

**Easter 2009: Resurrection not Reconstruction**  
**1 Corinthians 15:1-22**

**V1-15**

- The doctrine of the resurrection of the human body is hinted at in the Old Testament but isn't presented with the clarity found in the New Testament. We read plenty that spoke about or alluded to the resurrection in scriptures like **Job 19:25-27**, **Psalm 17:15**, and **Psalm 49:15**. Even the story of Abraham and Isaac recorded in **Genesis 22:1-17** provides somewhat of a glimpse. Abraham went to Mount Moriah to offer up his son Isaac. Verse 5 - what most of us would have seen as torture he calls worship. Verse 1 indicates that it was a test to see if Abraham would hold anything he received from God with more esteem than his relationship to Him. Once it was proven that he wouldn't, God provided a substitute sacrifice. In verse 14, Abraham called that place Jehovah Jireh, the Lord will provide. **Hebrews 11:17-19** says Abraham could do this only because he believed God would raise Isaac up from the grave, if needed.
- As we'll see, our faith in the gospel is contingent upon the resurrection being true. And since it's that important, why is it that we rarely hear it taught except on Easter Sunday? It's simple; Satan wants us to focus on reconstruction not resurrection. Reconstruction is the building upon something that was once flawed, while resurrection is the removal of the imperfect to make way for that which is perfect. Since we are flawed individuals, we'd rather work around our sins than focus on the removal of our sins. Why? No more justification - "I'm not perfect, that's how I am," and my personal favorite, "You want me to change overnight!" Reconstruction keeps these sayings alive, while the resurrection reminds us that one day all excuses will be useless.
- Chapter 15 of 1 Corinthians is known as great resurrection chapter of the bible; it tells us where our focus should be, and why it should be there. The church, at this time, had adopted the Greek teaching of there's life after death but not a bodily resurrection, instead you'll be spirit beings floating around like ghosts. Paul gives 3 classic proofs to these denials; proofs that we should also have engrained within us:
  1. **Our salvation** (v1-2) - look at your transformed lives, this is proof of the resurrection; and you can see this in 2 ways: first, your spiritual posture or how you stand-abide, hold up continually; second, the source of your deliverance or how you're saved-healed, or delivered.
  2. **The scriptures** (v3) - it's biblical, this was all done according to the scriptures.
  3. **Eyewitnesses** (v4-8) - 30 years later Paul says the majority is still alive
- Verse 7 correlates to **James 2:1-3**. Imagine what kind of heart James has in writing this. Initially he didn't believe his big brother was the Messiah, he'd lived with him all his life. Can you imagine what that conversation was like? Then later he finds out Jesus is God. Now he's writing be careful when you're in a synagogue and become swayed by appearances, I did that and boy was I wrong!
- Verse 8 - Paul says he was like one born out of due time. What he's saying is that he should have been cast away-aborted, and he goes on why. Because he

persecuted the church, caused many to deny the Lord, separated families, consented to murder, yet by the grace of God he says, "I am what I am by His grace that was bestowed upon him." I love this; he realizes he's undeserving, which causes him to labor more fervently. But he knows it wasn't him but God's grace. He's stuck, as all of us are, between the sovereignty of God and human responsibility - a wonderful place to be.

- Verse 12-15 - Paul asks if Christ is risen then why are some of you saying there's no resurrection? If Christ is not risen then our faith is in vain, in fact, all of us are liars.

### **V16-22**

- Paul says there's no gray area either. If Christ is not raised from the dead then none of us are heaven bound, blood covered, or sin proofed, as we're still in our sins. And those who died before us are also still in their sins; and us who are alive are of all people most miserable, as we also are believing a lie, and sacrificing time, effort, vices, pleasures, all for something that's not true. Verse 20 - but because Christ has risen from the dead then we can be assured that we also will be raised from the dead.
- Verse 21-22 - Paul tells us God is not interested in reconstruction - building upon a flawed foundation - so here comes Jesus the second man of those who come after Him, those who believe will experience the breath of life. The first man was made a living soul, the other is a life-giving God, who makes something from nothing; and He doesn't build upon flawed material, He creates out of nothing. The saints who were burned alive will still experience a bodily resurrection, just as those who will be changed at the rapture of the church.