

# A Better Resurrection

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(Quotations from the New King James version except as noted)

Good afternoon, brethren. Here we are on God's special Sabbath day, and today what I would like to do is talk about what I think is a very, very important topic. It is one, I think, that is almost entirely ignored in this world. At least in the religious world that I am accustomed to, you very rarely, almost never, hear it mentioned. It is something which we in the Church of God **do** refer to from time to time, but I thought it would be a good idea to refresh our understanding by looking at the topic in more detail today. In some ways this might be more of a Bible study, really, than a sermon, I guess, because this is a truth which we have which does affect us all. Whether it is the younger people or the older people or those in the middle, this will affect every single one of us. In fact, it affects everybody in the whole world. It is a very basic truth, and that is the subject of the Resurrection of the dead.

What I would like to do is really to look at the Resurrection of the dead to find out what we know about it, what the Bible has to say about it, and then also to look back and think, "Well, because we have got this truth, what should it mean for us?"

Truth isn't a question of just possessing some knowledge. It is not like you end up at the gates of the Kingdom one day and Saint Peter is waiting with a questionnaire and he says, "Okay then, how many Trumpets are there?" And you say, "Oh...seven," and he checks a box "How many days of Unleavened Bread are there?" And you go, "Ah,...five," and he puts a cross against you. It's not a question of knowledge for the sake of knowledge. It is a question of the knowledge we have and the truths that we possess should actually affect the way we live. It either helps us to see our lives differently or sometimes it is very, very specific.

For example, the Bible says, "Don't eat unclean meats." That is something that is very, very immediate and relevant and concrete and practical, so you know that you can't eat snakes. Hopefully you know that. And you can't eat hedgehogs. We were talking about gypsies this morning on the way up in the car. When I was a young boy, seven or eight, I was aware that in those days, gypsies would actually eat hedgehogs. They would catch the hedgehogs and then bake them in a clay coating, and then, when they had finished baking them, they would peel the clay off, and off would come the spines from this nicely cooked hedgehog! But we know that the truths of the Bible tell us that you can't eat hedgehogs.

What about the Resurrection? What should the knowledge of that actually do for us? I said that you don't hear much about the Resurrection in this world's churches. The only place, really, that I have heard about it in any detail at all has been among God's people, but it is fundamental. Let's open our Bibles first of all to Hebrews, chapter 6, and lay the foundation here. Starting in verse 1 we read,

**1 Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, (or the basics) let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,...** So we are now outlining, if you like, the very foundational, basic teachings that we have in God's church.

**2 ...of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.**

So we can see there that Paul is laying out the very basic, foundational truths and saying that we should have gone beyond these, of course, brethren, which is true.

Today I just want to focus on this particular one, the Resurrection of the dead, which is absolutely important. It is critical understanding to know what God means by "the Resurrection of the dead." Why do you need a Resurrection of the dead? What is its purpose and what should that do for us?

Turn to 1 Corinthians, chapter 15, which is, of course, the Resurrection chapter. There are dozens of verses here about the Resurrection, but I want to start with verse 20.

**20 But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.** My margin says there, "who have died" because I think we understand that the Bible uses the term "to fall asleep" to imply that you are dead.

**21 For since by man came death** (that was Adam), **by Man also came the Resurrection of the dead.** **22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.** It means all. All means all! Everybody who has ever lived so far has died or will die, not counting that small number that live on through the End times and are changed at Jesus' return

**22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.** Everybody at some stage will also be made alive again.

**23 But each one in his own order...:** So there is a sequence here. It doesn't all happen simultaneously, all at once. Each one in his own order. **Christ the firstfruits,** (Who has already been resurrected) **afterward those who are Christ's at His coming.** (Those who are Christ's) And then, later on...

**24 "Then comes the end, when He (Jesus) delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power.**

So it does tell us there that there is this sequence, and in that sequence, ultimately, all who ever lived will be made alive again. They will be resurrected. That was a key teaching that Paul understood was so important. Wherever Paul went, basically, he would preach the Resurrection of the dead. It was dramatic information to people in these days.

If you turn to Acts, starting in chapter 17, we can pick up two or three of these places where Paul was preaching the Resurrection, and sometimes getting into trouble for so doing. Verse 18...this was Paul in Athens, **18 Then certain Epicurean and Stoic philosophers encountered him.** (Paul) **And some said, "What does this babbler want to say?"** (My margin says that it means "seedpicker", "this hick".) **Others said, "He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign gods,"** (Why?) **because he preached to them Jesus and the resurrection.** So here is Paul in Greece, in an important Gentile city, and he is preaching about Jesus and he is preaching about the Resurrection of the dead. I don't know about you, but, literally, I have very rarely heard anybody preach about the Resurrection of the dead, in any of my previous years in the Catholic church or elsewhere. It is almost a forgotten or ignored topic. Yet Paul is here in a Gentile country preaching to these people the Resurrection of the dead.

**32 ¶ And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked, while others said, "(Oh yeah) We will hear you again on this matter."** So they thought, "This is stupid. This guy is coming along talking about...you live, you die, and somehow you pop up again. How can you come back up from the dead?" So they just mocked and said, "This guy is drunk. He is beside himself."

Turn to Acts, chapter 23, verse 6. Paul is in trouble, again, in this particular chapter, and he is being interrogated.

**6 ¶ But when Paul perceived that one part (of this group) were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, "Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee; concerning the hope and resurrection of the dead I am being judged!"** So Paul could see here that there was one way to try to extricate himself, because he knew that there were two parties of the Jews here, the Sadducees and the Pharisees. He hoped to use the Resurrection of the dead as a means of trying to get himself out of some trouble. But he did point out, "Look, it is because of the hope of the dead, the Resurrection of the dead, that I am being judged, or criticized, or condemned here."

**7 And when he had said this, a dissension (an argument) arose between the Pharisees and the Sadducees; and the assembly was divided.** They started arguing with each other.

**8 For Sadducees say that there is no resurrection----and no angel or spirit; but the Pharisees confess both.**

The Jews didn't have a body of beliefs that they all shared. Sometimes today we do find even in the churches of God some people saying that we should look to the Jews for guidance. "The Jews understand Hebrew. They have the oral traditions. We should pay attention to Jewish thoughts and Jewish study groups, and so on."

But here is an example where there were two groups of Jews in front of Paul. One group didn't believe in angels or spirit world or the Resurrection, and yet they were "good Jews." They were the Sadducees. The other group, of course, the Pharisees, *did* believe in the Resurrection, and Paul could see that this was one way of trying to create some dissension and try to get himself out of trouble.

**9 Then there arose a loud outcry. ...** Because this question of the Resurrection stirred up some **real** heat here. **... And the scribes of the Pharisees' party arose and protested, saying, "We find no evil in this man;** (because he was supporting the

Resurrection as far as they were concerned) ***but if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him, let us not fight against God.***"

**10** *Now when there arose a great dissension,* (a huge fisticuffs, and so on) ***the commander, fearing lest Paul might be pulled to pieces by them, commanded the soldiers to go down and take him by force from among them, and bring him into the barracks*** (where he would be safe).

So this subject of the Resurrection of the dead actually created almost mayhem among this group of Jews. It was a very important topic. Those who didn't believe wanted to fight and argue and debate their cause.

So the Resurrection of the dead has been a very important topic for many years among God's people.

Turn to Acts, chapter 24, verse 14

**14** ***"But this I confess to you, that according to the Way*** (with a capital W on Way in my Bible, New King James) ***which they call a sect, so I worship the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets.***

I remember Mr. Ted Armstrong years ago. He was a bit of a young rogue when he was in his late teens, early twenties. He ran off and joined the Navy, I believe, but he did come to Ambassador College in the early Fifties or late Forties. He didn't really believe that his father was right. He knew better than his dad, and so on, because as a young man he knew **everything**, as most young men tend to believe.

But he was in Bible class and he was reading the book of Acts, chapter 24. He had also been reading, I think, just that particular week, an article in a big American magazine by a famous American religious teacher who had said categorically in his article, "Christianity is not a way of life." He said that several times. I think it was Norman Vincent Peale, who wrote about positive thinking for people, and so on. Ted thought, "Hang on a second! Here is this leading religious minister in the USA who says `Christianity is not a way of life`, but in verse 14, Paul says here `...according to the Way which they call a sect...`" It mentions the Way several times in this chapter, so it was that clear, obvious, categorical example that religious leaders, in fact, were not teaching the truth, that first alerted Mr. Ted Armstrong to, "Oh, perhaps there is more to what Dad teaches than I thought." Because the Bible says it is the way, the Way, and yet the present world teaches

that it is **not** a way of life. So that was the first thing that led Ted down that particular road.

**15 "I have hope in God, which they themselves also accept, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust.** So Paul refers here to the Resurrection of everybody, the just, the good, and also the Resurrection of the unjust. Of course, it is not clear from that verse whether they are all resurrected at the same time. We have to look at other parts of the Bible to find out whether there is more than one Resurrection. But Paul is quite categoric - there **will** be a Resurrection of everybody, the good and the bad.

I said a few moments ago that there is very little preaching of this today. Why not? Paul preached the Resurrection of the dead. If he got into trouble and caused fights and arguments over his preaching of the Resurrection of the dead, if it is the hope of the dead, the Resurrection, and we have Christian groups all around us today, various churches and denominations, how come there is not much preaching of the Resurrection of the dead today? What happened to it?

When I was a Roman Catholic, I certainly was **aware** of the Resurrection of the dead, but it was only some vague idea somewhere in the back of my mind. Even though, up to age 17, I was taught religious knowledge every morning of the week in school, for nearly an hour, we just never touched upon the Resurrection of the dead. It was just one of those airy, fairy ideas somewhere. Since those days I have seen many televangelists from being in America, watching on TV those very excited and enthusiastic televangelists, and I don't think I have heard anybody speak about the Resurrection of the dead.

You say, "Well, why not?" The reason, basically I think, is because Protestants and Catholics woefully misunderstand the nature of man. They don't know what man is. They think that man is, or has, an immortal soul. They think that mankind already lives on after he dies, so what point would there be in a Resurrection if you think when you die, and you have been good or just, that you pop off up to heaven? Or if you die and you have been not so good, you disappear down to hell, but in either case, you just live on, in that location up above or that location down below. You don't need to be resurrected, do you, because what would the point be? If you are an immortal soul, then you just live on anyway.

In a sense, it is almost ridiculous; the Christian world teaches that when you are dead, you are alive! Common sense tells you that, really, that is the opposite of life. You are either alive or, if you are dead, your life is stopped. But they teach, in fact, this crazy belief that when you are dead, you are actually **more** alive.

Some of them say, "Well, in this fleshly body you are restricted. You can only walk around a little bit, you can only see so far, but when you are dead, you are free to zoom around." In fact, they say that when you are dead you are actually more alive, you are freed up, you are liberated from this mortal, fleshly body. It really is complete nonsense.

When you read the Bible, it talks of death and the analogy it uses, the illustration it uses, is that you are **asleep**. We just read that earlier. When you are dead, you are said to be asleep. Of course, when you are asleep, really, you are unconscious, aren't you? You don't know much.

If you go to sleep in the night, and you are really exhausted, like when Charity arrived from this long flight from America, and we kept her up very late so she would be into the swing of British time, and so on, when she went to bed, she was zonked completely. She was asleep, and we made noises all over the house. There were phones going, bells ringing, dogs barking, ambulances making their way past with their sirens going. Charity was oblivious to it all, because she was asleep. She wasn't more alert; I can assure you she wasn't more alert when she was asleep than beforehand.

Likewise, when the Bible says that when you are dead, you are asleep, then you are not alert. When you are asleep in the grave, you are unconscious. You close your eyes, you are deaf, and the passage of a year, or a century, or five thousand years, you know nothing of. You are asleep.

I'm afraid that the Christian world, the religious world, thinks that when you die you are actually **more** alive, and that therefore makes the Resurrection a complete irrelevancy.

Why on earth would you need a Resurrection? It is because when you die everything actually stops and **ends**, because it terminates your life and your plans and your hopes and dreams, because death is such a categoric finality, humanly speaking, that Solomon got so utterly depressed.

Solomon was the wealthiest man who has ever lived. Bill Gates is a wealthy man; he has billions, but Solomon dwarfed Bill Gates into comparative poverty.

Solomon had the wealth, he had the fame. Worldwide, people came from thousands of miles away to see Solomon and hear his wisdom. He was a king. The streets were paved with gold, literally. A ton of silver was worthless in Jerusalem. Solomon was a man of enormous wealth and fame and fortune and glory and power and majesty, and yet at one point he wanted to die. Why? Why would a man with all of that want to give it up and just die, and end it all?

If we turn to Ecclesiastes, chapter 2, we can pick up the story there, because it does fit in very much to why the Resurrection is so important. Starting in verse 4, Solomon is just recounting some of the great things that he chose to do.

4 I made my works great, I built myself houses, and planted myself vineyards.

***5 I made myself gardens and orchards, and I planted all kinds of fruit trees in them.***

So he had beautiful surroundings. I can just imagine that this was the most beautiful spot on the earth at this time. If someone with all this money contacted the best landscape gardeners and said, "Look, transform all of this into the most beautiful place on earth," then I'm sure that it was.

***6 I made myself water pools from which to water the growing trees of the grove.***

***7 I acquired male and female servants, and had servants born in my house. Yes, I had greater possessions of herds and flocks than all who were in Jerusalem before me.***

***8 I also gathered for myself silver and gold and the special treasures of kings and of the provinces. I acquired male and female singers, the delights of the sons of men, and musical instruments of all kinds.***

So again, entertainment, Solomon had it all. The best choirs, the best quartets, the pop music of the day, etc. The best instruments, whether it was harps, or bagpipes, or whatever. Solomon had it all

**9 So I became great and excelled more than all who were before me in Jerusalem. Also my wisdom remained with me.**

**10 Whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure, For my heart rejoiced in all my labor; And this was my reward from all my labor.**

So he had everything. He didn't stop. He had the time; he had the money. If he wanted something, he had it. The lot. And of course, in this life, sometimes we think, "Oh, if I just had a newer car, or my own private airplane, or a bigger house, or a conservatory, or my own land. If I just had more and more possessions, I would really be happy." Of course, that can help make you happy, I suppose. Solomon had the lot, and he didn't end up a happy man.

**11 Then I looked on all the works that my hands had done And on the labor in which I had toiled; And indeed all was vanity and grasping for the wind. There was no profit under the sun.**

Vanity means just futile, just a waste of time. Solomon thought, "I have done all of that and, really, what does it mean? It is actually worthless." That's what he said to himself.

**15 So I said in my heart, "As it happens to the fool, It also happens to me, (meaning that `both of us die` ) And why was I then more wise?" Then I said in my heart, "This also is vanity."**

**16 For there is no more remembrance of the wise than of the fool forever, Since all that now is will be forgotten in the days to come. And how does a wise man die? As the fool!**

So, he thought, "Look, whether I was wise and wealthy or a complete idiot and moron, ultimately we are both dead, and in a few years we are both as forgotten as any other, so what is the point of all this?"

**17 ¶ Therefore I hated life because the work that was done under the sun was distressing (grievous) to me, for all is vanity and grasping for the wind.**

So he hated life; that basically means that he was suicidal. "Life is just so utterly painful, worthless, and futile because you die! Everything is finished and you are forgotten. What is the point?"

He could see that no matter how wealthy you are, no matter how material you are, no matter how powerful you are...That might apply to some of the so-called powerful men in God's church. They think because they are over a thousand, or two thousand, or five thousand of God's anointed elect, etc, that that power is meaningful, but ultimately, if that is all you have got in this life, it is just futile.

**18 Then I hated all my labor in which I had toiled under the sun, because I must leave it to the man who will come after me. "I'm going to die; I'm going to end."**

**19 And who knows whether he will be wise or a fool? Yet he will rule over all my labor in which I toiled and in which I have shown myself wise under the sun. This also is vanity.**

**20 Therefore I turned my heart and despaired of all the labor in which I had toiled under the sun.**

So the man was at the end of his tether, absolutely despairing, depressed, suicidal, because he knew that his death was the end.

Turn to Ecclesiastes, chapter 9.

**9 Live joyfully with the wife whom you love all the days of your vain life which He has given you under the sun, all your days of vanity; for that is your portion in life, and in the labor which you perform under the sun.**

**10 Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going.**

It can be depressing sometimes to read the book of Ecclesiastes, yet it does show the mind of a man that has really lost his hope in God. What he says here is, "Look when you are dead, there is nothing. There is no work, no device, you have no knowledge. You are not more alert when you are dead. When you go to the grave, life is not much more exciting for you. When you are in the grave, it is over; it is ended. Death finishes you off." He says, "Therefore, whatever you are doing in this life, make the most of it." Do it with all your might.

Mr. Armstrong wrote his booklet you will remember, *The Seven Laws of Success*, why no human being should ever be a failure. In that, one of his laws of success, I think number four, after right goal, preparation or education, good health, was **drive**. Press on, use your time wisely, be energetic. Don't lie back and be passive in life because when you are dead, your chance is over, just like Solomon says there.

Whatever your hand finds to do... Make use of the time you have now, because when you are dead – it's finished.

That is the same thing we are facing. We are facing, naturally speaking, the end of our lives, at some stage. It might be quite close in years, it might be a number of years away, but whether you live to be 120, or 150, or 200, by popping vitamins and so on, breathing properly...it doesn't matter where we get to, at some stage, we are all finished, goners.

Really, if you think about it, we don't have life anyway. I couldn't find any quotations, but I know Mr. Armstrong used to say something along the line that we don't actually have life itself. Human beings don't actually have life. What we have, he would say, is just a temporary physio-chemical existence. All we are, if you think about it, is just a bag of skin with various chemicals inside that will do things. That is it!

At some stage of our lives, those chemicals don't work any longer and we are finished. That is the end of it. We are dead. So, really, we have a temporary physical, chemical existence. We breathe in the oxygen which oxygenates our blood, and our heart pumps it around in our veins and arteries, and so on. We eat apples, and oranges, and pears, and burgers, and so on, and the body digests it, but it is all chemical. Eventually, after a few years, 70, 80, 90, or 100 years, or whatever, it all "packs in."

So, really, we don't actually have life as God has life. Mr. Armstrong would say, `God the Father and Jesus Christ have life **inherent**. They don't have a temporary existence. They actually enjoy life in its fullest sense.` Now, of course, that is something that we don't have naturally, but it something that we can have, and the beauty and the importance of the Resurrection is that the Resurrection is our hope and our guarantee and our means whereby we can enter into and enjoy the eternal God-life.

So here Solomon was depressed and suicidal because death ends it, and in a physical sense, that is correct, but the Resurrection is our hope, it is our means, it is the absolute guarantee we have that there is something ahead of us that will stretch out and last for ever, and ever, and ever. So the Resurrection is **absolutely** so important. It is probably one of the most important and far-reaching truths that we can have - the Resurrection. That is the doorway to eternal life. That is how we achieve our God-plane existence for evermore.

Come to think about it, what a great job Satan has done! When we think about it, Satan has taken the Resurrection, which is the hope that we all have, the hope of the dead, and Satan has diminished that to the point of irrelevance, or in some cases totally eliminated that knowledge. You won't hear it. In this world, you will not hear people talking about the Resurrection of the dead! Satan has suppressed that, he has whittled it down, he has diluted it, and now it is just a joke, almost, in some religions.

I have a quote here from the Westminster catechism. I don't actually like the word catechism. It brings me back to my school days. Catechism simply means a compendium of questions and answers. I don't know if you had those when you were at school. When I was at Catholic school, we had big, thick book just full of questions and answers - set questions, set answers. It was called the catechism. You had to learn the question and the answer off by heart.

When I was in grades 7 through 12, every year you went to a different phase of the book. There was a special motivational technique in Scottish schools when I was a lad. If you got it wrong, and you messed your words up, they would strap you with a big leather tawse. You had to hold your hands out like this and they took a four foot long leather tawse and would **strap** you on the hand. It would **burn** for hours afterwards. Some students actually memorized the question and memorized the answer perfectly, but I was strapped a number of times over the years (because I was just human!).

So catechism to me is a really nasty word, but the Westminster catechism, talking of the Resurrection says, "The bodies of the dead rest in their graves until the resurrection, but their souls do immediately pass into glory." Now wait a second; this is a bit odd. The body rests in the grave where, of course, after a while it rots away and gets sucked up by the trees and bushes and eaten by worms, but the soul flits off to glory, assuming you were a good person, of course, not a bad person. Hang on a second. At the Resurrection some time later the soul comes back down and the body comes back up and you plug them together again? It made no sense to me when I was a kid. It makes no more sense to me now! It is utterly confusing. Really, they have no idea at all what the Resurrection means. It is totally a mystery to them.

When you start to look at a topic in the Bible in terms of doing a study, one of the things that I find helpful is to get the Concordance out and find all the places it is mentioned.

Now, I was quite surprised to pick up the Concordance and look up the word "resurrection." I thought, "Well, that can't be right. It doesn't appear in the whole Old Testament! The first time "Resurrection" appears in the Bible is in the gospel according to Matthew. This is a hugely important teaching, and yet the word doesn't appear in the entire Old Testament. However, the Resurrection was actually known to God's people and the saints. It just wasn't actually referred to, in the King James Version at least, as a resurrection.

It meant a lot to God's people in those ancient, Old Testament times just as it really ought to do for us. Turn to Psalms, chapter 17, verse 15. This is a Psalm of David, who knew a thing or two about God's ways.

***15 As for me (says David), I will see Your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness.***

So, here is David looking to the future and he says, "Oh, I am going to awake." And, of course, we know, as we have seen in other places, that when you are dead, you are said to be asleep, and when you awake, you waken out of sleep, you are resurrected from the dead. So here, he said, "Oh, look, I shall be satisfied when I awake **in your likeness.**" So David actually knows that when he wakes up from his sleep of death, he will bear the likeness and image of God in heaven.

Turn to Psalms, chapter 16, verse 7. This is a Psalm quoted in the book of Acts, in Peter's sermon.

***7 I will bless the LORD who has given me counsel; My heart also instructs me in the night seasons.***

***8 I have set the LORD always before me; Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved.***

So, David had this picture, this understanding that God was with him, and because God was with him, at his right hand, I think it gave David encouragement many times that he wouldn't easily be swayed. Because, he thought, "Well, why should I fear? The LORD God is at my right hand! He is watching as well." So it served two purposes. First of all, "He can see what I am doing, so I ought to behave." And secondly, "When I am under pressure, I know that God is with me." So it gave David great encouragement. He wouldn't be moved.

**9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will rest in hope.**

He is alluding here to the fact that there will come a time when his flesh rests, sleeps, if you like, in the grave, but it will do so in hope.

**10 For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, (which is the grave) Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.**

So he is talking there both about his own soul, his own body, his own life being left in the grave, and also alluding there to Jesus, the Holy One, who would not be allowed to see corruption.

**11 You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.**

So David could actually see, if you like, into the Resurrection. He could see that when he was awake from this "sleep," that his soul would not be left in the grave. He would be able to enjoy, he says, "Fullness of joy." I am not even sure what that could possibly include, but to be fully joyous, where every fiber of your being, every moment of your life is just filled with joy. It is an amazing experience to be in; **"At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore"**.

When we are resurrected and in God's family of eternal spirit beings, it is just going to be unbelievable! Pleasure, excitement, thrills, challenges, fun, joy beyond our ability to comprehend. Of course, David could see that and so he would be resting in the grave in hope of this fantastic future laying before him.

Daniel, chapter 12, looking at a few references here of how in the Old Testament, some people "did know" about the resurrection

**2 And many of those who sleep (again, you see, death is likened to sleep) in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame and everlasting contempt.**

So there are definitely two outcomes there.

**3 Those who are wise shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament, And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever.** It is a great future. So, we can see there an awakening, a Resurrection from the dust of the earth, to life, on the one hand, or some to everlasting contempt. So there are at least two Resurrections mentioned there.

Dropping down to verse 13, Daniel was told:

**13 "But you, go your way till the end; for you shall rest, and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days."** "For the intervening two and a half thousand years, Daniel, you are going to rest, you will be asleep, you will be unconscious, out of it, but at the end of that time you will arise, you will wake up to a fantastic future," as it says there, to his inheritance.

Hebrews, chapter 11, makes some reference to the Old Testament saints and what they did know. This is the faith chapter and the heroes of faith.

**8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.**

**9 By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; 10 for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.**

So he was looking way off into the far future. He knew that this wasn't his time, even now. There was another city, made by God, and he was looking forward way into the future for that city.

**13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.**

They knew that this was not their day, but they saw by the eye of faith, when they will live yet in the future.

**14 For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland.**

**15 And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return.**

**16 But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.** That is of course, the New Jerusalem.

**17 By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,**

**18 of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called,"**

**19 concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.**

So, Abraham was aware of the Resurrection of the dead. He actually believed, in his heart, that, if he had to sacrifice Isaac, God would raise him up. He was aware of that.

**32 And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets:**

**33 who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,**

**34 quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.** So these were many, many people who demonstrated their courage and their valor before God.

**35 Women received their dead raised to life again. And others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.** Some of them were probably told, "If you give up your beliefs, we won't torture you any more. We will deliver you or, if you like, let the lions escape." And they said, "No, I am not giving up my beliefs. You are not going to frighten me out of that. I am going to commit myself. If I die, I am going to die, because I am looking forward to something that is far more valuable." They knew there was going to come a **better** Resurrection, something far better than temporary, physical release, and they were looking for the better Resurrection.

As we will see as we go along, for us, today, we still have that hope of a better Resurrection, because there is more than one Resurrection. One of them is a better Resurrection to be in, and that is the one to aim for.

The Old Testament doesn't explain very much about the Resurrection. It mentions a few, basic facts, plain. There are some interesting scriptures in the book of Job. The translators seem to argue about what, exactly, it means, so I have not used any of those. The New Testament, however, makes things much more plain. Let's see what Jesus talks about. John, Chapter 11 has a very, very interesting and moving story, starting in verse 11. This is Lazarus, Jesus' friend who had died.

***11 These things He said, and after that He said to them, "Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up."***

Again, we can see what that means.

***12 Then His disciples said, "Lord, if he sleeps he will get well."***

***13 However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep.***

***14 Then Jesus said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead."***

Again, we can see that sleep equates to death.

***15 "And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Nevertheless let us go to him."***

***20 Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him, but Mary was sitting in the house.***

***21 Then Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died."***

***22 "But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You."***

***23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."***

***24 Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."***

So, you see, Martha did believe in the Resurrection, and, of course, many Jews did. The Sadducees, as we saw earlier, didn't. Perhaps the average person did have that belief in a future life, and Martha certainly had that. She said, "Yes, I know that, Jesus. I know that

at the Last Day, many, many, many, many years away from now, he will rise then."

**25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.**

**26 "And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"**

So it is very interesting that Jesus said to her, "Look, I **am** the resurrection. I **am** the life."

27 She said to Him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world." 32 Then, when Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to Him, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died."

That is what Martha said a few moments earlier.

**33 Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled.**

**34 And He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to Him, "Lord, come and see."**

Then the shortest verse in the Bible:

**35 Jesus wept.**

**36 Then the Jews said, "See how He loved him!"**

**37 And some of them said, "Could not this Man, who opened the eyes of the blind, also have kept this man from dying?" "**

If He turned up in time," they thought.

**38 Then Jesus, again groaning in Himself, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it.**

**39 Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there is a **stench**, ("He will stink. He has been dead four days! His body will be rotten and eaten, and so on.") **for he has been dead four days.**"**

**40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?"**

**41 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me.**

**42 "And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me."**

**43 Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!"**

**44 And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Loose him, and let him go."**

This is quite an outstanding story, really. Just look at verse 44. It says that he was bound hand and foot, so, if his feet were bound with grave clothes, then perhaps he couldn't even walk out on his own. It was as though he had to "float out" almost, because he couldn't actually walk with his feet bound together. I think that is a fabulous story about that. I just love reading it. The main point was that Jesus taught the Resurrection. Martha and Mary knew about the Resurrection and Jesus, of course, physically resurrected an individual there, and said, "I am the resurrection and the life."

Turn to Matthew, chapter 22. The amazing thing is that even after that event, the chief priests, and scribes, and so on still wanted to kill Jesus. Yet what they had just witnessed there was just absolutely incredible.

**23 The same day the Sadducees, (who we met earlier) who say there is no resurrection, came to Him and asked Him,**

**24 saying: "Teacher, Moses said that if a man dies, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife and raise up offspring for his brother.**

**25 "Now there were with us seven brothers....** So these lads have got a story. They say, "This resurrection is stupid. Come on! Resurrection from the dead! We'll not have that! We've got a tale that will catch this so-called Messiah out."

So they came along with this hypothetical tale that they built up to demonstrate why the Resurrection was nonsense.

**25 "Now there were with us seven brothers. The first died after he had married, and having no offspring, left his wife to his brother.**

**26 "Likewise the second also, and the third, even to the seventh.**

So this woman was not much luck to her husbands, was she?

**27 "Last of all the woman died also.**

**28 "Therefore, in the resurrection, (ha, ha, ha!) whose wife of the seven will she be? For they all had her."**

**29 Jesus answered and said to them, "You are mistaken, (my margin says "deceived") not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God.**

That must have been a fair-sized insult to these men, because these were the Sadducees, one of the main Jewish religious sects. Jesus said, "Look. You are mistaken. You do err. You are deceived. You don't know the Bible! You religious people do not know the Bible."

**30 "For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven.**

So Jesus said, "Look. There is a resurrection, but when you are in it, you are like an angel. You are immortal. You are a spirit being.

**31 "But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying,**

32 `I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."

These people are dead. Abraham is dead; Isaac is dead; Jacob is dead. God is not the God of the dead. He is the God of the living. The only way that the dead can be alive again is if they are resurrected. That is what Jesus says there, verse 31, **"...concerning the resurrection of the dead...."** So it is very clear that Jesus teaches the Resurrection of the dead. That makes it very definite. There will be one!

Jesus not only taught about the Resurrection of the dead. Jesus has the honor and the privilege of being the pioneer who has gone before us and actually experienced the Resurrection. Turn to Romans, chapter 8

***28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.***

This is a very, very encouraging verse, if you are "***the called***", and I think, hopefully, that we are all the called. If we are the called, it says that all things work together for good to us. We can have confidence, really, in that.

***29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.***

So Jesus, it says here, is the firstborn among many brethren. Therefore, there must be many more to be born. So, Jesus is the first, and then there are going to be numerous others. Jesus is the firstborn of many brethren!

But, how was Jesus the firstborn? Surely, the firstborn was Cain. There were Adam and Eve, who were created, and then they had a child called Cain, and then Abel. So surely, Cain is the firstborn. How is Jesus the firstborn? When Jesus was born of the virgin Mary in the little town of Bethlehem, that was four thousand years after Cain. Millions were born before then, so exactly how did Jesus become firstborn? What does it mean for Jesus to be called the firstborn of many brethren?

The answer is in Romans, chapter 1.

***1 Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God***

***2 which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures,***

***3 concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh,***

So that was Jesus, if you like, the first time He was born. He was born of Mary who was descended from David according to the flesh. So He was born once. That was Jesus' first birth, physically.

But, verse 4:

**4 and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.**

Jesus was declared to be the Son of God by the Resurrection from the dead. That is how Jesus was born again. He was actually born again by being resurrected?

He was born first, physical flesh and blood of Mary. Then He was born **again** when He was resurrected from the dead. His Resurrection made Him the firstborn of God. Mr. Armstrong clarified that. I guess he mentioned it several times.

I found this particular quotation in the booklet *Why Marriage? Soon Obsolete?* Mr. Armstrong says about this verse, talking of Romans, chapter 1, verse 4, and trying to clarify it so that we would fully understand that Jesus is born by a resurrection from the dead, as we all are (or will be),

Study that. Jesus was born of a human mother -- made human, just as you and I. Even though He was begotten of God -- not of a human father -- yet He was a human man who could die. The very fact that He was sired by God -- begotten of God and conceived by a human woman -- proves that humans are after the God kind, not some animal kind. Humanly, through His mother, the virgin Mary, Jesus was a son or descendant of David.

But after having been born once, human, Jesus died. Then, by a resurrection, He was born a second time.

I will repeat that: "**Then, by a resurrection, He was born a second time.**"

Mr. Armstrong continues ,

And this time, He was "declared to be a Son of God." This time, born "with power, according to the spirit of holiness." But, read it without those descriptive words. He was "the Son of God ... by a resurrection from the dead."

So, if you look at the verse there, in a sense, if you put some brackets around the words "with power according to the spirit of holiness," it would read, "and declared to be the son of God by the resurrection from the dead." Mr. Armstrong was saying, 'Look. If you didn't have those descriptive words that are added, then it actually tells you that Jesus was **born by a resurrection from the dead.**'

So, continuing with Mr. Armstrong for a couple of sentences:

This says He (Jesus) was born a second time and this second birth by a resurrection!

And this is what the Bible means by salvation -- being saved -- in regard to the human family in general. For we, too, may be born again -- by a resurrection.

So Mr. Armstrong wants to make it very plain there that that verse tells us quite clearly that Jesus was born again by a Resurrection from the dead. In this present "Christian" world, people talk about being "born again," meaning "Did you give your heart to the Lord?" If you did, then you are "born again." Well, of course, you aren't. Jesus was born again. He was born once, physically, and then He was born again, a second time, by a Resurrection.

Some modern translations do actually rearrange the words there to make it just a "wee" bit clearer. The NIV, the International version, puts it this way, "And who through the spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by His resurrection from the dead." So that is fairly plain there. Frankly, for most of God's saints who have ever lived, that is exactly how we will be born again, by a Resurrection from the dead. Here at the very end time, a comparatively small number of us may, hopefully, live right up to the last trumpet blast and be changed, instantaneously. But the majority of God's saints over the centuries will be born again by a Resurrection from the dead.

When does it take place? First Thessalonians, chapter 4. When are we born again? When is the Resurrection?

**13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep,** (that term once again) **lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.**

**14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.**

So, they are dead. They are asleep; they are unconscious.

**15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.**

Those who have died ahead of us.

**16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.**

So even if we do live to the very end, they still get the pre-eminence slightly over us. Whether it is a minute before us, or five minutes, or an hour, I am not too sure.

**17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.**

So here the dead are, sleeping, resting if you like. Christ returns. There is a great trumpet blast, and the dead in Christ are raised up, or born again, at that point. Just as Jesus was born again by His Resurrection, so **they** are born again by **their Resurrection**. If we are still alive at that time, and, of course, going God's way at that time, then we will be changed, caught up into the clouds, and we all meet together and we head off for Jerusalem.

I Corinthians, chapter 15, the resurrection chapter, verse 50

**50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption.**

Our bodies are corrupt. We think a lot of them, of course, and we tend to pamper them, but ultimately our bodies sort of give up after a while and decay and waste away.

**51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: (I am revealing truth to you) We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed----**

**52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.**

**53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.**

**54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."**

So when that trumpet blows, the dead in Christ are raised up, or born again, and we who are alive at that time are changed and also born again. We receive at that point these immortal, incorruptible, eternal, glorified spirit bodies. Ahead of us is eternity waiting, billions, and billions, and billions of years - life, real life, life inherent within us like God possesses, forevermore. Of course, it does mention the dead in Christ, and we Christians who remain, but what about the rest? What about the others who are not Christ's?

Turn to Revelation, chapter 20, we can pick up the story in verse 4...

***4 And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God...***

So these are clearly in Christ. These are Christians. They have been martyred because they believe in the truth, and so on.

***...who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.***

Then, really, in brackets

***5 But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished.*** End of brackets. ***This is the first resurrection.*** So, it tells us there that the martyrs, the dead in Christ, are raised up and they live. They have been resurrected and they reign with Christ for one thousand years, and that is the First Resurrection. The **rest** of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished, but clearly, the rest of the dead do **live again**, so there must be another Resurrection in which they are called back to life. It is clear that there is a First Resurrection and at least one more Resurrection.

***6 Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.*** Again, it reminds us that there is a first Resurrection, and in that Resurrection you reign with Christ in the Millennium, Afterwards there is another Resurrection, and we know that there are actually two more Resurrections, the Second and the Third, but that is another story. That is getting on to the Last Great Day.

Turn to John, chapter 5. We just touched on that subject. I am really looking more at, shall we say, the better Resurrection that we can be in, the First Resurrection. We can see there that there is to be at least one, and as we know, actually two more Resurrections.

**21 "For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom He will.**

**22 "For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son,**

**23 "that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.**

**24 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.**

**25 "Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live.**

**26 "For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself,**

We don't have life. We just have this temporary, physio-chemical existence.

**27 "and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.**

**28 "Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice**

"All" meaning all !

**29 "and come forth----those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.**

Or the Resurrection of judgment. So, there is that implication there of at least two Resurrections, and we know, in fact, that the Resurrection of judgment is in two parts.

So I think that we would all like to be in the First Resurrection, because it says "**blessed and holy**," happy and successful and joyous, are those who are in the First Resurrection. That is the great reward.

We have to remember, really, that today is our time of judgment. Frankly, this is the only Resurrection for us. If we are not in this Resurrection, if we are not in the "**First Resurrection**", then the ultimate outcome for us is the Lake of Fire, which is not good news, so the First Resurrection, the better Resurrection, is the one for us. That must be our goal. We look to this Resurrection.

Turn to Revelation, chapter 19, which is our second to last scripture.

**6 And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, "Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!"**

This is talking of Christ's return and the beginning of the World Tomorrow.

**7 "Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready."**

**8 And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.**

**9 Then he said to me, "Write: `Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!'" And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God."**

Verse 7 really is very important for us. today, because it could be said, "Look! The marriage of Jesus Christ, the King of Glory, has arrived and His Bride, His Wife, the Church, (that's us), has made herself ready. She is ready for the wedding!" The word "ready" often means "prepared." She has got ready, she has prepared, and she has done what is necessary for a bride at a wedding.

Most people who have been married know what marriage is, and what weddings are. They have been to a wedding, and really, you don't just turn up on the day "willy-nilly" and get married, not as a rule, anyway. People tend to **plan**. They say, "Let's get married in six month's time. Let's find this particular minister or pastor to marry us. Let's do it in that particular location. Let's have these

sorts of dresses and these garments and this sort of a meal organized.”

The whole thing is properly organized and done decently because it should be a very happy day, a very joyous day, for most people, at least. Some marriages, of course, are complete disasters, but often the wedding day is quite good; it is just that afterwards it all falls apart. So, the wedding is a very special occasion, because people weep and they laugh and they have a great time.

It says here, “Look. Jesus, the King of Glory, is going to be married to the Church.” She should be ready for that event. That is what we are doing today, and tomorrow, and for the rest of this year. We are preparing for that wedding! We are getting ready for the Resurrection from the dead.

Probably of all people in the churches of God, we should know what Jesus is looking for in His bride which, really, is beautiful character. He is not looking for little robots that march about with some jack-booted commandant behind them. Jesus wants a bride who exemplifies beauty in nature: beautiful character, purity, holiness, out-going concern; a bride who is patient and longsuffering, who is filled with joy, with faith; a bride who has voluntarily chosen to commit to her husband for the rest of her life, in this case, eternity.

Jesus does not want a mean-spirited, carping, fault-finding wife. He wants a wife who has this gorgeous attitude, this character, and our preparation for the marriage is that we develop that holy, righteous character. Then, when we are Resurrected, or born again, or for some of us at least, changed at that time, we can marry Jesus, at that point, when we have that beautiful character.

We read Hebrews 11 which referred to the **better** Resurrection. It is a better Resurrection and it is something which should strongly motivate us. I said in the beginning that if we understood the truths of God, it should actually help us to even look at the way we live our lives differently. If we could understand the fantastic future and what the Resurrection means to us, it should strongly inspire us or motivate us for that goal, that prize that lies ahead of us, to enter into God’s Kingdom by means of the Resurrection of the dead.

For the last scripture, turn to Philippians, chapter 3

**7 But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ.** Paul is looking back at his earlier life as a Pharisee, and so on.

**8 yet indeed I also count all things loss...**

"No matter what I was in my former life, no matter how important I had been, no matter how much I thought I was important. All these things are just rubbish," he says.

**8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ**

**9 and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law,** (that is of the ritual and ceremonial law) **but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;**

**10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,**

**11 if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.**

He said, "Look. Somehow, no matter what it takes, I **must** attain to the Resurrection from the dead. I have given up **everything**. My life is meaningless that I led before I was called and converted by Jesus. Frankly, nothing should stand in my way. I want, I strive towards, I **must** attain to the Resurrection from the dead"

**12 Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.**

**13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,**

**14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.**

Paul said, "Look. I have got my mind focused. To attain to that better Resurrection is so important to me, above all things, that I am pressing, I am striving, I am racing and running with all my speed towards that Resurrection from the dead. I **must** be there."

The Greek grammars point out that in verse 11 it actually says "resurrection from the dead." The King James says "resurrection of the dead." But in fact, the Greek is "resurrection **from** the dead," (implying that, if you're dead, you are not resurrected -- which, of course, is right). All those who have not been called yet will continue to lie in their graves and rest for another thousand years. Paul is looking at this Resurrection of some **from** the dead, and he wants to be in that **first** Resurrection **from** the dead, that **better** Resurrection, that First Resurrection. Above all things, he is racing and pushing and striving and agonizing to get there!

Looking at verse 20, with still the same thoughts in his mind, he said,

***20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,***

***21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.***

So still in that mind he said, "Look. This Resurrection that I am striving to attain is going to transform this body of mine to be just like Jesus' own glorious body. It will happen when He comes back." So to Paul the Resurrection was real; it was something that was important. It was something that he must achieve. We should share, in a sense, that passion that Paul had.

To summarize, as we have come to the end, and time is virtually up anyway, the Resurrection of the dead was a key teaching in the Bible. Even in the Old Testament. And Jesus taught it. Paul preached it and got into trouble doing so.

It is a truth that the world doesn't know. It is one of those truths that make us peculiar. It sets us apart from the world. It explains how the dead can enter into eternal life and it is the hope of all mankind.

No Resurrection when we die? Then we are out!

So for us today, we have been invited to the First Resurrection, to the better Resurrection, to be born again into that special, close, intimate relationship with Jesus Christ as our husband and with us as the bride. So let's appreciate and be thankful that God has revealed the Resurrection of the dead to us, and let us, like Paul,

press forward towards that goal and to be in that better Resurrection.

*Transcription and formatting by Diane Goddard and Don Goddard*

*Transcription of a sermon for reading is more than a simple typing of the words spoken. The style and grammar appropriate for a spoken sermon is not the same as for an essay, as the reader may observe. Inflection or intensity of the voice often alter the meaning of words; and punctuation and font face have been used to try to reflect the speaker's intent. Even the paragraph breaks require care to avoid shifting the sense of a passage. Additionally, for the sake of readability, falters, and misspoken or repeated words etc. are sometimes adjusted where it will not alter the meaning. The preparation of this document was done with the intent of the most accurate transmission of the speaker's message and any shift in meaning is purely unintentional.*

e.g. What Do You Mean...Salvation, Herbert W. Armstrong, 1973,

"You have only temporary chemical existence. You are like a clock wound up, and running down. You don't know at what second it will stop! You can't give yourself any life beyond this running-down chemical existence. There is no eternal life inherent in you." et al.