

07-11-10

Series: The Resurrections

# The Resurrections (14a)

## What Happens to Christians Who Die?

([1 Thessalonians 4:13-18](#))

Pastor Eddie Ildefonso

[Matthew 28:1-10](#)

(Continuation from 07-04-10)

### The Doctrine of the Resurrections

([1 Thessalonians 4:13-18](#))

#### 1. The Pillars of the Rapture

[1 Corinthians 15:20-24 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>20</sup> But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep.

<sup>21</sup> For since by a man *came* death, by a man also *came* the resurrection of the dead.

<sup>22</sup> For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.

<sup>23</sup> But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming,

<sup>24</sup> then *comes* the end, when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power.

In the most detailed passage on the resurrection in Scripture, Paul wrote that **“Christ [is] the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming”** ([1 Corinthians 15:23](#)).

[1 Corinthians 15:23 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>23</sup> But each in his own order: **Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming.**

([1 Corinthians 15:20](#)) **first fruits:** This speaks of the first installment of harvest to eternal life, in which Christ's resurrection will precipitate and guarantee that all of the saints who have died will be resurrected also.

(See [John 14:19](#)). fallen asleep: *See also note on [1 Corinthians 15:18](#).*

[John 14:19 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>19</sup> “After a little while the world will no longer see Me, but you *will* see Me; because I live, you will live also.”

[1 Corinthians 15:18 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>18</sup> Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.

07-11-10

Series: The Resurrections

**(1 Corinthians 15:18) fallen asleep:** A common euphemism for death (cf. [1 Corinthians 15:6, 20](#); [1 Corinthians 11:30](#); [Matthew 27:52](#); [Acts 7:60](#); [2 Peter 3:4](#)). This is not soul sleep, in which the body dies and the soul, or spirit, supposedly rests in unconsciousness.

**(1 Corinthians 15:21-22) man ... Man:** Adam, who through his sin brought death on the whole human race, was human. So was Christ, who by His resurrection brought life to the race.

**(1 Corinthians 15:22) all ... all:** The two “alls” are alike only in the sense that they both apply to descendants. The second “all” applies only to believers (see [Galatians 3:26, 29](#); [Galatians 4:7](#); [Ephesians 3:6](#); cf. [Acts 20:32](#); [Titus 3:7](#)) and does not imply universalism (the salvation of everyone without faith). Countless other passages clearly teach the eternal punishment of the unbelieving (i.e., [Matthew 5:29](#); [Matthew 10:28](#); [Matthew 25:41, 46](#); [Luke 16:23](#); [2 Thessalonians 1:9](#); [Revelation 20:15](#)).

**(1 Corinthians 15:23) in his own order:** Christ was first, as the first fruits of the resurrection harvest ([1 Corinthians 15:20–23a](#)). Because of His resurrection, “those who are Christ’s” will be raised and enter the eternal heavenly state in **3 stages** at Christ’s coming (cf. [Matthew 24:36, 42, 44, 50](#); [Matthew 25:13](#)): **1)** those who have come to saving faith from Pentecost to the Rapture will be joined by living saints at the Rapture to meet the Lord in the air and ascend to heaven ([1 Thessalonians 4:16-17](#)); **2)** those who come to faith during the Tribulation, with the Old Testament saints as well, will be raised up to reign with Him during the Millennium ([Revelation 20:4](#); cf. [Daniel 12:2](#); cf. [Isaiah 26:19-20](#)); and **3)** those who die during the millennial kingdom may well be instantly transformed at death into their eternal bodies and spirits. The only people left to be raised will be the ungodly and that will occur at the end of the Millennium at the Great White Throne Judgment of God ([Revelation 20:11–15](#); cf. [John 5:28-29](#)), which will be followed by eternal hell ([Revelation 21:8](#)).

**(1 Corinthians 15:24) Then comes the end:** This third aspect of the resurrection involves the restoration of the earth to the rule of Christ, the rightful King. “End” can refer not only to what is over, but to what is complete and fulfilled.

**He delivers the kingdom to God:** In the culmination of the world’s history, after Christ has taken over the restored world for His Father and reigned for 1,000 years, all things will be returned to the way they were designed by God to be in the sinless glory of the new heavens and new earth (see [Revelation 21, 22](#)).

**End to all rule:** Christ will permanently conquer every enemy of God and take back the earth that He created and that is rightfully His. During the Millennium, under Christ’s rule, rebelliousness will still exist and Christ will have to “**rule them with a rod of iron**” ([Revelation 19:15](#)). At the end of the 1,000 years, Satan will be unleashed briefly to lead a final insurrection against God ([Revelation 20:7–9](#)). But with all who follow his hatred of God and Christ, he will be banished to hell with his fallen angels to suffer forever in the lake of fire ([Revelation 20:10–15](#)).