the midst of growing apostasy and persecution, so they will **not** go through the Great Tribulation of God's wrath poured out on the people of the earth as all hell literally breaks loose and Israel is threatened with extinction by the Devil and his Antichrist and False Prophet.
1 Timothy 4:1-5; 2 Tim 3:1-9; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 5:1-11; 2 Thess 2:3-12; 1 Corinthians 15:23, 51-57; Revelation 5—18
- 3) **AFTER 7 YEARS** of God's wrath being poured out on earth during the Great Tribulation, Jesus Christ will **RETURN** a second time to the earth with His Church to **REIGN** over all things! He will also **RESURRECT** all the OT and Tribulation saints, because Israel finally **REPENTS** and **RECEIVES** Him as their Messiah. He will **RULE** with a rod of iron as He binds the Devil for 1,000 years and brings all things in subjection to His will and word!
Daniel 12:1-2; Revelation 19:1–20:6
- 4) **AFTER 1,000 YEARS** of Christ **REIGNING** with His people (the Church and Israel) in order to subject all things to Himself, the Devil will be **RELEASED** for one last **REBELLION** but suffer swift defeat and **RETRIBUTION** by being thrown into the Lake of Fire with his Antichrist, False Prophet, and with every single unbeliever who has been **RESURRECTED** to suffer eternal **WRATH** with them. And finally the last Enemy, Death, is also thrown into the Lake of Fire!
1 Corinthians 15:25-26; 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10; Revelation 20:5, 7-15
- 5) **AFTER THIS** the ultimate goal of history will be fulfilled, as God the Son (to whom the Father has subjected all things) will hand over His kingdom **RULE** to the Father and subject Himself to the One who subjected all things to Him, so that God may be all in all!
1 Corinthians 15:24, 27-28
- 6) **SO FOR ALL ETERNITY** God and His Son, the Lamb—who was slain and **ROSE** from the dead—will **RULE** from their throne and **REVEAL** their glory and grace throughout the entire New Creation and His people (Israel and the Church) will **REIGN** with them forever and ever!
Revelation 21—22

God's glorious presence will forever dwell with His glorious people in His glorious place for all eternity!

The Kingdom has come and God's will is now done on earth as it was in heaven!

God will be all in all for His glory and our good!

Rising Up Will Get Us to the End God Intends for All of History!

Next week we will take one more look at how this plays out in the Scriptures by comparing what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15:20-28 with what is taught about the End of History in the rest of the NT.