

# KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

*"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."*

## FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 222

### THE FIRST RESURRECTION (continued)

“And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the *souls* of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and *they lived* and reigned with Christ a thousand years...*this is the first resurrection*” (Rev. 20:4-5).

Many passages of scripture remain locked up to man and cannot be understood with the natural mind. I am certain that one such passage is found right here within our text where the apostle says, “...and I saw the *souls* of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus...and *they lived* and reigned with Christ a thousand years...THIS IS THE FIRST RESURRECTION.” The key here is the word “first,” the FIRST resurrection. The Greek word used here is *protos* and literally means “first,” or “foremost,” that is, foremost in reference to time, place, order, or importance. It also implies that there are other orders to follow, but this is FIRST, unique in its purpose and working. As Ray Prinzing once pointed out, it bears an analogy to the birth process, and the special position that was accorded to the one born first. “*You shall set apart unto the Lord all that first opens the womb. All the firstlings of your livestock that are males shall be the Lord’s...and every firstborn among your sons shall you redeem*” (Ex. 13:12-13, Amplified). Others can follow in due time, but they can never have that special privilege and purpose of being the first to be born.

Do I believe there is going to be a physical resurrection? Certainly! Do I believe our bodies will get back up from their dissolution and the grave? Absolutely! There have been times in my thinking when I have thought that the resurrection is not a resurrection of *bodies*, not something that takes place on a physical level. But you see, I have to look at the *pattern* — the pattern is Jesus — and *His* body got back up from the grave! He’s the pattern, the blueprint, the example, the forerunner, the prototype of man’s redemption and destiny. I go to the Word — His body arose from death and my body will arise from death. People’s bodies have already gotten back up from the grave. At the resurrection of Jesus we read that “...*the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after His resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many*” (Mat. 27:52-53). This has already happened as a result of the Christ’s resurrection! It’s a historical fact that dead bodies arose and walked out of their tombs at the resurrection of Jesus and were *seen* by many. This is resurrection! I believe in the resurrection of the body. Yet — I am not convinced our present text is speaking of that type of resurrection! This is a resurrection of “souls.” “I saw the *souls* of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus...and *they* (the souls) *lived*...this is the *first* resurrection.” I’m not looking to come into resurrection life after I die, my vision is to lay hold upon the power of His resurrection as His life is raised up in me in the here and now!

I believe the key to unlock the interpretation of the twentieth chapter of Revelation is presented to us in this expression: *“This is the first resurrection.”* If we can determine when and how the first resurrection occurs we will progress greatly in our understanding of the entire chapter. In contrast to the first resurrection we need to go back further and discover when the “first death” occurred. It makes spiritual sense that the “first resurrection” would be the resurrection out of the “first death.” The revelation of death was first presented to Adam in the Garden. *“But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the **day** that thou eatest thereof thou shalt **surely die**”* (Gen. 2:17). This is the death of the **soul**, for something catastrophic happened immediately in the lives of Adam and Eve as soon as they partook of the forbidden tree. Someone may object, contending that actually their soul was magnified by the fall, and I will be the first to admit that their soulful life was magnified; but it was magnified only because it *died* to the life of the spirit, it *died* to God, it *died* to truth, it *died* to righteousness and to all that is high and holy. The testimony of scripture is just this: *“The **soul** that sinneth, **it shall die.**”* Can we not see by this that in the day Adam and Eve sinned, **their soul died**. The sinning couple did not immediately die physically. The death of the body came many hundreds of years later! The New Testament vindicates this position.

Paul addressed the state of the Ephesians before their salvation, stating that they were *“dead in trespasses and in sins”* (Eph. 2:1). Can we not see by this that if it is the soul that dies as a result of sinning, then the Ephesians who were “dead in sins” were dead in their souls? Then Paul says of these same saints that *“God who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, **hath quickened us together with Christ...and hath raised us up together**”* (Eph. 2:4-6). I’m sure that all will agree that what was *quickened*, that is, *made alive, resurrected*, was **not** their mortal bodies! Paul writes essentially the same truth to the Colossians, saying, *“And you, being **dead in your sins...hath He quickened together with Christ**”* (Col. 2:13). Unregenerated men are dead men! Even our Lord said of them, *“Let the dead bury the dead”* (Mat. 8:22). I don’t think anyone would argue that he was speaking of dead **bodies!** These dead are dead souls. Other passages also make the point: *“Thou hast a name that thou livest and art dead”* (Rev. 3:1). *“She that liveth in pleasure, is dead while she liveth”* (I Tim. 5:6). *“...shall save a soul from death”* (James 5:20). *“He that loveth not his brother abideth in death”* (I Jn. 3:14).

This is not a moment for fine words or eloquent speech. This is an hour for very plain speaking. The truth is that when man sinned it was not his *spirit* that died. We have all believed that man died in his spirit that day in Eden, and most of us have taught it that way. But as I have walked with God and been taught by the spirit of truth I have come to understand that such a notion misses the point. Let us consider this thought of man’s spirit for a moment. It is doubtful that in all of scripture any subject is more prominent and yet surrounded with such great mystery as the truth concerning the spirit in man. Now let me share with you a further truth concerning the life, or that spirit which was breathed by the Almighty Father into each of us. Many scripture passages, and the parables of our Lord, call it a “seed.” The Bible uses the illustration of a seed to tell us who we really are! You see, to tell a person in a darkened state of mind, bound in sin-consciousness, in their present weak and frail human condition that they are the manifestation of God on the earth, would be absolutely impossible for them to fathom. If they did understand such a concept, they would receive it into their carnal minds, become puffed up and egotistical, distort, misapply, misuse, and abuse it, becoming even a worse devil than they are.

The seed of God is in every man, and the life of that seed *is the spirit of man*. But you meet the drunk on the street, you see your unconverted, worldly-minded neighbor, you rub shoulders with the people of the world, you watch the parade of murderers, thieves, child molesters, rapists, and thugs of all kinds on the evening news, and you don’t see God in anybody! That is because God in every man is a *seed*. A seed doesn’t do anything. It just is. It can lie on the shelf for fifty years and never express a thing! You see no action, no manifestation of the life within; all you see is the outer shell which reveals nothing of the power that is on the inside. Seeds have been found in the tombs of Egypt that are more than three thousand years old, and they look today just as they did when they were placed there, but they have never produced a harvest. You see, my beloved, just as the seed (sperm) of a man and the seed (egg) of a woman must *conceive* in order to change, grow, express, and accomplish, so must the seed of the vegetable kingdom be *germinated* in order to be productive. The life is hid in the seed, but it is covered by the outer shell and abides in a state of dormancy and inactivity. It must be subjected to two things: heat and moisture. The rain

falls upon it, the sun shines upon it, and suddenly there is effected a mighty *release!* There is a stirring of that life that is restrained on the inside, the shell that conceals that life bursts open, and the life within springs forth, puts down roots, and grows upward; it breaks through the earth and comes forth in mighty expression and manifestation of itself!

Can we not see by this that the spirit of man is indeed the seed of God but it is buried in, encased by, the outer man of flesh, the carnal understanding, the natural consciousness, and the inclinations of the flesh. It is here that we must tread softly and bow reverently before the spirit of truth. It is easy to say that in that long ago Eden man's spirit *died*, and that man is *spiritually dead*, and that therefore His spirit must be *quickened, resurrected* in order for man to again have spiritual life. As logical as that sounds I have been brought to see that *it is not the truth!* Nowhere does scripture state that man's spirit *died*. There is not one single passage in all of God's blessed Book about *dead spirits*. Oh, no! But a whole lot is said about *dead souls* and *dead bodies!* Men are not separated from the life that is in God because of something terrible that happened *in* the spirit of man; rather it is due to what happened in his soul and in his body!

Hear it! "*But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ...should shine unto them*" (II Cor. 4:4). Surely you noticed that it is not their spirits that have been blinded, but their *minds* — their SOULS! Again Paul writes, "*But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ*" (II Cor. 11:3). Again we see that the serpent did not corrupt Eve's spirit — he corrupted her *mind* — her SOUL! And now hear this! "*And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled*" (Col. 1:21). This time too, we were alienated from God and were enemies of God, not because of some dark tragedy in our spirit, not because our spirit was dead — but it was in our *mind* — our SOUL! Perhaps we can now better understand the words of Peter when he says, "*Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the spirit...*" (I Pet. 1:22). We have purified, not our spirits, but our souls — and our spirit is the very instrument and vehicle of that soul-purification!

Yes, God does do a wonderful work in our spirit, but it is not a resurrection from the dead. He moves upon *our* spirit by *His* Spirit to cause it to be *released* from the outer husk of the carnal mind and the self-life which have encased it. The problem has not been with the spirit, for the spirit is the very breath, the very seed, the very offspring of GOD! To say that the spirit could die is to say God could die. To say that the spirit could be corrupted would be to say God can be corrupted. To say that the spirit can be blinded is equivalent to saying God Himself can be blinded. The spirit is the only part of our being that was not *created*. It was blown into our nostrils out of the very mouth of the Lord God Himself! Yes, the spirit within man has been covered over, hidden, concealed behind the veil of flesh. The rising up, the springing forth, the release, the revelation of the life that is in the seed comes by a mighty action upon the outer part of the seed by which its power of restriction is removed. The inner life is released. And, thank God, the genetic code is intact! Everything that life ever has been, is now, and ever shall be is right there in the seed! When the life springs forth all that hindered is broken asunder. Every step of the revelation of Christ is an unveiling!

There are some conclusions which the Holy Spirit would mark indelibly upon our minds. With the inward witness of the Spirit I cannot help but conclude that since the scripture presents to us the "first death" as being that of the *soul*, then it is this dead soul which must be resurrected first. Therefore, when the apostle reminds us that "*Even when we were dead in sins, He hath quickened us together with Christ,*" we must bear in mind that it was not Christ's *spirit* that was raised from the dead — it was His *soul* and His *body!* When Jesus died He cried out, "Father, into *Thy hands* I commend my spirit." His spirit did not suffer and die on our behalf, for it was alive and well in the hands of His Father in heaven. But Christ in the agony of Gethsemane cried, "My *soul* is exceedingly sorrowful, even *unto death.*" And the prophet prophesied of Christ's death, "Thou wilt not leave my *soul* in hell, neither wilt Thou suffer thine Holy One to see (*bodily*) *corruption.*" His spirit had been committed into the hands of His Father in heaven. It was His soul that was not left in Hades and it was His body that burst forth from the tomb. Think of it! If we are "*quickened together with Him*" then it can only be in soul and body that we, too, are quickened. And when we study the various passages that speak of us now being raised, now being quickened, now having

passed from death unto life, we know it is not in our body that this reality is being accomplished — it is the dead *soul* which is *first* made alive. Truly, THIS IS THE FIRST RESURRECTION!

It is erroneous to speak of the resurrection of the body and omit the resurrection of the soul. Man's body is not all that dies or is dead. Death seized upon Adam in the very day when he sinned, although many hundreds of years passed before his body finally went back to the dust. Two Greek words are used to speak of the resurrection. The first is *anastasis*, generally translated "resurrection." The second is *egiro*, translated as "raise, raised, or risen." A close examination of the texts where these words are employed reveals that they are used interchangeably and both are applied to both the resurrection of the soul and the body. There is neither time nor space to go into a detailed examination of these facts here, but the truth can be readily apprehended by anyone willing to take the time and make the effort to do a word study of these two terms.

When Jesus came He found this world a cemetery — *all* were dead. To these dead men Jesus announced, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, *hath* everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation (judgment); but *is passed* from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the *dead* shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear *shall live*" (Jn. 5:24-25). It should be obvious to every enlightened mind that Jesus was not talking here about the resurrection of dead bodies out of the cemetery, for that would mean that **not one dead person** in the past two thousand years has heard the voice of the Son of God and *lived!* He spake of the resurrection of souls that were dead in trespasses and in sins, dead to God — unresponsive to spiritual things and the spiritual realm.

Yet there are millions of earnest believers who know that they have been made alive in Christ, but who would invent still another physical resurrection to take place at some future date which they term "the FIRST RESURRECTION!" "First" infers that there could not be any other before it. In his wonderful revelation of the powers and realities of the kingdom of God John saw thrones, and sitting on them he saw the "souls" of those to whom authority was given to act as judges. These were also the "souls" of them that were beheaded (died to SELF) because of the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands, and THEY LIVED and reigned with Christ a thousand years. And then he adds: "*THIS is the first resurrection.*"

Perhaps the indignation of some will be aroused because of this statement, but if you carefully scrutinize the statements above surrounding this "first resurrection," you will be forced to agree that this passage is not even dealing with a first "bodily" resurrection at all, for John sees *souls*, not bodies. True, the term "souls" at times in scripture denotes "people" or "persons," that is, the entire being, spirit, soul and body. An example of this is found in passages like Genesis 46:26-27 wherein we read, "All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls were threescore and six; and the sons of Joseph, which were born him in Egypt, were two souls: all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were threescore and ten." But in this case you can substitute the term "people" for "souls" all through the passage. Try it and see! Now try the same method with our text. Here in Revelation 20:4 you cannot do so! The phrase is, "the *souls* of *them*..." The only word in that phrase for which you can substitute the word "people" is "them." "The *souls* of the *people* that were beheaded..." You cannot grammatically substitute the word "people" for "souls." So John is not seeing *people*, he is seeing peoples' *souls*, and these souls had been made alive, caught up to the throne, and were now capable of judging and reigning with Christ for a thousand years — ***in the illumination and glory and power of the day of the Lord!*** Isn't it wonderful!

The fact of the soul's living and reigning with Christ in heavenly glory and power being called the *first* resurrection is not difficult to understand. Every child of God has a soul as well as a body. The soul first experiences God's transforming love and power: *it is raised first*, here in this present life for the elect of the Lord, and the soul's union with the spirit is the harbinger of that resurrection yet to come when even our vile body shall be changed that it may be fashioned like unto HIS GLORIOUS BODY! For some years now the Spirit has been speaking to many of God's called and chosen elect that it is now time for a people to lay hold upon and apprehend even this bodily transformation — resurrection. And during this same time

the Lord has been preparing us for just such a glory — transforming our souls, bringing forth souls that are adapted and equipped to express themselves through such a body of glory as mature sons of God — souls that have been fully saved, fully redeemed, fully quickened, fully purified, fully transformed, fully made overcomers, brought into union with the spirit, raised up out of the dust of the death realm and made to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus! Oh, yes, I know something about that! This is not doctrine, theory, or conjecture, my beloved brother, sister, but a present and powerful and living reality that God is working in my life, and in your life! This is the power of the *first resurrection!* Any other kind of resurrection must take place at a later time, in another order, and as the **result** of this first one! That is the mystery.

The first resurrection is just one of many events revealed in the book of Revelation. This is not a book of outer world events but it contains the keys to inner spiritual events that will uncover Christ — Head and body. Revelation is really another “gospel” written in signs and symbols concerning the working of Christ in His people and which takes up where the four Gospels in our Bible leave off. Another interesting and significant teaching in connection with the first resurrection is the statement which immediately follows: “*But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished*” (Rev. 20:5). Who are, or what is, the “rest of the dead?” Can we not see that the “rest of the dead” can refer only to that part of each of us which has not yet been raised up into life — the *mortal body*. That is certainly the “rest” of the dead in my life! And there are two conditions which must be met for the body to be transformed. First, the soul must be fully redeemed, transformed, and raised up to live in His sight, for that is the *first resurrection*. Second, the body cannot be changed until “the thousand years are finished,” that is, until the day of the Lord in our life is consummated — until the day of the Lord in our life has **fully and completely done its work in us!** The body can only be changed when we have completely become new creatures in Christ Jesus by the release of our spirit and the resurrection of our soul that has been dead and wasted because of our old Adamic nature. We are being made alive as a new people, conformed to His image, because we have risen in newness of life and are seeking those things which are above where Christ sits at the right hand of God. This is the first resurrection!

This new life is not something that is going to happen some day, somewhere. This new life has already happened and is happening, first in our souls as we put on that precious mind which was in Christ Jesus. We have the life of the ages now because we have been resurrected into the kingdom of God. “*Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son*” (Col. 1:13). We do not have to go to the grave to receive this resurrection and translation. Blessed be God! We are not waiting for our “rapture.” Nothing new must be added, and no specific prophetic events must occur before we have this translated life. Our death to Self, our beheading, the losing of our old Adamic head of the carnal mind, is but the gateway to a larger, fuller, heavenly life — the more abundant life of sonship to God. As we sign our death-warrant and consign to the grave the “old life,” it is only to find that we are recipients of a life infinitely more wonderful and glorious — as the firstfruits of His redemption. Marvelous truth! Glorious fact! How it enriches! What treasures of grace, what a reservoir of power, what radiance of glory — what a wealth of meaning! That is the matchless energy which works in the believer — THE POWER OF CHRIST’S RESURRECTION!

The words of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, spoken in the splendor of His resurrection to the expectant hearts and attentive ears of His wondering disciples, hold a significance far beyond the scope of human understanding. Perhaps the greatest words ever spoken were uttered by Jesus when, at the moment of His ascension He promised His little band of foot-step followers, “*...ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth*” (Acts 1:8). The Lord didn’t say to these disciples, “Now fellows, be sure to arrange a beautiful, impressive, and well-advertised Easter Sunrise Service each spring to bear witness to my resurrection.” Oh, no! He arose by the power of God and ascended up into heaven in the sight of those men whom He had chosen and selected to carry forth His redemptive ministry throughout all the known world of that day. To these He left His parting instructions, upon them He pressed the infinite purpose: “*...ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you: and YE SHALL B-E W-I-T-N-E-S-S-E-S U-N-T-O M-E!*” The message is clear — you will not merely witness, you will not only speak words, or bear a testimony, or declare a message — but you will BECOME, you will, within yourself, literally BE *the witness!*

Some teach that the great mark of the resurrection was the empty tomb. People travel thousands of miles and spend, annually, billions of dollars to go see that empty tomb in Jerusalem. But the apostles **never referred to it!** They did not need an empty tomb for **THEY THEMSELVES** were the witness! Christ was alive *in them!* The very same wisdom and power and authority which He had manifested for three and a half years before His crucifixion was now manifested mightily through these men into whom had come His **RESURRECTED LIFE**. After healing the lame man at the gate of the temple, Peter was called before the Sanhedrin and the record states, “And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this? Then Peter, *filled with the Holy Ghost*, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, if we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, **WHOM GOD RAISED FROM THE DEAD, EVEN BY HIM** doth this man stand here before you whole” (Acts 7:4-10). The proof of the resurrection of Jesus Christ was in the very fact that **HIS POWER** had made this man whole. And this power was **IN THE WITNESSES**. God wants a people today who have the evidence of the resurrection **within themselves, in their lives!** The resurrection of Jesus is not a historical fact to be **commemorated**, but a present glorious and eternal reality to be **demonstrated!**

Ah — it isn’t a day, it isn’t a celebration, it isn’t a sunrise service, it isn’t the enthralling rendition of “He Arose,” by a dawn-kissed choir, or dyed eggs, or Easter bunnies, which witness to the resurrection of our wonderful Lord. **MEN AND WOMEN ARE THE WITNESSES**, men and women born from above, transformed by His grace, imbued with His mind, conformed to His image, filled with His Spirit of power, living out His life. Christ is alive! Hallelujah! And I am, in the glory of my redeemed soul, *raised up together with Him!* It is indeed wonderful!

We cannot over estimate the value of our soul’s resurrection — our soul standing up in the fullness of the Christ-life. Ray Prinzing beautifully expressed the truth of this when he wrote, “When Jesus arose from the dead He was not only **ALIVE IN SPIRIT**, but **HE WAS ALIVE IN SOUL** — that is, He had all His mental faculties together. Thank God we can be *‘renewed in the spirit of our mind’* (Eph. 4:23). Redemption is for the whole man, and resurrection life is also for the soul/mind realm. There may be those days when the aging process of the natural seems to leave you somewhat disoriented. But the hope is for resurrection, and **HE** will finish this work in us, *‘For God hath not given unto us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind’* (2 Tim. 1:7). Sound mind — literally one could say, to be calm, cool, and collected. A well-balanced mind is a part of the resurrection process at work in us.

“*And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to AWAKE out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed’* (Rom. 13:11). *‘Wherefore He saith, AWAKE thou that sleepest, and ARISE from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light’* (Eph. 5:14).

“Awake — *‘egeiro,’* gather your faculties together, and arise, stand up out from among the dead. Thus Paul clearly taught that there was an **INWORKING RESURRECTION** that could be experienced now, and then it would be a steady **ADVANCING** until we are *‘changed from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord’* (2 Cor. 3:18). *‘If ye then BE RISEN with Christ, seek those things which are above...set your affection (mind) on things above, not on things on the earth...’* (Col. 3:1-3). To be *carnally minded* is death! Hence we need this resurrection, to **RISE UP** out of that state, to have all our mental faculties attuned to the things above. Then it remains only for the body to be changed. The process continues as we are renewed into the mind of Christ, and He begins to gather all our faculties into harmony with the spirit. And ultimately these inward changes will be manifested in a **CHANGED BODY**. **‘Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection.’** There is an on-going resurrection now, and it is the power of advancing until we are completely *‘found in Him’* (Phil. 3:9)” — end quote.

Can we not understand that God cannot give us an immortal, glorified body until we have a disposition and character that corresponds to, and expresses perfectly through, such a body. Should God give a glorified body to a person still walking in the carnal mind and human soulical Self-hood, He would actually create a devil! That fact reveals the true mystery of the first resurrection, the standing up in Christ of the soul — our mind, will, emotions, and desires — thus preparing us for the “rest of the dead” to be raised — our body — and fitting us for the glory and power of that kind of body.

“The game is played above the neck!” yelled the coach as he watched yet another mental lapse out on the court. He was simply expressing what others say in motivational talks to people who want to transform their minds. Some people even listen to motivational CDs under their pillow at night; they want their subconscious changed so that they can change. The truth is that much of what we are and what we become is influenced by our minds. But it takes more than motivational talks to truly *transform* the mind. It takes the power of the FIRST RESURRECTION! The mind that is transformed by the Spirit focuses attention on things that are above, where Christ is seated in the heavens of God’s Spirit. Your body may be changed at the sounding of the trumpet, but it takes the transforming power of redemption *now* to change your disposition and character — your soul. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, “You come behind in no gift.” They had all the gifts of the Spirit, yet there was envy, strife, division, sexual perversion, drunkenness even in their meetings — spiritual immaturity!

You may have been saved thirty years ago, baptized in the Spirit twenty-nine years ago, got a miracle of healing twenty-eight years ago, the gift of prophecy twenty-seven years ago, and received the deeper revelation of kingdom truths twenty-six years ago — but when stripped of all that experience you may find that you are very carnal and spiritually immature. You have not grown in grace, you have not developed in the image of Christ, you have not overcome the flesh, there is still a childishness, a pettiness, with condemnation of others, pride, biting words, wrong attitudes, anger, negativity, fearfulness, works of the flesh, etc. Should the trumpet blow and your body of humiliation be fashioned like unto His glorious body, but your mind is unrenewed, your will is weak, your emotions unstable, and your desires fleshly, how can you express the life and glory of sonship on the level of the glory of your new and incorruptible body? You would merely have a heightened and intensified ability to express carnality on a higher level! You will have experienced the *second resurrection* without having experienced the *first!*

God will have a people today who have the evidence of the living Christ in their spirit, soul, mind, body, home, automobile, family, job, everything that has to do with them. The Biblical picture of glory and heaven and spiritual things is *beauty*. God instructed Moses to put garments of beauty and glory on the priesthood. When Solomon built the temple he made it beautiful and glorious. God did not make a nasty sunset or an ugly rainbow. Even the snow is beautiful, and the grass, the trees, the mountains, the seashore, and the heavens! Do not talk about Christ being glorified unless part of that glory is shining and manifesting in you. If this salvation does not help us right down here with our present problems, pressures, weaknesses, sins, and diseases, if it does not help us now to rise above our circumstances, prejudices, and traditions, it is not worth anything. Some believe that salvation happens to you after you are dead. And many believe that resurrection *only* happens to you after you are dead and buried. But I do not hesitate to tell you, precious friend of mine, when you are not experiencing the resurrection now, you will not be ready for it when you are lying in a coffin! In the days that lie before us, may there be a demonstration through all the elect of the Lord to all who are in need, to the effect that Christ not only died for our sins, was buried, rose again and ascended to the right hand of the Father, triumphant up there, but may we open our hearts to the risen Christ, that that victory, that triumph, that glory, and that life of God be manifested in us, *now!*

Paul said that he yearned to know Christ in the *power* of His resurrection. Then he also said, “Christ is the power of God” (I Cor. 1:24). There is nothing clearer in the history of this world than that Christ is power. He has made new men and women of tens of millions. He has turned them right around and set their faces towards God. That is the hardest task in the universe. To create a world is nothing compared with re-creating one human soul. The victories of Alexander the Great, Caesar, Napoleon, were child’s play in comparison. Their power could crush men into a feigned submission, but it could not penetrate the inner nature and change the secret heart and will and soul. This is what Christ has done again and again! Have you ever tried to reform any soul held in the grasp of some delusion, addiction, or sin? Motive after motive you urge — the injury he is doing to himself, his self-respect, public opinion, the love of friends and family, his place in this world or the next — all in vain. For a moment the poor sinful feet make a feeble struggle to lift themselves out of the mire, and then sink back deeper. A sense of despair comes over you: you feel as though there were nothing to which to appeal.

And then one day a new heart, a new will, a new mind are given by the sovereign operation of God; the man stands up in the glory of Christ! All has not yet been transformed, but a mighty power has been raised up and a glorious new work begun. If you ask him the secret, he would tell you, with Paul, that

Christ is the power of God *unto salvation!* Now, believe me, there is nothing worth calling power compared with the power that can accomplish that. To break a man's resistance; to reverse his will; to turn the currents of his heart; to renew his mind; to purify his emotions and desires; to make him love what formerly he hated; to set his soul triumphantly superior to sin and weakness and sorrow and death; to translate him into the kingdom of the Son and give him seating in heavenly places; to make him a son of the Most High with a calling to glory and virtue: whoever can work these revolutions is strong beyond all that the mighty of the earth ever conceived of power. And Christ has done it again and again, praise His wonderful name! And He shall reign until all enemies are under His feet and the last soul in heaven, earth, and hell has been re-created into the image of God. David spoke of this mighty power when he said, "He *restoreth my soul.*" Ah, that is just what God is doing in this first resurrection — He is RESTORING OUR SOUL! That is the *power* of HIS RESURRECTION!

Have you considered the truth that lies hidden in these inspired words of the apostle, "*For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory*" (I Cor. 15:53-54). There is not just *one* truth in these words, but *two*. The apostle tells us that this *corruptible* must *put on incorruption* AND this *mortal* must *put on immortality*. Then to drive home the significant point that there are *two resurrections*, the first and the second, he reiterates again the *dual* operation of our change into spiritual beings, saying, "So when this corruptible *shall have put on incorruption*, AND this mortal *shall have put on immortality*, THEN shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, *Death is swallowed up in victory!*" Simply stated, when both of these operations of God are accomplished in us the resurrection will be complete.

Paul prefaces the above statements with these words: "*Behold, I show you a mystery...*" How totally inadequate do words become in the face of a mystery so deep and profound as this! How weak are our explanations, how frail our exhortations! Only the spirit of wisdom and revelation from God can teach us these things as we ought to know them and may God grant that the eyes of our understanding should be enlightened of Him to see that the mystery and the power of His resurrection is being raised up within us to lay hold upon our entire being until in our totality WE SHALL BE LIKE HIM.

To be continued...

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