***Dependence upon the Holy Spirit;
and, Two Resurrections

RV238-02***

Our subject is "The First Resurrection." This is segment number four in Revelation 20:4-6.

**Rewards**

We've already called to your attention the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ, on several occasions, stressed the doctrine of accountability for what a Christian does with the days of life allotted to him by God. That is a very important doctrine. One of the strange things is that Satan has brought a blindness upon so many groups of Christians in this respect. Christians are not alerted to the principle of accountability for what we do with the days of life allotted to us. A life, therefore, which is spent in the production of divine good works under the guidance of the Holy Spirit will result in rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ, which will enrich the believer's eternity. A life which is spent in human good works produced by the old sin nature will suffer the loss of rewards and the loss of an enriched eternity.

Both types of Christians, of course, are saved, and they are both in the royal family of God, and thus they are both in the kingdom of God. They are members of that kingdom by fact of their union with Christ, who is the King of Kings. But while they are both saved, they will not both have the same results in contrast to the lives that they have lived. While all Christians, then, are in the kingdom, not all will reign on a throne under Jesus Christ and the Millennial Kingdom.

This calls for a sense of divine viewpoint values, and that is hard to come by. It is very difficult to go through the world today, and for Christians to maintain their sense of eternal values. They are easily sidetracked and easily distracted. For many people, they don't even get to first base of knowing what eternal values are.

One parent who came up to pick up his son at the campground said, "Well, thank you for whatever you did for my son this week. I'm sure you did some good." I thought, "Here's an example of a parent who is totally oblivious to what his son received; what his son was involved in; and, what was put together by these sacrificial, capable, devoted parents to have brought all this together, and the focus on that boy personally." What an ignorant father! What a stupid man! And what a demonstration he gave to me in those few sentences of how oblivious he is to true spiritual values. For him, it was fun and games, and he was not smart enough (spiritually discerning) to realize that our fun and games were focused upon a great spiritual impact on the lives of these boys.

We have a little microphone and speaker around our campfire so that it's easy for everybody to hear the boys. We have them come up and tell us something for which they are thankful to God. And all day Friday is the greatest day of camp. This is the most important. The big impact comes Friday night. And it was very moving, not only for us as counselors, but upon the boys themselves to your boys come up and say, "I thank God for this." And that's what I asked them to do. I said, "I want you to thank God for something." And it wasn't anything trivial. They were deep, thoughtful, sensitive things. It showed us how much this was unlike the youth programs that are awash in the world today, that are fun programs, and that's the end of it; but, they're nothing. They are nothing but worldly programs that exhaust and dissipate a child's capacity in life to a world system. They are fun and games.

However, our focus, right there, was in gratitude to God. They were lining up. They couldn't wait to get up to that microphone and thank God. It was in connection with all the good things that had happened that week. But for our focus, we didn't just give them entertainment. We focused it upon real values.

So, we have made our contribution to these boys someday proving themselves worthy of having a throne of jurisdiction. We have done a great service to these children in alerting them to the fact that God is going to hold them accountable for what they have done with the days of their lives. We have made the impact upon them that you must choose between the things of the kingdom of God and the things of this world system.

How tragic when parents teach their children to go for the things of this world; and, if you could work in the things of God, that's OK too. That's nice. But go for the big time. Go for where it's at. And what they have done is robbed their children of a sense of destiny – potential rulers in the kingdom of God.

Now, one qualifies himself for a throne by living a godly life and by fulfilling his mission of service to God. If you've been reared with a sense of fulfilling your mission, then that's what you're going to do. We have looked at the parable of the ten minas in Luke 19, which illustrated the rewarding of the faithful Christian stewards with a throne, and an area of jurisdiction. Only believers, we pointed out, in glorified bodies, who are therefore minus the old sin nature will be eligible for a throne in the kingdom. People with non-glorified bodies will live in the kingdom, but they will not reign over others. Christians are joint heirs with Jesus Christ, who is the primary heir of God in the Millennial Kingdom.

Christians who are positive to doctrine, and who are obedient to the Holy Spirit, will have a reigning authority in the kingdom. That's what it comes down to. Christians who have learned the Word of God, and then act upon the Word of God, and Christians who are dedicated to fulfilling their particular mission for which they were born, are Christians which will be given a throne and a jurisdiction of reigning authority. And it's going to be a lot more fun in the kingdom for those people.

Now, a throne in the kingdom can be forfeited. We call your attention to three major passages in Scripture, which I'll just mention for you to review for yourself: 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Galatians 5:19-21; and, Ephesians 5:1-17. These passages list some of the most horrendous sins that the human mind can come up with – sins that Christians are capable of. Every now and then, I run into some believer who says, "Oh, I cannot believe that a person can be born-again and do these terrible things." That's lordship salvation: "If Christ is not your Lord, then you're not saved." That is wrong. He can be your Savior without your having made Him your Lord, because your life is still living on the world's principles and in the world's ways. These are terrible things. You would think that, as you read these things, they cannot possibly be.

I pointed out to the boys around one of the campfires that the Bible says, "You must not watch Oprah Winfrey. You must not watch Geraldo. You must not watch just Jessy Raphael. You must not watch Donahue. You must not watch any of these talk-programs, because they all center on teaching you evil." The Bible says, "Be innocent about evil, but wise about good." That means, "Don't sit and let people tell you the terrible things that people do, and then accept that as normal.

I read an article that was bemoaning the fact that you can't get juries now to condemn people for doing terrible things, because these talk-shows have made them used to the fact that this is what people do. So, they don't see why it's all so bad. Just because your mother-in-law wags her tongue and tells you what kind of a bum you are, and you dispatch her off to mother-in-law heaven, that's understandable: "Gee, everybody does that. I learned about that on these talk-show programs." This acclimation to evil is just horrendous. It's bad enough to read these passages here that I gave you, and see what people can do as a warning that we do not follow that, without our engaging ourselves in these programs. They spew this upon us.

I sat in one my least favorite places about a week ago – the dentist's office. And they had a television program on, and the receptionist suddenly got up at the half-hour, and changed the program. And somebody sitting there said, "Oh, that was a talk-show. I wanted to watch that. And the receptionist said, "I'm sorry, we're not allowed to show those programs in this office." And she changed it to a family-oriented program. And I thought, "Boy, this is pretty good. Dentists are usually very boring people. They're always boring you about your teeth, and drilling away. And here these people have quality and class. They're not going to contaminate you when you sit there in their office. Once they get your hands on you, that's a different thing – what they'll do to you. But out there, they said, "No, we're not going to spew that garbage on you." I thought, "What a commendation that was to this principle: don't learn evil. Just learn about the things that are godly.

So, make no mistake about it. These three passages, listing sins that Christians are fully capable of, will strip you of an eternal throne in the kingdom of God. All of these passages are about inheriting a kingdom. This is not a reference to salvation, but it is a reference to receiving a throne with reigning authority in the Millennial Kingdom of Jesus Christ. All believers, by the fact that they're related to Jesus Christ, who is the King of Kings, are members of the royal family. But not all Christians will have a throne of authority.

These moral vices, such as characterized the Corinthians Christians in their unsaved days, were still prevalent in those congregations. And that's why Paul wrote that passage and said, "These are the kinds of things that will keep you from reigning in the kingdom of God." He didn't tell them that these are the kinds of things that will keep them out of heaven, because they were born-again. But Corinth was a horribly sinful place. These people came out of a cesspool (out of a sewer) of moral sins. That was their lifestyle, and they had trouble shaking it off, even after they were Christians. They had been saved by free grace, so, in the kingdom, their inheritance was certain, but their reigning honor does not come as a gift like salvation. This is something you have to earn.

Some of the Corinthians Christians were living in immoral ways, and they were cheating themselves out of a portion of ruling authority of honors and of rewards in the Millennial Kingdom.

In 1 Corinthians 5:1, the apostle Paul points it out in this way: "It is actually reported that there is immorality among you: an immorality of such a kind as does not exist even among the gentiles – that someone has his father's wife." Here in this Corinthian congregation was an act of incest. It was even illegal to practice incest in the Greek world, because they considered that a horrendous threat to the family unit. And Paul says, "Here, you Christians are acting with the worst kind of immorality. Here is a specific case that even the gentiles are horrified to consider that they would practice such a thing."

1 Corinthians 6:18: "Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body." If you want to send yourself to an early grave, then practice sexual morality. Our society is proving that. Every other sin you can commit is peripheral (outside). But sexual immorality hits your physical structure itself. Christians can be guilty of the worst kind of immorality, but they can return to God immediately through the confession principle of 1 John 1:9. They can return to temporal fellowship, and be back on the road, earning their royal inheritance honors.

I do not want you to think that you can ever stray so far that you cannot instantly bounce back. I don't care how deep in sin a person goes, a Christian can instantly bounce back by confession of sins. If Christ returns and finds a Christian living in the sins listed in these three major passages, he will go to heaven, but he will not inherit honors in the kingdom of God. He will enter the kingdom, but he will not be there as a reigning official. For that reason, it is important that we Christians live under the expectations of the fact that Jesus is coming again; that we live in the day-by-day anticipation of His return for us; and, that we be prepared for it.

1 John 2:28 says, "And now, little children, abide in Him." "Abide in Him" means stay in temporal fellowship (with sins confessed): "And now, little children, stay in temporal fellowship so that when He appears, we may have confidence, and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming." Yes, there will be a lot of Christians who, when the Lord comes, and suddenly they see themselves in their lives for what they have been, and what they have done, they are going to be ashamed of themselves, and they're going to try to slink away and hide, but they will not be able to.

Suddenly, all of their perspective will be there before their eyes, of what they have chosen to do with the days of their lives. They will realize how often they could have supported some Christian enterprise of the local church ministry, but they had their own thing to do. How often they could have said, "My hand is there to assist. My hand is there to say, 'Well done.' My hand is there to say, 'Keep it up.'" Instead, the activities of the world had such an attraction for us, and we're going to be ashamed of that. That's one reason that there are going to be tears shed. And the Lord will come up, and He'll wipe away those tears from us, but there's not going to be any throne in our future.

2 Peter 3:14: "So, therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace: spotless; and. blameless." That's a lot better. When the Lord returns, you're at peace. You're not ashamed. You're not in agony. You're not covered with all kinds of unconfessed sin. You stand before Him blameless. If that happens, and that's the condition in which the Lord finds you, the rewards are enormous.

Matthew 24:45: "Who then is the faithful and sensible slave, whom his master put in charge of his household, to give them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that slave (or that servant) whom his master finds so doing when he comes. Truly, I say to you that he will put him in charge of all his possessions." Here is the principle again. Be faithful in the little things that God gives you. Be supportive of those little things that God gives you. And someday, He will reward you with big things.

The degenerate lifestyle will be severely judged. Take a look at Matthew 24:48: "But if that evil servant says in his heart, 'My master is not coming for a long time,'" and you know what that means. He says, "He's not coming for a long time, so what?" What that means is, "I'll get around to it. I do intend to invest for God, but not right now. I've got some things I have to get taken care of first." You think you have a long time: "And shall begin to beat his fellow servants, and eat and drink with drunkards, then the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him, in an hour which he does not know."

Now, in those few verses, the principle is clear. How the Lord Jesus Christ finds you when He returns is going to determine what kind of reward and what kind of authority you will exercise in His kingdom.

In Hebrews 4:12-13, we're reminded of the principles upon which we will be judged. They are the principles of doctrine: "For the Word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do now."

Now, that is an important doctrinal principle. You cannot kid God. You make fool yourself. You may con yourself. You may tell yourself that what you're doing is OK, even though down in your heart, you know that, "No, it's not OK. No, I'm not rising to what I should be doing. And when Christ comes, it's going to be a very painful event." It's going to be a painful event for the hypocrites (the pretenders). There'll be weeping and gnashing of teeth for those who have pretended to serve Christ, but who are serving themselves. There will be profound regret and painful memories. Once a person is freed from the delusion of the sin nature, then you'll look back and say, "Oh, what I could have done with my life; the resources; and, the opportunities, not the least of which were the superb abilities I have. Those superb abilities could have made an impact upon the work of God. Instead, I frittered them away in the world's system." There will be profound regrets and painful memory.

However, the comfort of God, even in that condition, Revelation 21:4 says, will be there: "He will wipe away their tears." It is the wise Christian who takes God seriously, because the Bible presents God as a consuming fire who will judge evil conduct in just that way?

Hebrews 12:28-29: "Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe. For our God is a consuming fire." There we're back to the principle. Yes, you will inherit a kingdom. You will possibly inherit reigning authority in that kingdom, and that should be taken very seriously. We should serve God with acceptable service; with reverence; and, with awe, because He is a consuming fire;" meaning that He judges.

**Walk in Dependence on the Holy Spirit**

So, what does that tell us to do? We are to walk in dependence on the Holy Spirit.

1. **Listen to the Holy Spirit**

Listen to the Holy Spirit. Let Him guide your heart, and don't resist.

1. **Obey Doctrine**

Learn to obey the principles of doctrine that you have learned.

1. **Walk in the Consciousness of His Holy Presence**

Walk in the consciousness of His holy presence. Don't walk through life like He's off out there. No, He's right here. And He's right there watching and listening in all of your relationships, with family members and those outside. Keep in mind that Judgment Seat of Christ evaluation that 1 Corinthians 3:11-15 describes. Keep in mind that that is before all of us.

1. **Your Coronation as a Reigning King**

Then anticipate your coronation as a reigning king in the Millennial Kingdom. Do you realize that only a few people in this world are ever born into a family of royalty such as the royal family of England? An heir will come to his great day which is his coronation day. A few of have lived long enough to see a coronation of a king, and it is a great and magnificent event. It is prepared for long in advance, and everything is worked out in detail. It's a great moment when finally the bishop raises the crown and places it upon the head of the new monarch, and he is crowned the new ruler.

Do you realize, as members of the royal family, that that is your potential as well? Each of you will have your own personal coronation event. It is worthwhile to think of what your eternity is going to be like, with as much devoted care as we worry about our retirement.

**Those who have been Beheaded**

In Revelation 20:4, the verse goes on, and John says that he sees the throne. He sees many people sitting on these many thrones. He sees that they have given they've been given judgment. They have an authority which has been given to them. Then he sees that: "These are the souls of those who have been beheaded." These are people who have had their heads chopped off of their bodies. He is now zeroing in on a particular group of people qualified to have thrones of authority.

**A Temporary Body**

This has been done to a group of faithful people in the tribulation. It had been done to them by the antichrist. And now John sees them with an intermediate, temporary body that God has given them in heaven until the resurrection of their physical bodies from the grave. When a Christian dies, he does not go out into eternity unclothed in his soul and spirit. He is given a temporary body, and that temporary body looks just like the one that's lying in the grave. So, if you were to see that Christian in heaven, you'll immediately recognize him. He's not there in his physical body. All you see is the real person. All you're meeting is the real soul and spirit. But the body that God is given looks just like the person you knew.

John sees the souls of those who have been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the Word of God. It is because of their witness concerning Christ, and it is because of the Word of God. These people were fans of doctrine. They were not fans of anything else in life. They were interested in other things. But the thing that they were really fans of was the Word of God. So, because they took doctrine seriously, they learned it; they obeyed it; and, they told people about it. Consequently, they were very unpopular in the world's system, and particularly in the system of the antichrist. So, they were beheaded.

The tribulation believers suffer death because this is the official policy of the world government under the antichrist for any who refuse to worship the antichrist. Because of their testimony concerning Jesus, and because of their devotion to the Word of doctrine, these people have not worshiped the beast or his image, and have not received his mark upon their forehead or upon their hand. These people would not bow down to the image of the antichrist. They accept martyrdom. That's why, in Revelation 6:10, we see them alive in heaven, calling out for God to exercise vengeance upon the antichrist for having taken their lives.

However, they are fully conscious, and they have strong feelings about what was done to them, but they are glad that they did not worship the antichrist. They refused to bow to that image, and they were executed because of their loyalty to Christ and to His Word.

These believers who are that intense, of course, are special objects of Satan's hatred, and of the antichrist's persecution, because they're telling people the truth about God. You will always find that when you tell people the real truth about God, and the real truth of the implications of doctrine, they will not like you. You will find resistance. You may tell people: "What you're doing with your children is not smart. It is teaching your children a wrong sense of values. You've been captured by the world system." They won't like it because they like the world system. They like the things that they're doing, and they don't want you to tell them: "Don't focus upon those things."

So, when you tell people the truth, as these people did in the tribulation, Satan moves in on them and takes their very lives. You may count on the fact that if Satan has his way, he will cut every one of you down at his earliest opportunity. And Satan sometimes gets a blow at you, as he did to Job, but God says, "No, you can hit him, but you can't kill him." And Satan's objective is to silence those who are making an impact with the Word of God.

**The Victory of Resurrection**

Here in the tribulation, many believers will pay the price. They will not take the mark of the beast. They will not worship him. They will not accept him as their lord. But for them is to come the victory of resurrection: "For they came to life." This refers to the physical resurrection of the tribulation martyrs. The devil could take their lives, but God is going to give it back to them.

This is the same word which is used in Revelation 1:18 and Revelation 2:8 in order to describe the physical resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is the Greek the Greek word "zao." That's the physical resurrection of Christ that is described. It is the same word. This is what's going to happen to these people. They receive bodies which are glorified. A glorified body is one that doesn't have a sin nature. They receive bodies that are as perfect as Christ's.

John 11:25 says, "Jesus said to her (to Martha), 'I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me shall live even if he dies." So, they receive a resurrection body minus the old sin nature. This does not refer to the resurrection of the soul in some spiritual regeneration. It refers to the body. The soul never dies.

So, at the end of the tribulation, these martyrs are raised again, and they receive their lives back. Then their faithfulness to Christ has earned them a throne to reign with Him. And here we're told that the tribulation martyrs, who will reign with Christ, are going to reign with Him in a kingdom that will last for 1,000 years. This is the first place where we're told in the Bible how long the kingdom of Christ is going to be on this earth – this special kingdom promise to David: "They will reign with Him as worthy saints." They suffered in the tribulation, but now the time comes for them to reign.

That's a good thing to remember. 2 Timothy 2:12 reminds us: "If we endure, we shall reign with Him. If we deny Him, He'll deny us." So, the reigning brings us the rewards.

Reigning in the millennial kingdom on the throne is not the same thing, I remind you again, as salvation. Some are saved, but not all are rewarded with a throne and an area of jurisdiction.

Revelation 20:5 now gives us another piece of important information that we do not find elsewhere in the Bible: "The rest of the dead." This word "dead" is the Greek word "nekros." The "nekros" refers to unbelievers. These are people who are in Hades, in contrast to the saved dead which were raised in verse 4. Here is the rest of the dead. These are souls of people who are fully conscious of their status in Hades, but their bodies are dead in the grave.

In Luke 16:23, we see the rich man is fully conscious while his body is dead in the grave. He's in Hades.

**Two Resurrections**

In Revelation 6:9-10, we have these martyred tribulation people (believers). Their bodies are in their graves, but they're fully conscious. A person in eternity is always aware of where he is. "The rest of the dead" refers to the contrast of verse 4. These are unbelievers. The unbelievers did not come to life. They did not receive their resurrection. Their bodies were not raised until the 1,000 years were completed. So, immediately, we have two resurrections. There's a resurrection of saved people; and, a resurrection of unsaved people. Here, we are told that there's an interval of 1,000 years between those two resurrections.

In John 5:29, Jesus said, "And some shall come forth: those who did good deeds;" that is, those who produced divine good because they were saved: "To a resurrection of life." That's resurrection number one: "And those who committed the evil deeds (because they were not born-again – they produced human good deeds), to a resurrection of judgment. So, there's a resurrection of life and a resurrection of judgment. These are two distinct resurrection, and they are separated by 1,000 years. In Luke 14:14, you have this same concept implied.

So: "Until the 1,000 years is completed;" that is, until the 1,000 years have been completed between the beginning of the millennium and the end of the millennium. The believers are physically raised to life at the beginning of the millennium. The unbelievers are raised at the end of the millennium. So, there is a first and the second resurrection. The end of verse 5 then says, "This is the first resurrection."

The word "is" is not in the Greek Bible. It is put in there to complete the sentence. The idea is that this "completes." This completes the first resurrection. It is referring to verse 4. It means this completes the first resurrection – that first stage of believers being raised.

**Resurrection**

Notice the word "resurrection." This is one thing to caution you about. This is the Greek word "anastasis." "Anastasis" means literally "standing again." It refers to dead bodies which are lying prone in the grave, and being raised up to stand on their feet again – erect, out of the grave. It is a very literal word. "Ana" means "again;" and, "stasis" means "to stand up." So, they're standing up again.

This word is used about 40 times in the New Testament, and it always refers to physical resurrection. The amillennialists use this word to get around the fact of two resurrection. They don't like that. The amillennialists want one big judgment day resurrection. So, they get around it by trying to make this world refer to spiritual regeneration – that you are coming alive spiritually. But this is not true. I want you to know that everywhere in the Bible that this word is used (some 40 times), it means physical bodies coming to life.

One example is John 11:24: "Martha I said to Him, 'I know that he (that her dead brother Lazarus) will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.'" What was it that Martha thought her brother was going to do? That her brother was going to have a spiritual regeneration on the last day? No. It was quite clear that what Martha regretted (and for which Jesus wept) was that their brother and friend Lazarus was dead. But Martha said, "I know he's going to come to life again someday." It is very important that you do not be confused that this word ever means anything else but physical resurrection. It never refers to spiritual regeneration.

This is the same word also which, in Acts 3:33 is used to describe what happened to Christ in His resurrection: "And with great power, the apostles were giving witness to the resurrection (the "anastasis" – the same word) of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all." So there, physical resurrection came to Christ.

**The Stages of the First Resurrection**

So, you can translate the end of Revelation 20:5 by saying, "This completes the first resurrection." The very fact that it says that now implies to us something else – that that first resurrection is in stages. One way to think about this is like a military parade.

1 Corinthians 15:22-23 put it this way: "As in Adam, all die; so also in Christ shall all be made alive, but each in His own order (in his own division): Christ the firstfruits; after that, those who are Christ's at His coming." So, here it is very clearly demonstrated to us, by this word "order," which is a military word, that the first resurrection has several units.

In the passage that Paul presents to us, we may view this as a parade with two battalions: a first battalion; and, a second battalion. The first battalion is the first resurrection of believers. The second battalion is the resurrection of unbelievers.

A battalion has three or more companies in it. So, it is made up of several sections: companies of resurrected people; and, companies of lost people. You can you can imagine what a parade is like with the reviewing stand. God the Father is the inspecting officer.

**The Firstfruits**

So, we have the first battalion (the first resurrection). The first unit that comes by is Alpha Company. Alpha Company is Christ, the firstfruits. The firstfruits means that He is the first of something that is grown or a product which is to come. When Christ is called the firstfruits, it means that it's referring to the Old Testament sacrifice of the firstfruits, which spoke of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. You have this in Leviticus 23. The feast of the first fruits always fell on Sunday, which was Christ's resurrection day. That's interesting. They'd perform this feast the day after the Sabbath. The farmer would go out, and cut a little grain, and he'd bring it to the priest at the temple, and the priest would offer it up as a token of the firstfruits of what was coming from that field.

That firstfruits told us two things. There's a lot more of the same kind to come, and what comes is going to be the same kind as what is out there. Jesus Christ is our firstfruits, and tells us that many more of us will follow physical resurrection, and that when we have our physical resurrection, we're going to be just like He was in His physical resurrection. This is a beautiful feast, and I always refer to it at funeral services in order to alert people to the fact that, as human beings, we can enter heaven in our physical bodies because there's already a man up there. Christ was our firstfruits.

So, Jesus Christ is the firstfruits of the resurrection because He is the first person in all of humanity who is raised with a glorified immortal body. People who have been brought back to life in the Old Testament, and in the New Testament, were not resurrected. They did not rise with immortal glorified bodies. They all died again. When the poor widow's son form Nain was raised, the boy came to life, but he died again. When the little girl had died, and Jesus came and raised her, she died again. All the people who were raised, including those (I think) who were raised on the day of Christ's crucifixion, were raised, but they died again. I won't push that too hard, because it's possible that they were raised after Christ was raised. The graves were opened; He was raised; and, then they came out. It is possible that they were a little handful sample of those who were going to be glorified, such as we are going to be.

In any case, Christ was number one. He was the example of what is going to happen to the rest of us. Resurrection means not only coming back to life, but it means coming back without a sin nature, so that you can never die again, and so that you are totally glorified. Resurrection is a tremendous experience.

In John 11:25-26, Jesus says, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me shall live even if he dies. And everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die again. Do you believe this?" What a question? "Do you believe this?" You will never die again. The interruption of death is painful, sorrowful, and unpleasant, but the end is great glory. We will never die again.

1 Corinthians 15:42-44: "So also is the resurrection of the dead: it is sown a partial body; it is raised an imperishable body. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body; and, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body."

So, the first company, Alpha Company, of the first battalion is Jesus Christ Himself. He of course, had to be alive to be able to give life to the rest of us. The resurrection of others is not possible until Christ was raised. A dead Christ could impart life to no one.

In 1 Corinthians 15:21-22, we've already noted how Jesus Christ is contrasted with Adam. From Adam, all we get is death. From Jesus Christ, we get life. He reverses what Adam did.

In 1 Corinthians 15:45, therefore, Christ is called "the last Adam." The first Adam brought sin and death to the human race. Jesus Christ brought salvation and eternal Life. The first Adam became a living soul, and Jesus Christ is the source of that life. The first Adam received his life from God, and Jesus Christ gave His life in behalf of others.

So, the resurrection of Christ guarantees the resurrection of all of us. He is first, and more is going to come just like Him. And the resurrection is inevitable. Because Christ was raised from the dead, that was the proof that what He did on the cross was acceptable to God the Father for payment for our sins. So, if Christ is still dead, then the work on the cross had no meaning, and it was useless (1 Corinthians 15:17).

His resurrection is part of the vital message of the gospel. He died spiritually, separated from God the Father while He bore our sins. Then He completed the penalty of death by dying physically. He was buried to show that He really was dead. Then He was raised, and the grave was empty (the tomb was empty) in a real physical resurrection.

We have many witnesses recorded in the Bible to His resurrection, and the resurrection proves that Christianity is true. If it wasn't for the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we wouldn't know that Christianity is really true.

So, the first resurrection is compared to a military parade. First battalion Alpha Company is Jesus Christ, the firstfruits, raise from the dead.

Now we come to the area that is extremely important and interesting to ourselves, because we come to Bravo Company, where we now have the church-age believers who steps into the picture in a most magnificent way. And if you will join us at our next session, we will pick up the resurrection at that point that particularly applies to you personally.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1993

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