

# SIX LONGINGS THE RESURRECTION SATISFIED

1 Corinthians 15:12-20, ***“Now if Christ is preached as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified of God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised. If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all men most to be pitied. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.”***

The resurrection of Jesus Christ satisfies six of our deepest needs and longings. I believe these six longings are rooted in every human heart. Note, the apostle Paul used negatives: *“preaching not in vain ... faith not in vain ... etc.”* However, we can see what God has really done for us in raising Jesus from the dead when we put all these negatives into positives. I'm going to switch the order around because when the resurrection starts meeting our needs, there is a kind of pattern that fits our experience. I want to follow that pattern as we look at each of the longings being satisfied:

## (1) THE LONGING FOR ACCEPTANCE

Verse 17, instead of saying negatively that we are not still in our sins, we can say positively that because of the resurrection we are forgiven for our sins.

I put this first as the basic longing of the human heart because if God holds our sins against us, then there is no hope of receiving anything from Him. The foundation for every other blessing from God is that He won't hold our sins against us. Everything hangs on forgiveness. How is the resurrection connected to our forgiveness? Isn't it the death of Jesus that takes away our sin, because He bore our sins and took our judgment? Yes. But the connection with the resurrection is very important. Romans 4:25 puts it like this. ***"He was handed over [to death] on account of our transgressions, and He was raised on account of our justification."***

This means that by His death Christ paid the penalty for our sins and purchased our acquittal, our justification, our forgiveness. And since the achievement of the cross was so complete and the work of our justification so decisive, God raised Jesus from the dead to validate our forgiveness and to vindicate His Son's righteousness and to celebrate the work of justification. We all need forgiveness, and deep inside, even when we don't think about it, we long for it. We long to be accepted by God. We fear the alienation because of our guilt. But Paul says, since Christ rose from the dead, we are no longer in our sins. This is the first and most basic longing of our hearts.

## (2) THE LONGING FOR TRUST

Verse 14, instead of saying negatively that our faith is not in vain, we can say positively that because of the resurrection our faith is well-founded. Or, to put it more personally, because of the resurrection of Jesus there is someone we can trust completely and absolutely. I believe that deep in the heart of every person is a longing for someone that you can count on through thick and thin. Someone who is absolutely trustworthy. Someone who, if you put your faith in him, it won't be in vain.

Someone who won't let you down - who will always be there. We want to trust because we were made for it. God put man and woman in the garden of Eden to glorify God by trusting Him for everything they needed. That need has never changed, in spite of sin. And now that we are no longer in our sins, this longing too is satisfied by the resurrection of Jesus. The death of Jesus proves His love for us, and the resurrection proves His power over every enemy of life. And so there is someone you can count on. Someone absolutely trustworthy. Someone who will never let you down. His name is Jesus, and He is alive to be trusted. ***"The life I live I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me"*** (Galatians 2:20).

### (3) THE LONGING FOR TRUTH

Verse 15, instead of saying negatively that the apostles are not false witnesses about the work of God, we can say positively that because of the resurrection the apostles preach what is true. They are not false witnesses about God. They are true. Our young people are being taught (and many of us were taught) that there is no 'absolute' truth - something that is true all the time and everywhere whether people know it or like it. It is a rare teenager today who has the guts and independence to stand up for the truth. Without the conviction that there are 'absolutes' that can be shared and made the basis for society, the only end will be anarchy where everyone does what is right in his own eyes. Therefore the need for truth is a deep need of the human soul and human society. And Jesus came into the world to say, ***"I am the way, the truth, and the life"*** (John 14:6). And then he rose from the dead to vindicate His claim. Jesus has a right to tell us what is absolutely true because in the resurrection God proved Him to be absolutely true.

#### (4) THE LONGING FOR THE MIRACULOUS

Verse 16, instead of saying negatively that if the dead do not rise then Christ has not risen, we can say positively that because of the resurrection we can believe in miracles. And not only that, when needed, miracles can be performed in our lives by the same power that raised Jesus from the dead. There is a longing in every human heart to see the supernatural power of God at work. And there is no better place to start than by looking at the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Because Christ has been raised from the dead, all other dead things can be raised by the same power, and that is, the exceeding greatness of God's mighty power which is being directed towards those who believe.

If you need a dead thing to come to life, the miraculous power of God is available to bring about your miracle. It may be a barren womb, a dead relationship, a lifeless business venture, an expired dream or any lifeless situation. No matter what it is! The resurrection power of God is ever ready to breath life back into it! Due to the resurrection of Jesus Christ you can now operate in the supernatural realm and experience the miraculous.

#### (5) THE LONGING FOR RESPECT

Verse 19, instead of saying negatively that we are not to be pitied, we can say positively that because of the resurrection we are to be envied and respected. Our preaching is not in vain - it is full, meaningful, valid, valuable, significant. If Christ is not raised, then living for Him, doing what He says, following His will is a great delusion. We should be pitied like insane people who are delusional. However, since Christ has been raised and is alive, and reigns as king forever, all our obedience,

all our love, all our self-denial is not just not-to-be-pitied, but is positively enviable and thus respected. ***"This slight momentary affliction is working for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison,"*** Paul said in 2 Corinthians 4:17.

There is in every one of us the longing that our lives be well spent. That our lives count for something, that they have significance and usefulness, that we don't come to the end of our days and say, it was all in vain, empty, pointless, useless, insignificant, or pitiable. Paul knows this and that's why he ends this whole chapter on the resurrection (verse 58) with the words: ***"Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain."*** Not in vain! That's the longing of our lives. Let me not come to the end of my days and say, "I've wasted my life!" Christ is risen and everything done in His name; by His strength; and for His glory is not in vain. It is enviable, significant, and valuable, therefore, it demands respect.

## (6) THE LONGING TO LIVE FOREVER

Finally, there is the longing that we shall live forever in joy. That we not come to an empty end after a full and valuable life. And so Paul says in verse 18 that because Christ is raised, those who have fallen asleep in Him - those who have died in faith - have not perished. Or positively, they are still alive. They will live forever. They live the way Christ lives. They will enter into the joy of their Master. Remember this, God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ are most glorified in you when you are most satisfied in them. And to make that true God raised His Son Jesus from the dead to reign forevermore. Jesus is now seated at the right hand of God in heavenly places with His enemies under His feet. Hallelujah!

In raising Jesus from the dead God gave us forgiveness and glorified His Son (*satisfying the longing for acceptance*). He gave us the all-sufficient forgiver; Who is a friend that we can count on and is utterly reliable and trustworthy (*satisfying the longing for trust*). God gave us guidance and unchanging truth and glorified Jesus as the absolute foundation for truth and righteousness (*satisfying the longing for truth*); He gave us a life that is not pitiable but enviable and respected (*satisfying the longing for respect*), He gave us a ministry that is not in vain but fruitful, and glorified Jesus as the source and goal of all life (*satisfying the longing for the miraculous*); and He gave us everlasting joy that will not be ended by death (*satisfying the longing to live forever*).

Through death and resurrection Jesus became the author of life, the victor over death, and the first fruit of those who have fallen asleep. Yes, Christ is risen so that all our longings may be satisfied!