

The Grace of God



"For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us..." (Titus 2:11-12).

Oct. 7, 2007 (Vol. 7)

FIRST PRINCIPLES: RESURRECTION

dwh

Continuing our study of "the basics of basics of the oracles of God" (Heb. 5:12-13) we now look at the topic of the resurrection.

There are several passages in the Old and New Testaments, which testify of a resurrection. For example: the widow's son (1 Kings 17:21), the man who was lain in Elisha's sepulcher (2 Kings 13:21), and the vision of the valley of bones (Ezek. 37:1-14). The first two were literal resurrections, giving a glimpse of God's power and plan. What Ezekiel saw was a vision, not a literal resurrection. It was representative of the "resurrection" of the nation of Israel, the restoration of the Old Testament kingdom from captivity. Yet, it still demonstrates in dramatic detail that such a concept was in God's mind.

And who can doubt that a resurrection on such a grand scale is within His power to perform? We see from the O.T. examples that God can raise the dead. And from the beginning of creation God has set in motion the whole of nature as an illustration of His awesome power (Rom. 1:20).

In the New Testament times, we see Jesus expanding upon the foundation lain in the O.T. He chided the Sadducees, a sect of the Jews who did not believe in the resurrection, for not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God (Mt. 22:29). He then appealed to Exodus 3:6 to draw a necessary conclusion that "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living"

(Matt. 22:31-32). Therefore, we must believe in a resurrection.

Furthermore, Jesus testified of Himself that "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live..." (John 11:25). If an ordinary man had claimed such a thing, we would all call him a lunatic. Yet, though Jesus was a man, He also proved that He was not *just* a man. In this same chapter of John, He raised up Lazarus from the dead as proof that He is the source of life and the Son of the Father (John 11:25-26, 40-44).

The Lord also spoke of the final resurrection. He described it as a time when all that have ever died will be raised, whether they have done evil or good (John 5:28-29). He also explained that the resurrection would lead to a new existence, different from this earthly one which involves marriage (Matt. 20:30). And who can doubt that it will be exactly as He describes it? If the God of Heaven planned it and demonstrated His power by having His Son experience it (John 20:26-29), then there will be a resurrection of all the dead.

Some years after the resurrection of Christ, when the gospel had reached as far as Greece, the apostle Paul encountered some philosophers who did not believe in the resurrection (Acts 17:32). It was just such a philosophy that invaded the church at Corinth a little later and necessitated the profound revelation and illustration of the resurrection recorded in 1 Corinthians 15.

First, Paul reviewed the gospel he preached, affirming that it included the resurrection and that the Corinthians had accepted it (15:1-11). Then Paul discussed the consequences of denying the resurrection. If, according to their reasoning, there was no resurrection, then Christ has not been raised, the apostles were false witnesses, and their faith would be in vain (15:12-19). Who could believe this?

The apostle then responds to the question of the unbelievers: "How then are the dead

raised? And with what body do they come?" (15:35). To this, Paul brings our minds back to the processes of nature which illustrate God's Divine power (15:36-38). When we look at a seed that is sown, we do not plant the form that will be, but only the bare grain. And, just as it is "buried" in the earth and "raised" with a new body according to God's good pleasure, so God is able to change our mortal bodies.

Also, we may look at all the different kinds of bodies that exist (15:39-41). There are different kinds of flesh, such as men, fish, beasts and birds. There are different kinds of celestial bodies and different terrestrial bodies, each with their own glory. "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body" (15:42-44).

Having said all this, we now ask: "Why is this topic important?" One word says it all: HOPE! Without it this life is empty and vain. Without it we face oblivion and have no purpose in our existence. Hope is exactly what God offers us in Jesus Christ. "A living hope" which is the "resurrection of the dead unto an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away" (1 Pet. 1:3-8).

Friend, have you laid hold of this most glorious and precious hope? Only those who obey the gospel shall receive the resurrection

unto life (2 Thess. 1:8-10; John 5:29; Acts 2:38)? So, have you by faith obeyed? Will you?

PEOPLE TO REMEMBER & PRAY FOR

Johanna Fletcher, Othena Kinnard, Wesley Geer, Mag Bumbalough, Thelma Cunningham (at Manchester), Mary Cox, Monie Petty, Dave Poteet (NHC 229), Robert & Betty England, Joe Smith, Mike Tenpenny, Thelma Klein, Nathan Hill, DeLeesa Price, Lydia Poe, Larry Bumbalough, Jake Hale, Joshua & Misty Poteet, Ed & Carolyn Williams, Kenley Streeval. Matthew Taylor (leukemia), Joyce Simmons Wagner.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- **Radio Program** - Every Sun. 2pm, AM 1050 WSMT
- **Home Bible Study** - Sat. Oct. 13th & 27th.
- **Ladies Class** - 2nd & Last Sunday Each Month.
- **Business Meeting** - Sun. Oct. 28th.
- **GM** - Raymond Castillo, Oct.14-19, 2007.
- **GM** - Ron Daly, April 2008.
- **GM** - Lanny Smith, Oct.12-17, 2008.

We Invite You To All Our Services!

Sunday @ 9am, 10am & 6pm
Wednesday @ 7pm

<http://frontiernet.net/~nscoc>
nscoc@frontiernet.net

Remember Our Meeting!

Plan for it!
Pray for it!
Work for it!
See you there!

North Sparta church of Christ

359 North Spring St.
Sparta TN 38583
(931) 836-3321

Place
Stamp
Here