



## ***The Last Enemy to be Destroyed is Death***

1 Corinthians 15:12-28

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**Overview:** The Christian belief in the resurrection is neither a coping mechanism to deal with death nor wishful thinking that imagines a better life, but is rooted in the historical reality of the risen Christ and is integral to the gospel message. The Apostle Paul thus describes the Christian life apart from resurrection hope as one of empty talk, false belief, divine misrepresentation, and ongoing futility resulting in pity. And yet, the reality of the resurrection provides us with an understanding of God's ultimate plan to conquer death, which entered the world as a tool of God's judgment against sin, but will be vanquished forever as a testimony to God's glory. Rather than being pitied for having this hope, Christians are victors over the greatest enemy ever known and participants in the greatest life yet to come.

**01. Death is our most visible reminder of God's judgment upon a sinful world. It takes but does not give, destroys but does not rebuild, condemns, but does not forgive, and, if it could, would keep even the Son of God in the grave.**

**02. The resurrection is our most certain hope of God's gift of salvation to a sinful world. By it, God gives what was taken, rebuilds what was destroyed, forgives what was condemned, and exalts the Lord above all things.**

# The Death of Death

1. What rationale might account for the denials of the resurrection among the Corinthians (verse 12)? What evidences does Paul cite for the reality of Christ's resurrection in verses 1-11? How important would the eyewitness accounts be in defending the resurrection against those who denied it?

2. Note how many things Paul says are lost if the resurrection of Jesus did not actually happen (verse 14-18). Which of these results would be the hardest for you to bear in your own life? Can you design an evangelistic presentation based on the results of the resurrection?

3. Paul states that Christians are to be pitied if we have hope in this life only (verse 19). Do you have pity for those who are not Christians and are therefore living for this world only? Or do you envy those who seem to have it all now and are unconcerned about their future state? What measures can you implement in your life that will help you to see through the vanity of living for this world only?

4. The sinful action of Adam brought death into the world (verse 21-22). How would you reply to someone who suggests that it isn't fair for God to punish the world for the sins of one man? How does the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ help us to appreciate our representation by one man?

5. How does 1 Corinthians 15:20-28 help us to understand the purpose of world history as it relates to God's great plan of salvation? What elements of God's plan remain to be fulfilled, according to verses 26-28? In what way can you use these passages as a means of encouragement as you think about your own life, or about history itself coming to an end?

**For Further Reading:** John Owen, *The Death of Death in the Death of Christ* (originally published, 1684; Banner of Truth edition, 2002).

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