

**Text:** 1 Corinthians 15:24-28

**Title:** The Resurrection, Part 5

**Truth:** The resurrection of Christ culminates in God's kingdom and glory.

**Date/Location:** Sunday March 28, 2021; prev. ed. Feb 19/27, 2019 at FBC

## I. Events at the End of the Kingdom, 24b-28a

Paul goes on to say that more events will happen at the end “when” (another key connective word) the kingdom comes to its close:

- A. **Christ will** deliver up the Kingdom to God, v. 24. The Bible tells us that God gives Jesus Christ all authority (Matthew 28:18) and will deliver to Him a kingdom (Daniel 7:13-14). Christ will rule that kingdom, with the assistance of His people, so that the original mandate given to humanity is fulfilled, the earth and creation are at their best stewardship level, sin is maximally constrained, and God is worshipped as much as possible. At this point, Christ will return the kingdom to the Father as an act of selfless submission to the will of God the Father and an act that will glorify the Father. It is as if He says, “You gave this to me; I know return it to you, having managed it perfectly, having had dominion over the earth and its creatures and nations and readying it for your glory and enjoyment. I have led humankind to do as you have said.”
- B. **Christ will** put an end to all rule and all authority and power, v. 24. As part of this subjugation of the world, Christ has to put down all other forms of power and authority that may challenge the reign of God. This is the result of His kingdom smashing all the other kingdoms and sweeping them away like a heavy wind blows light chaff out of the barnyard. There will be no competition to His rule.
- C. **Christ will** reign until he has put all enemies under His feet, v. 25-26. Not only will Christ do so, he **MUST** do so. It is necessary for Scripture to be fulfilled and the plan of God to be completed that every single enemy of God be put down. The nations rage against God now, but they will be restrained from doing so in the kingdom. A different kind of enemy—death—is also going to be constrained. Longevity will be increased and eventually death will be swallowed up entirely.

1. There is an issue about whether this passage alludes to Psalm 110:1 in some way, and whether the allusion, if present, is direct (prophecy/fulfillment) or merely analogical. Remember, Psalm 110:1 says, “The LORD said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool.’” Clearly God is going to subjugate Christ’s enemies at some level and then install Him as King (Psalm 2). I discern two main views about the connection between Psalm 110 and 1 Cor. 15:25.

The **first view** is that SIT is equivalent to REIGN. It refers to Christ’s present reign from heaven. The making of enemies into a footstool has already happened at some point in the past. This is roughly equivalent to the amillennial view. This does not seem to make sense—how can Christ reign while sitting if His enemies are not yet subjugated under His feet?

The **second view** is that SIT is equivalent to WAIT, not REIGN. It refers to Christ’s present waiting for His kingdom to begin on earth. See Hebrews 10:13 which completely convinces me of this view. The making of enemies into a footstool will happen in the future, by God the Father. I propose then that once Christ is installed as King, He will ensure that all the enemies remain in subjugation for the entire 1000 year kingdom. He will reign and every enemy will be subject to Him, including new generations born who might like to rebel against Him. The final enemy subjugated will be death.

2. Granted, there shall be one final rebellion of the world, led by Satan, against the Lord Jesus, but that will be quickly squashed and order returned after the enemy of all enemies is cast into the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:10). The unbelieving will be judged and condemned in like manner (Rev. 20:11-15). Even death itself will be made subject to Christ, who has already conquered it, but will do so openly and universally for all humanity and angels to see.
3. I believe the order of the verses help us understand this flow of events. Verse 24: At the end, Christ will deliver the kingdom to the Father when the power structures of the world and heaven are completely undone. Verse 25 explains: why all this?

BECAUSE (for) He must reign until every enemy is subdued. Christ **first** waits until the Father subdues the enemies to the footstool level. **Then** Christ reigns in the millennium until the enemies are dismantled entirely and remain under His feet. Notice that 1 Cor. 15:25 says “He (Christ) must reign until He (Christ) has put enemies under his feet.” But Psalm 110:1 says God the Father will make the enemies His footstool. These are connected, but they are two different things. One has God putting people as a footstool, the other Christ. But of course Christ is God, so thus it can be confusing.

D. **Christ will** take what is subjugated to Himself and deliver it to God the Father. Paul quotes a well-known passage from the Psalms—“He has put all things under His feet” (verse 27a, quoting from Psalm 8:6; notice *things* instead of *enemies*). Christ, as the perfect man, representing all of humanity before God, has the privilege of having all things under his authority. But there is also a responsibility tied to it. Adam failed in his assignment from God to subdue the earth and rule it successfully for God. So, Christ came to the same realm (the earth) in the same kind of nature (as a human) to do properly the same job that Adam did not do, and what no human since him can do. We will not have to endure forever a world that is ruled by the enemies of God. There is coming a glorious day when God will rule in Christ directly on the earth. Then all will be well!

Now, obviously this “all things” has one clear exception, namely God the Father who arranged all of it (27b). So the “all” is not inclusive of every existing thing—only every *created* thing. God is in an entirely different category than “created things.” The One who did the “putting” did not also put Himself under His Son.

The section ends at v. 28 and circles back to v. 24. “When” all things are subjugated to Christ the King of Kings, then Christ will turn over the rule and authority back to the Father and will publicly, for all to see, place Himself under the authority of God the Father. Now, all *created* things will be under the Father, and the Son will subject Himself as well. This is a phase shift from the millennial kingdom to the eternal kingdom. The first is ruled directly by Christ. The second is ruled over by the Triune God, in

which the perfect will of God will be openly executed in every possible way in the new heavens and on the new earth.

Christ brings all of creation into proper order and relationship under himself. All things are subjected to Him. Then He takes that package and delivers it as a gift to the Father.

It is like the Roman general who went out at the behest of the Emperor. The general had all the authority of the emperor and could do whatever he wanted or needed to be done to conquer a particular assigned area. When he did, he would return, bringing a sample of the spoils and prisoners with him, and would publicly bring this to the Emperor to show his loyalty and subjugation under the emperor. This shows that the emperor is the highest of all and is worthy even of the subjection of his highest generals.

- E. The passage is neatly bookended with the kingdom being delivered to God the Father both in verse 24 and 28. The middle of the passage indicates what things must be “put down” for this to occur—all enemies, including death.

## **II. The Glory of God, v. 28b**

- A. This whole passage has been moving toward a crescendo. The resurrection of Christ was first; then the resurrection of believers; then, incidentally the resurrection of unbelievers. Just after believers are raised, Christ rules a kingdom in which there will end up being zero opposition, even from the stubborn enemy of death. *Everything* will be put in order. Corruption will be eliminated. Idolatry will be gone. Politics and religion will be purified. The world will be as present-day utopians wish it to be, but not due to social programs or socialism, but rather because of Jesus.
- B. The climax is this: “in order that God may be all in all.” This is the grand purpose/aim/goal of all the events that Paul has been explaining. In fact, it is the purpose and goal of the entire creation and historical program that God has decreed and has been guiding for the millennia.
- C. But what does “that God may be all in all” mean? We learn by simply looking back to the context of the entire ordered program. Everything led up to this. The climax is that Christ will hand over

the well-ordered kingdom to the Father, and also will bow to the Father in humble submission. He will have fulfilled the role as the last Adam, a man who has done perfectly what God wished to be done. In his perfect humanity, He will demonstrate proper obeisance to the Creator of the Universe.

All who have glorified Christ up to this point (Philippians 2:9-11) will turn their glorifying attention to God the Father. All eyes will be on Him who decreed, planned, created, guided, and sustained all things. He will then be at the top of the stack (all) among everything (all). All things (creation and humanity) will recognize God for who He really is and will give Him honor.

- D. How is this glorification different than the glory desired by an egotistical maniac? With all the Christian talk of “glorifying God,” is it possible that God is not entirely self-absorbed?

He is not, for He created and enjoys fellowship with others than Himself. He gave of Himself to save us. He enjoys the characteristic of humility, which marks His own character because He is holy and incapable of selfishness. And He exhibits common grace in which He shares many blessings with His creation, as undeserving as it may be of those blessings.

Because of what I call *Triune self-reflecting glory*, He can receive glory without being self-centered or self-absorbed, because at the same time He receives, He also reflects/shares/disburses that glory to the other members of the Triune Godhead. What would for us become an occasion of stumbling and a cause for reproach cannot become those things for Him, because the glory He receives is perfectly received and redirected toward Christ and the Spirit.

Why Christ? It was the Son who lived and suffered and died. It was the Son who implemented the reign over the kingdom. It was the Son who raised from the dead and conquered death and Satan. It was the Son who rebuffed all attempts of the Devil to test Him.

And why the Holy Spirit? It is He who worked in every believer’s life throughout all of history to illuminate them, wash them, and regenerate them. It is He who teaches and guides all believers. It was He who was active at creation and in the offering and

resurrection of Christ, in the new creation of sinner's hearts, and Who indwelt the church. The church gets a share of this glory, being *in* Him.

And the Son and the Spirit can in turn reflect the glory toward them to the Father, who is, as Paul says, all among all, because God planned, created, sustains, and guides all things to His intended purpose.

It is this God whom we worship. He is the God we serve. He is the God who saves and sanctifies. He is the only true and living God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is He who is holy, and true, and just, and loving, and omnipotent, and all-knowing, and everywhere present. It is He who as deigned to raise sinners to the place of saints. May we worship Him truly by His Spirit, that He may be glorified as He deserves.

See also Romans 11:36, 16:27; 1 Cor. 8:6, Eph. 3:21; Jude 25; Phil. 4:20; 1 Timothy 1:17; 2 Peter 3:18; Rev. 1:6.

## **Conclusion: The Glory of God**

Fellow believers: Behold God. He is EVERYTHING. He is ALL IN ALL. He raised up Jesus from the dead. He will raise up every Christian as well (2 Cor. 4:14). Christ will establish His reign openly on the earth in a society under the righteous rule of His Son and His people. All of this will be given back to God from Whom it came, that God might have all the glory among all creation.

MAP