

Text

1 Cor 15

Main Point

Resurrection of the Mediator the Means of Redemption

Introduction (300)

Hook

Achievements

We all hope to achieve something great in life. Something that our children and even grandchildren would benefit from.

Many of us have benefit^{ed} from the achievements of those who have gone before us. And, for many of us, we don't even know about it.

- Maybe it was the price of getting out of slavery.
- Maybe it was the determination to get out of the spiral of addiction.
- Maybe it was the struggle of getting out of the vicious circle of poverty.
- Maybe it was the effort of getting a good education.
- Maybe it was the risk of starting a business or moving countries.

Some of these achievements still have a huge impact on us, others less so. But each of us benefit from the achievement of those who have gone before in one way or another.

*Whether or not
we realize it.*

Link to resurrection

There is one achievement, from time past, which all of us can benefit from. One achievement that the passing of time does not affect in any way. One achievement that must not be forgotten. One achievement that is not exclusive to family, country or race.

The Resurrection of Christ stands above ^{and beyond} any struggle, any effort, or any risk taken. And its benefits echoes through the centuries to all who would believe it.

The resurrection of Jesus achieved far more than overcoming slavery, addiction, oppression or poverty.

The resurrection of Jesus achieved eternal life. It achieved redemption.

From the Confession

As we continue our study on the Jesus the Mediator through the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith, we come to the topic of the resurrection of Christ. We are now in paragraph 4 of chapter 8, and have moved from the doctrines of the person of Christ to the Works of Christ, and specifically his resurrection. We read:

on the third day he arose from the dead with the same body in which he suffered

Outline

So to help work through this topic we are going to break it up into three parts.

1. The Nature of the Resurrection
2. The Detail of the Resurrection (Exactly what was achieved at the resurrection)
3. The Expectation of the Resurrection (how does this achievement benefit us)

Part 1 – Nature of the Resurrection

Exposition

Account

So let us begin by looking at the nature of the Resurrection.

We know the story well.

Jesus, after he is pronounced dead, is laid in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea.

Friday evening marks the start of the Sabbath so the ~~body~~ ^{remains} of Jesus was not able to be fully prepared ^{He is} for burial. Still the body of Jesus was put in the tomb, and a large stone was rolled over the entrance to seal the tomb.

After the Sabbath, early on Sunday morning, three women go to the tomb, seeking to anoint Jesus and complete the burial process.

But nothing would prepare them for what that day brought.

In Mark 16:4-7 we read

⁴And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back—it was very large. ⁵And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed. ⁶And he said to them, “Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him. ⁷But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.”

Jesus was risen. He was not in the tomb. He would be seen on more than 10 occasions by more than 500 people over the next few weeks.

All four Gospels attest to the physical bodily resurrection of Jesus. On one side there was a strong continuity with Jesus's pre-resurrection body, but on the other side there was also something significantly different about Jesus.

Continuity

As we read the accounts, we can see that there was a strong similarity between his pre-resurrection body and his body after the resurrection.

For one, his disciples recognised him. When given a chance to see him, they knew it was their beloved Lord simply by looking at him.

There is even an account where ~~his followers~~ *it is said that* ~~had~~ *his followers* *had* "their eyes were kept from recognising him" and then "their eyes were opened and they recognised him" (Luke 24).

And secondly, Jesus' resurrected body was physical. His body continued to be physical. Jesus seems to go to great lengths to make a point of that.

And in Luke 24:39 we read

³⁹ *See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have."*

Jesus expects them to recognise him and explicitly states that he is not a mere spirit. He has flesh and bones. He has hands and feet still bearing the scars of crucifixion. He can be touched.

In another accounts we read that he prepared food and ate and drank with his disciples.

So there is a strong continuity. He was clearly recognised, and his body continued to be physical.

Change – New body incorruptible

But there was also a great change.

You see, the resurrection of Jesus was not simply him coming back to life like Lazarus. Lazarus would eventually die again, but Jesus would never die again. He was raised never to die again.

His resurrection body, although physical, is incorruptible.

In 1 Cor 15:42-44 we read about the resurrected body.

⁴² So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. ⁴³ It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. ⁴⁴ It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.

The resurrected body of Jesus was imperishable, glorious, powerful and spiritual.

Jesus would have seemed transformed simply by being restored to perfect health. The last memories of the disciples was one of a man who was “greatly distressed in his soul”, a man who had been beaten, mocked and crucified.

And now they saw him fully restored, his soul at rest, his body fixed.

Yes, his scars of the crucifixion remained, but they represent a trophy of his finished work. They are part of his glory.

Jesus’ resurrection body is physical and incorruptible.

Application

We proclaim the physical resurrection of Jesus (Gospel)

And so, we too, like the Apostles, proclaim the physical bodily resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

He is risen, he is risen indeed.

To deny that is to deny the only way of being saved from your rightful punishment in hell.

Are you convinced that Jesus was raised from the dead?

It is the most significant event in history. Hundreds, if not thousands of people have tried to disprove it and failed. The evidence for the resurrection is staggering, but do **you** hold it to be true?

If not what hinders you? What holds you back?

Is it that you feel facts don't add up?

Or is it simpler than that, when you are honest?

Do you not want it to be true because of the implications?

Because you know that if you believe the resurrection your life could not longer revolve around you?

Because you know that if you believe the resurrection, your life would have to revolve around Him, and you do not like that?

Whether or not you hold it to be true will significantly change your life today, but it will ultimately change your eternal life.

Believing in the resurrection will cost you, but the cost is nothing compared to what you would gain.

God's promise is clear:

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.

This is God's promise

But how is the resurrection so important to our redemption?

This brings us to our second point.

Part 2 – Detail of the Resurrection

Exposition

No resurrection no salvation

In his first letter to the Corinthians, Paul makes some other strong statements about the critical nature of the Resurrection. In Chapter 15 Paul basically says, if Jesus had not been raised then there would be no hope of salvation for the sinner.

No resurrection would mean no salvation.

Look at verse 14

¹⁴ And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain.

And then verse 17 says a similar thing.

¹⁷ And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins.

(1 Cor 15:14,17)

If it were not for the resurrection, we would all still be destined to hell.

But why? Why is it so critical?

Does it simply bring weight to the promises Jesus made? I mean, any man can make promises. Mohamed, Buddha, Joseph Smith and others all made promises but then they died, so their words hold little weight. *is that -what paul is getting at?*

It is true, that the resurrection brings weight to the promise Jesus made. It fulfils his predictions and so forces us to take seriously his teachings and the predictions about his future coming.

But the resurrection is more than proof of promises.

The resurrection is in fact the substance of the promises.

At the resurrection Jesus was redeemed, and in turn we are redeemed only because we are united with Christ.

Let me put it this way: **We are saved because we are united to the resurrected Christ.**

Jesus was made sin therefore all curse of sin apply to him

Let's think about the idea of the Redemption of Jesus.

As the second Adam, as our human representative, as our mediator, we know Jesus was made sin.

We read that clearly in 2 Cor 5:21.

*²¹ For our sake **he made him to be sin** who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

And so, everything that we learn about the results of sin on humans must be applied to Jesus as the Second Adam.

Necessary to talk of the Redemption of Christ

Sin breaks the relationship with God. And so in a similar way Jesus was estranged ^{or forsaken} from God – Therefore, like sinful humans, he needed to be adopted.

Sin requires a just punishment. Jesus bore the guilt of sin. Jesus was condemned. – Therefore, like sinful humans Jesus needed to be justified.

Sin places humans under the dominion of sin, under the control of sin. So Jesus too was under that dominion, (most clearly seen because he died). – Therefore, Jesus needed to be positionally sanctified, to be set free from the dominion of sin.

Sin corrupts the physical body. Jesus' body was perishable, weak, dishonourable, and of this present age. Therefore, he needed a new body, he needed to be glorified.

And so, as we can see, it is necessary to talk of the redemption of Christ.

As a man, as the second Adam, He needed to be Adopted, Justified, Sanctified, and Glorified.

And at the resurrection, that is exactly what happened.

The Resurrection is the redemption of Christ. It is the deliverance of Jesus, as the last Adam, from the curse of Sin.

Adoption of Christ

Rom 1:4 talks of his Adoption at the resurrection using the language of declared or appointed to be the Son of God. And notice how it is at the resurrection that this happens.

⁴ and [Jesus] was declared [or appointed] to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord,

The resurrection is the adoption of Christ.

Justification of Christ

Next, 1 Tim 3:16 talks of his justification, our versions often use the word vindicate, but it is the same idea.

This verse is a summary of the mighty work of Christ. There is a contrast of Jesus' humiliation (in the flesh) and his exaltation (in the spirit). And as we know his exaltation started at the Resurrection.

¹⁶ Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness:

He^[a] was manifested in the flesh,

vindicated^[b] by the Spirit,^[c]

(Justified)

*seen by angels,
proclaimed among the nations,
believed on in the world,
taken up in glory.*

The Resurrection is the justification of Christ

Positional Sanctification of Christ.

In Rom 6:9-10 we read of the Positional Sanctification of Christ. Sin no longer holds dominion over him. He is dead to sin. And this is intrinsically linked to him being raised from the dead.

⁹We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰For the death he died, he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God.

The resurrection is the Positional Sanctification of Christ.

The Glorification of Christ

And then finally in 1 Cor 15:42-45 we read of the Glorification of Christ at his resurrection. Jesus receives a new body, imperishable, glorious, powerful, and spiritual.

⁴²So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. ⁴³It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. ⁴⁴It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. ⁴⁵Thus it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being”;^[e] the last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

The resurrection is the Glorification of Christ

Summary

And so we can see why Paul says:

¹⁷And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins.

We are only redeemed because we are united with Christ.

If Christ was not raised from the dead, then he was not adopted, justified, sanctified or glorified. If he was not redeemed, there is no hope for us to be adopted, justified, sanctified or glorified, no hope for us to be redeemed..

Or think of it this way: the application of redemption (Being adopted, justified, sanctified or glorified) is first done to Christ and then shared with those who are In Christ.

The resurrection is ^{the} ~~his~~ Redemption of our Mediator. ^{to us} ~~our~~ ^{hope of} ~~Salvation~~

Link

So, we can see that the resurrection is the substance of the Promise.

Some of the promises, we as Christians, already benefited from.

We too have been adopted.

We too have been justified.

We too have been positionally sanctified.

But there is one more aspect of the Resurrection that we look forward to. We too look forward to be ^{ing} glorified as he is glorified.

The bible talks of the resurrected Jesus as him being the First-fruit from the dead.

This is a great expectation for all humans. If there is a first, it implies there are others who can, and will follow.

This brings us to our third and final section:

The Expectation of the Resurrection.

Part 3 – Expectation of the Resurrection

In 1 Cor 15:20-23 we read that Jesus is the first fruit of the resurrection.

*²⁰ But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the **first fruits** 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 **first fruits**, then at his coming those who belong to Christ.*

Explain First Fruit

The word picture of first fruit comes from the farming world. In Leviticus 23 we read how the Israelites would offer the first of the harvest as an offering to the Lord. This sample of the harvest was known as the first fruit.

The full harvest was made once this offering was given.

So the fact that Jesus is called the first-fruit, indicates that the rest of the harvest is to follow.

Those who are united in Christ are the rest of that harvest. Those who believe in Jesus as their lord and saviour are the rest of the harvest.

As mentioned, there are some ways that we are already part of this harvest. As Christians we have been adopted, justified, and positionally sanctified. In a very real way we have already been resurrected.

But there are some areas that are yet to be fulfilled. We have yet to be glorified.

Our resurrection in Christ has already taken place and is yet to come.

Other First Fruit passages

We can see this “already and not yet” nature of our resurrection in various passages which ^{*also speak*} of Christ as being the first fruit or the firstborn.

Rom 8:29

*²⁹For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he **might be the firstborn among many brothers.**³⁰ And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.*

Col 1:18

*¹⁸And 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.*

Jesus' first fruit – great hope

Jesus' resurrection gives hope and confidence for those who are in Christ.

But if you do not yet trust Jesus as your Lord and saviour, know that this can be true to you too. You too can be part of the great harvest and be adopted and welcomed into the family of God.

You too can experience the relief from the guilt of sin.

You too can experience the freedom from the power of sin.

You too can look forward to a glorified body

The resurrection holds great expectation, for all humans.

The question is do you hold it to be true?

Are you willing to trust Jesus as your lord and saviour?

Application

Glorified bodies

And of course, the resurrection holds great expectations to those who are Christians. To those who are in Christ.

Just like Jesus, one day we will have new bodies. New glorified bodies, with no more weakness, no more pain, no more disease, no more death.

Oh we look forward to that day.

This world is not as it should be because of sin. And we all feel the effects of pain, disease and death.

One day that chronic pain will be gone. One day you will be able to walk, to run, to climb, to work and play in a way that you were designed to.

One day that disease which ravage your body will be no more. That cancer, that leukaemia, that blindness, that constant process of age will be no more.

One day that speech impediment will gone. One day you will be able to express yourself, to converse, and to sing as you were designed to.

One day death will be no more. No more will it take those we love away from us.

One day our bodies will be changed so that we can worship God as he designed us.

Without stain or taint of sin

Oh we look forward to that day.

We look forward to the day when, just like our mediator, we too will have bodies imperishable, glorious, powerful and spiritual.

Conclusion

We look forward to that day, not because of some promises of men. Not because of wishful thinking.

We look forward to that day because we know Christ has risen.

We know he was dead and was brought back to life never to die again.

We know that at his resurrection, he was redeemed.

That he was adopted

That he was justified

That he was positionally sanctified

And he was glorified.

We know that in Christ we too are redeemed.

Jesus is the first-fruit of redemption and those who trust in him are the harvest.

Those who trust in him are also adopted, justified and sanctified.

And so we look forward, with absolute confidence, to the day, when we too will be glorified. When pain, disease and death will be no more.

Let me close by reading the last four verses of 1 Cor 15, which conveys that hope and longing.

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.

⁵⁸ Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

Let us pray.