

# Of First Importance, 1 of 4 on the Resurrection

by Michael Flowers

---

*Michael Flowers emphasizes the centrality of the resurrection in the Christian faith and its transformative power for believers' lives.*

**Duration:** 18:08

**Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, 1 Corinthians 15:12, 1 Corinthians 15:17

**Topics:** "Resurrection"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the issue of some people in the Corinthian church denying the resurrection of the dead. The speaker emphasizes the importance of the gospel message, which includes the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He highlights that this message is not just a doctrine, but a crucial part of our salvation and union with Christ. The speaker also mentions that the resurrection of Jesus is a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies and is a sign of the Messiah King bringing new creation. He concludes by acknowledging the grace of God in his own life and the importance of living in anticipation of Christ's return and the resurrection of our bodies.

---

## Transcript

Over the next four Sundays, we're going to take a little trip through 1 Corinthians 15. And it's Paul's most lengthy treatment of the resurrection. The resurrection of Jesus and also the resurrection of those who believe in Jesus.

Some in that little house church in Corinth have a problem with this. And so throughout 1 Corinthians, Paul is addressing five key issues in the Corinthian church. This is the last one.

He saved the best for last. It says in verse 12, it says, Now, if Christ is preached, is raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? There's the problem. Some are saying there isn't a resurrection from the dead.

Kind of sounds like today, doesn't it? Nothing's really changed that much. And so this is why Paul begins this chapter with how they came into the path of salvation in Christ. He says, I want to remind you of the gospel which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are saved.

Which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are saved. If you hold fast, unless you believed in vain. And he's addressing folks that are not really sure about the resurrection.

And he's saying the death, the burial and the resurrection, the resurrected body, the physical body of Jesus was raised for our justification. And so Paul, with a sense of urgency and pastoral care, invites his flock back into this overarching story. Christ has died.

Christ is risen. The story of redemption, which they received, in which they stand and by which they are saved. If they don't depart from what they received, the gospel must be received as Paul received it.

And so very much like today, the biblical teaching in the resurrection is either rejected as a myth or interpreted metaphorically. He metaphorically rose from the dead. And that's why we can have higher consciousness, right? Avoiding any real and substantial psychosomatic event.

What do I mean by that? Psychosomatic? Body, soul. Psycho, soul, somatic, soma, body in Greek. Psychosomatic is a body, soul event.

It's not just the psychology that's happening, but it's a physiology that's going on. A real corpse once buried in a tomb, bodily coming to life in a new materiality, materiality. That's a good word, right? And that new materiality is what Paul calls new creation.

It's new creation. Anyone is in Christ, new creation. Paul says to reject or revise the teaching they received on the resurrection is to threaten the very nature of their salvation.

It really matters what we believe. And if they don't hold fast what he taught them, Paul says they believed in vain. OK, that's pretty serious stuff, isn't it? So we must ask if this is the first time the theme of resurrection has occurred in the letter.

Is he saving this just for last? Or has he been telling the big story throughout all of their issues and dealing pastorally with this crazy church that was not lacking in any gift? After all, isn't the doctrine of the resurrection some piece of confusing eschatology? No, isn't the doctrine of resurrection kind of contained in that whole eschatological future that we can't know much about? And it's murky and the details of the future are confusing. And no, no, I'm not going to get out here alive today. That's where I sit.

Right. Good, good, good. I feel threatened already.

That's great. So Paul says what he passed on to them is of what first importance. Yeah, what he's saying now is of first importance.

Christ died for our sins. He was buried and he was raised on the third day, according to the scriptures. What scriptures? Was the New Testament written at this time? No, New Testament wasn't written at this time.

It's the overarching. I don't believe it's any one or two, three scriptures that Paul is referring to, even though there are many. You know, Peter preached the resurrection on the Day of Pentecost through a psalm, Psalm 16.

Right. That was in Joel, the book of Joel. So throughout the Old Testament, there is this overarching theme of of the Messiah King coming to bring us out of exile into the land.

And through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, they came to see that Jesus is that Messiah King. He was bringing us into not just the land, but new creation. He's altering the very fabric of human existence and human materiality.

And so here we see a creed which has been passed on through apostolic tradition. This is a first importance that Christ died for our sins and that he was buried and that he was raised bodily on the third day, according to the scriptures. Sounds like a creed, doesn't it? Now, we've got to ask ourselves, what part does doctrine play in our lives? Isn't doctrine optional? Come on, talk to me.

Is doctrine optional? After all, I'm sincere. Is there salvation by sincerity? OK, OK. I'm learning as I go here.

So thank you. Talk to me now. Come on.

You've got to set me straight. You've got to set me straight. Is it doctrine for those people who like to read books and have big libraries and sit around and smoke pipes and talk about the things of God? Well, yeah, but it's not just for those guys.

That's right. Or does sound doctrine. Here's another question about the essential teachings of Christ permeate our moral nature and serve as a source of our transformation.

So for Paul, sincerity isn't enough. If you turn away from this, if you revise this, you have believed in vain, he says. Right.

Don't tamper with it. And so the story of our salvation is that in the crucified and risen Lord is intertwined with everything about our lives. It's just not up here.

Right. It's just not a set of credal beliefs that we can rattle off through memory. I believe in the resurrection of the body.

We're going to say that today in the Apostles Creed. We're going to spend some time in the Apostles Creed just because of that phrase, the resurrection of the body, not just the resurrection of the dead. But the resurrection of the body.

OK. And so the story of our salvation, as I said, in the crucified and risen Lord is intertwined in the fabric of everything that we do and everything that we attempt. You see, in our water baptism, we are buried with Christ and raised to newness of life in his resurrection.

His burial occurred in the old order of things. New creation had not yet happened. Christ died for our sins as the second Adam in the old order of things.

Paul says, if there is no resurrection, we're most miserable. If there's only the death of the Messiah, then we're still stuck in our sins. We're still stuck in the old order of things where death still has victory.

But the resurrection becomes a hinge point in a pathway into the new order, into new creation. And Jesus is the embodiment. His resurrected body is the embodiment of that new creation, which we're all headed towards.

We're all headed that way to have a body like Jesus. We're going to share in that resurrection life of Jesus. And we're sharing in that in a limited sense right now.

And we enter into that through baptism. We're buried with Christ. In his death.

And we are raised newness of life in his resurrection. And so receiving this gospel is a means of deliverance from this present evil age. Receiving this gospel is a means of deliverance from this present evil age.

Transporting us, as it were, into the new kingdom of his beloved son in whom we have redemption. And so the church buried and raised with baptism is the beginning of God's new story to be fully consummated at his final return. Right now we are living in an already not yet experience of the kingdom of God.

It's a foretaste of the marriage supper of the lamb that we will all be immersed in. And the presence of the future in Christ, in us. Let me say that again.

The presence of the future in Christ, in us, affects our moral character. Our physical bodies are now temples of the Holy Spirit, a place for the eternal divine nature to dwell. And so is this the first place that Paul speaks about the resurrection? Let's go back and let's think about 1 Corinthians 6 for a minute.

Here's some of the implications of the resurrection. In addressing a host of immoral expressions carried out by the body in 1 Corinthians 6. And there's a big list. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 6 13.

Yet the body is not for immorality, but the body for the Lord and the Lord is for the body. Speaking of our physical bodies. The body is for the Lord.

What we do with our bodies has significance. We're not disembodied beings where it only matters what we believe. It really matters what we do with our bodies.

You see, the body now is for the Lord because it's a temple of the Holy Spirit. And yet the body is not for immorality, but the body for the Lord and the Lord is for the body. Verse 14 says this.

Now God has not only raised the Lord. Here it is, but will also raise us up through his power. He's totally connecting this now.

This is right in the context. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Paul is asking, right? May it never be. But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with the Lord.

How? Through his resurrection, through his resurrection and the sending of the Holy Spirit. First Corinthians 11. Here's another implication.

In the Eucharist, Paul is drawing the church in Corinth into the wider, longer story. When he's talking about the Eucharist, looking back now on Jesus' death and final return. And he says in verse 23, in following of First Corinthians 11, he says, For I receive from the Lord that which I also delivered to you.

And then he states the words of institution on the night that he was handed over to suffering and death. Our Lord Jesus Christ took bread and so on and so forth. And then he ends the words of institution with verse 26.

For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he returns. The implication there is the resurrection. Because proclaiming the Lord's death until return assumes that he rose from the dead, right? Or he couldn't return.

And so every time we proclaim the Lord's death, we're doing that until he returns. It's the anticipation of the resurrection and our bodies being united fully, fully in Jesus. The death and resurrection of Christ, it affects our union, our communion with him now.

And so Paul ends this, these 11 verses, and we don't have time to really handle all of them today. He says. And then he appeared to me last of all.

And that shouldn't have happened because I'm the least of the apostles, because I persecuted the church. But it's because of the grace of God, I am what I am. He says that so humbly.

I am what I am by the grace of God, because I don't deserve the grace of God. And then he said, through the grace of God, I worked harder than all those apostles. He's getting a little proud again.

But it wasn't I, the ego, I in Greek is ego. That's where we get the word ego. It wasn't I. It was the grace of God working powerfully through me because of the resurrection.

We receive the grace of God. And the grace of God is more than unmerited favor. It's not just a concept.

It's not just the doctrine. If we insult the spirit of grace in the book of Hebrews, it says, how shall we? Dot, dot, dot. The grace of God is caught up into the the presence and power and very divine nature of God.

When we receive the grace of God, we're receiving God himself, the empowerment to do everything that he's called us to do. And it's because of the resurrection. It's because the grace of God, Jesus Christ, full of grace and truth, full of grace.

He wants all of us to be full of grace and truth. And we can be full of grace and be graceful people because our bodies now are temples of the Holy Spirit. And so we need to affirm that as we as we get up in the morning and we walk into this present evil age that we are being delivered from.

We need to affirm that our bodies, our bodies are for the Lord and the Lord is for our bodies. And that's why we eat and drink of the body of the Lord, because in the eating and drinking of the body of the Lord, we are becoming like him. It's a beautiful transformation process.

So this morning. Church, the grace of God is with you. The grace of God is inside of you and the grace of God is the power to do and to will all that God has called in your life to accomplish.

We will never accomplish our calling by our own means. It's only in our weakness will he be made strong. And that strength is the grace of God in our lives.

And most of the time when we're carrying it out. I don't know about you, but I know about me. I feel extremely weak and I'm not even aware of what's happening.

But the Lord is at work because the Lord is at work, not just in how we feel. The Lord is at work. He's so transcendent from our emotions and our feelings and our weakness.

And he is the one who is causing us to walk in the strength and light of Jesus. And so the grace of God is with you this morning. The power of God is with you this morning because of the risen Christ.

The Lord be with you. Yes. Amen.

The Lord be with you. I receive it. The risen Lord be with you.

Amen. Let's say the glory. Glory to the father and to the son and to the Holy Spirit as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be world without end.

Amen. Amen. Praise the Lord.

Let's stand together.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/28/SID28676.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/michael-flowers/of-first-importance-1-of-4-on-the-resurrection/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**