

W426_Resurrection.mp3

[00:00:02] This is a recording made in the Chapel of the Open Book and is number 31 of the series entitled The Form of Sound Words. And the subject before us this afternoon is the great subject of resurrection. I think we want to remember that before ever creation came into existence. It is indicated in the Scripture that redemption was in the mind of God. There is one passage which takes us back before the foundation or overthrow of the world, where Peter says that Christ was verily foreordained to be a lamb without blemish and without spot. And those words are used to indicate that he was a sacrificial lamb and a sacrificial lamb had to do with sin. So before ever this world came into existence, at least as we know it, and before ever, a man was upon the earth even to test him to see whether he would commit sin or not. There was a provision made by God with regard to his redemption. And in the future if that redemption is ever to be effective. There must be life from the dead. For the wages of sin is death. And as all have sinned. Then unless there be this next subject, which is before us.

Resurrection. It will all end in the grave. And linking the two together. Linking redemption in the purpose and plan of God and resurrection in the future. There is the reconciliation which has been brought about so far as God is concerned and man.

[00:01:44] These things are still to occupy our attention. But we have enough, of course, to survey a little of the teaching of this mighty subject of the resurrection. Now, we read the 17th Psalm and at the end of the 17th Psalm, there is a reference that we can make as a commencement of our study today. It says in verse 15 of Psalm 17. As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness. I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness. The word satisfied takes us right to the end of time, right to the end of the ages, right to the goal that is before God satisfied. But don't forget the little words. As for me. For they are a. They are words which mean he's comparing himself with somebody else. Now, you wouldn't know without your attention was drawn to it that the word satisfied comes in verse 14. So I'll put it there. He speaks about those who he says, In thou Philistine treasure, they are satisfied with children and leave the rest of their substance to their babes. But as for me, I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness. And if you look at Psalm 49, you may see just what he's driving at. Psalm 49. He says that verse six, they that trust in them, in their wealth and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches.

[00:03:21] None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him, for the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceases forever that he should still live forever and not see corruption. Then he goes on to say. For see that wise men die. Likewise, the fool and the brutish person perish and leave their wealth to others. Now, what is their inward thought when he tells you? Their inward thought is that their houses shall continue forever and their dwelling places to all generations. They call their lands after their own names. Now that's a proxy resurrection. And there are those who have made their boast, though they don't believe in a literal resurrection for anybody. But if their children and children's children in some great, infinite number of generations onward are continuing their name, or that's their immortality. Well, that's a poor thing, isn't it, Joe? Instead of saying, Well, I should have an immortality because somebody will read what I said thousands of years after I'm dead. He said, As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness. I myself shall see him and not another. So we don't want a proxy resurrection in merely having children and merely having our names perpetuated. So we come back to Psalm 17, verse 15. In contrast to those who have their portion in this life who who leave their rest of their substance to their babes.

[00:05:05] That's the only immortality they can have. Go to a solicitors and make their will and put their will down and leave it to their children. As for me, he says, not, not not that for me. As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness. I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness. Now that, in those few words, is gathering up the purpose of resurrection. It's the satisfaction. It's the conclusion. It's the goal. And it is personal. I shall see. I shall behold thy face. And it is also personal. I shall be like him. And the New Testament says we shall have a body like unto his body of glory. So we're not going to exchange the blessed hope that we have in the Scriptures for any of this proxy business. They can name their lands after their own names if they like. 154 Beckenham Road will remain 154. I shan't stick any name on it because I've got a house not made with hands eternal in the heavens. What the name of that is? I don't know what street it's in, but I shall be satisfied then, as I'm not satisfied now. What should we turn our attention to? The great classic passage. Great classic chapter. One Corinthians 15. To get a little hint as to how to pursue this subject. I think it's good for us to have in mind that there are passages of scripture that can be resorted to as very, very definitely dealing with some particular subject.

[00:06:37] And here is this one. If you want to start with a question of the place that resurrection occupies one Corinthians 15, and this is divided into three parts. The first few verses down to verse 11 gives you the witness, both of the Apostle Paul, the 12 and the others who bore their testimony that they had seen Christ. Well, then he goes from that personal testimony and he says, now, verse 12, if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you, that there be there is no resurrection of the dead. You see his argument? He doesn't say if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, then he must have been raised from the dead. No, he says, Don't you see? The resurrection of Christ is intimately connected with the resurrection of his people. And if you go down this argument, you glimpse at it. You'll see he's backwards and forwards on this subject until he says verse 16, For if the dead rise, not then is not Christ raised. And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, Ye are yet in your sins. Then they also, which are fallen asleep in Christ, are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we will have all men most miserable. Now, this self-same man has said earlier in this same epistle that he determined to know nothing.

[00:08:09] Among them say Jesus Christ and him crucified. But he did say, I speak among those who are perfect. I go on when they're ready for it. And if he had remained only at the cross, he would still be without a redeemer. For don't forget that our saviour said he had power to lay down his life and power to take it again. And unless the taking it again was accomplished, we still are without a saviour. So he says here. If in this life only. Now what is his positive statement? Verse 20. But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept? And again, he mentions that term in verse 23. Every man in his own order. Christ, the first fruits. Now, you must know that in the Old Testament scripture. There was very definitely enacted a picture, a symbol of this resurrection on the first day of the week after the Passover, Sabbath after the Passover was over. In the morning, the high priest waved in the presence of God, a sheaf of barley that had been plucked from the field, picking an ear there and here, an ear of rather more prematurely ripened corn. And that little bundle was to represent the harvest that was getting ready outside. And the very same time that the high priest in the temple was waving the first fruits before God in the temple itself, that very self-same morning, Christ was raised from the dead, the first fruits of them that slept.

[00:09:53] So you see, there's a great story here to be pursued. You look up the Old Testament. Well, then we come a little bit further down. For since by man came, death

by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam, all die. Even so, in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order. Christ the first fruits afterward They that are Christ's at his coming. There's no argument here as to how many are saved and how many are raised. The one great argument is they must be Christ's and he must be the first fruits. Now, those who fall asleep in this subject here are said to be those who fall asleep in Christ. Verse 18. Fall asleep in Christ. Well, however sad we may be with regard to an unbeliever who dies, I don't think any of us would justify it in saying, Oh, nevertheless, he's fallen asleep in Christ, that we've got no warrant for that. So he's dealing here not with universal need, but with the question of those who fall asleep in Christ. Some rather argue from verse 22, as in Adam, all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive. But I think the argument here is continuing all the way down here. The first fruits as sure as you are in Adam.

[00:11:20] Whoever you may be, you will die. But as sure as you're in Christ, you'll be made alive. So don't bank on the idea that it'll be all right in the end. You'll all get to the end. So you make sure you're in Christ and believe the gospel for That's the great thing to to believe, to the present day. If God's going to save more than we can understand at this present moment, we'll only be too glad when that day comes. But we'll rather leave it for him to explain in its fullness in that day. So here we have then, the way in which this one Corinthians 15 is subdivided, the fact of the resurrection, how then he puts in contrast Adam and Christ and says that death is destroyed and then he gives an exhortation awake. She'll be just look at the second part of this or the the the exhortation is in verse 34. Awake to righteousness and sin not. Awake. The destruction of death is not merely at the resurrection of Christ. Not merely at your being raised from the dead, but when the end of the purpose is reached. So we'll look at verses 24. Until 2628 because that gives us the goal. Then come at the end when he should have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father. That's one win or win. He should have put down all rule and all authority and power.

[00:12:51] That's the second one. Then an interval for he must reign till he has put all enemies under his feet. And the last enemy that will be destroyed is death. There it comes in the Resurrection Chapter. For they have put all things under his feet. There's another when but when he said all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is accepted, which did put all things under him is another. When and when all things shall be subdued unto him, then he's reached it at last. Then shall the son also himself be

subject unto him? That put all things under him that God may be all in all. There's a tantalizing verse waiting for us. I better touch up upon it. Else What should they do? Which are baptized for the dead? And you know, there is quite a Christian sect that actually baptized for the dead based upon this verse. So that you could write to them, you could get your pedigree looked up. And if you have a relative that's died of grandfather or an ancestor, you could go through a ceremony and be baptized for the dead. Well, is that what the apostle said? Let's let's read it a bit more. Sometimes if you stick halfway in a verse, you know, you don't get the the explanation that's waiting for you. Else what shall they do with your baptized for the dead if the dead rise? Not at all.

[00:14:08] Why are they then baptized for the dead? And why stand we in jeopardy? Every hour I protest by your rejoicing, which I have in Christ Jesus, our Lord, I die daily. If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantage is me If the dead rise not let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die. Did you see it all? An argument. So come back again. What shall they do? Are baptized. Well, he says if that's all it amounts to, you're baptized into death, you say? What do you mean? Well, you live in the days of the Apostle when he said, I die daily and I fought with beasts. He said, I've exposed myself to the fury that the persecution of all around me is. Baptism simply leads to that. It's leading merely to death. So he's not saying if we're baptized for the dead, if we are baptized, and that's all it amounts to and there's no resurrection, we are baptized into a living death. So we let that be the peace go. Well, then we come to another section of this one Corinthians 15. Another question. But some men will say, how are the dead raised up? So we start the game. You see, first of all, the fact of resurrection, and then we come back on ourselves. The manner of resurrection. Well, that's something we cannot answer.

[00:15:24] If we could answer that satisfactorily, we should be on an equality with God. There are many things in connection with creation that we know takes place, but we can't answer them satisfactorily except to say they do. I've got the remotest idea how oxygen and hydrogen know one another and how they are able to unite one another and never make any mistake about it. I don't know whether they've got tiny little brains in there or they speak of electrons and whatnot. I don't know. Isn't it marvelous the things we don't know? And he is one. How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come? What is answer? He says, Thou fool. Now, the apostle was privileged to say that. I am not privileged to say that, for I am in that category myself. But he said,

Oh, you're a fool to argue like that, because he said, Look, you can't even describe the things that go on round about you. You sow a seed, it's bare grain, it may chance of wheat or of some other grain, but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him. Do you know how it is that there's that superintending power that if you put a grain of wheat in the ground, it won't grow into tomatoes or anything else, Always be wheat. If you mix it all up so that a man couldn't distinguish barley from wheat and oats and it all got thrown into the ground like that, they'd all come up separate each one according to his own kind.

[00:16:54] Never mixed up. And if you could understand the miracle that goes on whenever a seed falls in the ground and then produces that lovely tulip or that narcissus or that rose or whatnot, it says, you know as much as God. And you can't describe it. You're going only tell people it happens. So is a resurrection. And so we have this emphasis upon the fact that there is the resurrection of the dead. He comes back to Adam again. You see, he starts in the first round by linking it with Adam. He comes back to Adam again further down in this same chapter. He says. Don't forget that there is a wonderful variety in the realm of nature with which you're associated and there's a wonderful variety in the world to come. We're not all going to be exactly the same. Just millions of millions and millions of us all run out of the same mould. We shall have individuality. So he says, look. There is a verse 41. There is one glory of the sun and another glory of the moon. And yet another glory of the stars for one star differs from another star, even though they are both in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. So also sun, moon stars all differing and yet all in glory.

[00:18:23] Then he says the difference Look at the contrast. It is sown in corruption. It is raised in Incorruption. Now, I don't think these words are to be said at a funeral because if you sow dead seed, you'll get nothing. You try it. And if you have a packet of seeds that's produced by a trustworthy nursery, you'll find a guarantee stamped on it of its fertility. It must be living. This has to do with our coming into the world. Into this world as children. Where we come into this world, we are sown in corruption. We are sown in dishonor, we are sown in weakness. But when we go into that new world that's coming, we shall be raised in Incorruption. We shall be raised in glory. We shall be raised in power. And then he goes on to speak about the two types of bodies. It is sown a natural body. Every one of us come into this world with a soul equal. If I may coin the word body. It's a pity, because this word natural has to do for more than one thought. We say,

Well, it's quite natural for him to do that. Well, that's nothing to do with his soul. And when we speak about natural laws, say like gravitation, that's nothing to do with soul. This word natural has to bear a bigger burden than it should. So you want to know that if you could say such a word, you could say psychical.

[00:19:54] But that may mislead you. You could say soul equal. That's pretty bad English. So remember that when he says natural, he's referring to Adam, who was made a living soul. And then he speaks about spirit. And Christ made a life giving spirit. He's balancing the soul and the spirit. So then it is so natural body. It is raised a spiritual body. And then he seems to look in the face of one of his readers by imagination. He says, Now, you think that there couldn't be a spiritual body, don't you? You think a spiritual body doesn't exist? Oh, yes, he said. Oh, yes. We are distinctly told that we're going to be given a body like unto his body of glory. In Philippians three. So here. There is a there is a natural body and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written. The first man, Adam, was made a living soul. Now, the first man, Adam, didn't exist. He's only a bit of folklore. Oh, goodness. If that's the case, we are done again. We are of all men. Most miserable. For if the first man Adam doesn't prove to be historic fact, there can be no second. Adam. We are finished again. You see, those who tinker with the Word of God and would cut away from us the book of Genesis. Because we know better. They are cutting in the very foundations of all our hope and the finished work of Christ.

[00:21:21] I think it would be far more honest if we shut the book and never bothered about it at all. But this man won't allow that. Not the Apostle Paul in Romans five. He says by one man, sin entered into the world and death by sin. And he names him as Adam in one Corinthians 15. He names him twice as associated with death and in contrast with Christ. And he speaks of him again later on. So either you got to dismiss the whole of Paul's testimony. If you dismiss the first chapters of Genesis or you say, I take the book that Christ himself, even in resurrection, expounded to his disciples, and I stand there. There's no alternative for it. And so he says, And so it is written. The first man, Adam, was made a living soul. The last Adam was made a quickening or life giving spirit. You see, the soul is not spiritual. The soul has to do with our present life. Spirit is to do with the life to come. Howbeit that was not first, which is spiritual, but that which is solely good or natural, and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy. The second man is the Lord of Heaven. And then he goes on to take a

piece bought out of the book of Genesis and says, verse 49, As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

[00:22:48] And then goes on to say that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. A further revelation is made in verse 51. Behold, I show you a mystery. We shall not all sleep the better guide on this subject of sleep. This is the consistent word used in the scriptures for those who die in Christ. I say it advisedly because as far as my search has gone, I have never come across a passage in the New Testament where an unbeliever is said to fall asleep, to fall asleep is to anticipate waking again in his likeness. But death without Christ is not so denominated. If anyone says I'm to find you out and catch you out over that, whether it says so many ungodly kings in the Old Testament slept with their fathers. You look at the word slept and you'll find that it's not there. It's a different word. So here it is. It says We shall not all sleep. That is to say, if Christ is coming back to this world, it doesn't matter how long they've got to wait for it. When he does come back, there will be some here living. One Thessalonians four says We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not anticipate those that are asleep. But together they'll be meeting the Lord in the air.

[00:24:08] That company. So he says, Here again, that's the same truth. We shall not all sleep. But whether you fall asleep in death or not, you must be changed. I believe, to the Christian who falls asleep and to the person who's living on the earth. When Christ comes, the experience will be just the same. It's a saddening thing to see a loved one die, but it's a merciful thing, so far as they're concerned that they don't know it. They fall asleep. They fall asleep. And whether they sleep for a week or a month or a century makes no difference. But the one thing that characterizes us all is that whether we sleep or whether we wake, we must all be changed. And I suppose you would say, and I'm glad to know it, we give up the things to do with this present mortality, with all its limitations for power and glory beyond understanding, we shall all be changed. And he says it'll take place in a moment. You needn't be frightened out of your wits as to what's going to happen before, before you can think about it. It's finished. It's the only occurrence of the word atom in the Bible. This word atom is the word in a moment. That is to say A is a negative. Tom is a part of Temno to cut its unsplittable. It's the unsplittable moment of time.

[00:25:33] In the twinkling of an eye. Even the Scripture realizes that you need not prevent blinking when you're taking a photograph. It doesn't make any difference. It's so quick. At the last Trump. And the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible. And we shall be changed. Then he says again, for this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality. If you are going to put on immortality at resurrection, how can you say you've got an immortal soul beforehand? If you've got an immortal soul, you don't need to bother. But if you have to wait for resurrection to put on immortality, then it is the gift of God. 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, then death is swallowed up in victory. O death Where is thy sting? O grave. Where is thy victory? Then he answered the question. The sting of death is sin. But if your sins have been forgiven and you have a redeemer, death is not a sin. This is not to say it's been extracted. You sleep? Why not believe what God says? There may be a sting in the death of a poor unbeliever. At the last minute, I don't know. But there is no sting in the death of a believer. Because the sting of death is sin.

[00:27:09] And that's been dealt with righteously by God. And so he gives his beloved sleep. O death, where is thy sting? The sting of death is sin. And the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. And then he brings back again the exhortation to balance. Therefore, my beloved brethren be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. For as much as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. Well, just earlier I touched upon that verse in Psalm 17. I shall be satisfied. I shall be very wrong if I don't give you one other verse, won't I? Isaiah 53 speaks about the suffering of Christ. It speaks about the death of Christ. It speaks about his soul being made an offering for sin. And it says He shall see his seed and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall be satisfied. He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied. Travail means something which is very, very irksome. Very, very painful. A long struggle. But he's got to be satisfied. Isn't it wonderful here in resurrection? This believer says, As for me, I shall be satisfied when I awake in his likeness and in the resurrection Christ. And I am satisfied with the consequences and results of my great atoning work. At long last springs, there's going to be enjoyed a word that can never be enjoyed in this life.

[00:28:47] Not full satisfaction. Not till then. Well, now, that gives us just a few minutes to refer to 1 or 2 other features. There are two words in the scriptures that deal with resurrection. One is anastasis, which means to stand up. And the other is a guiro, which means to wake up. Now you get you get such a thought as that in the epistle to the Ephesians in the exhortation that he gives Chapter five, I think it is. Wherefore he saith verse 14, wherefore he says Awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead and Christ shall give thee light. So there's two movements, and in the ordinary way, you wake up first and you stand up afterwards. Of course, there are occasions when you're out of it before you know where you are, but that's when there's a raid on or something. Now the word anastasis is never used with the connection of being raised with Christ. The word that he used in Ephesians two. If you'd like to turn back a page is the word Eijiro Gallo. He says, verse six, and hath raised us up together and made us sit together. We have been roused together with him. We are not in resurrection yet, friends. But we have been awakened. There's a new man. If any man be in Christ is a new creation.

[00:30:29] Peter says we be made partakers of the divine nature. We are not yet in glory. We know that we must all be changed. But we have been roused. The outward man is perishing, but the inward man is renewed day by day. Don't let's forget these things that are part of the teaching of Scripture. We are not yet there, but we've got our passport. We have been roused together with him. We are potentially seated together with him. And one day we shall be raised in his likeness and satisfied forever. So you get the words in Philippians three, which we've alluded to but not quoted, the end of Philippians three, verse 20. For our conversation or politeuma. Our citizenship is in heaven from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. Who shall change our vile body Better still? Who shall change this body of our humiliation? The one we've got down here that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, the one he has up there according to the working, whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. It's a mighty working that brings that about. Well, then the other word that we have to remember is that in Philippians three, we've got the passage open. There is a problem for the reader of the authorized version. He says in verse 11, If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

[00:32:00] If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Now, most of you know. But I must make sure that everybody is acquainted with it, that in this verse

11, the preposition ek comes. If by any means I might attain unto the out resurrection that resurrection which is out from among the dead. And so I've given a list of passages here under the word out resurrection. And I think we've just got time to survey them. That's why I put my spectacles on, because I can read the Bible without them, but I can't see that, you see. So I'm in a bad way, aren't I? Now we get to our first of all, acts 23 six. X 23 six. But when Paul perceived that there were one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he cried unto the council, Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee, and the hope and resurrection of the dead. I'm called in question. Well, he was a Pharisee quite before he was an apostle. When he was an unbeliever, so far as Christ was concerned, he believed the resurrection. I'm mentioning that because of the next statement. Mark nine. Mark the ninth chapter and verses nine and ten. Now this is where we get the problem coming in. Mark nine. The Lord has been transfigured. And verse nine says, As they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen till the son of man were risen from the dead.

[00:33:59] And they kept that saying within themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean. Well, that means to say on the surface, they didn't even believe what an unsaved Pharisee believed. The Pharisees did believe the resurrection, and these disciples who had seen the Transfigured Christ didn't know what the resurrection meant. You say, Oh, there's something here that's strange, isn't it? Just the word ec? Our Lord put the word ec in till the son of man be risen out from among the dead. They said, What is rising out from among the dead? That's something new. So we must watch. You see this added little word. Well, then, in Luke, 20, 35 and 2035, we get another hint as to the distinction. Verse 35. But they which shall be accounted worthy. Now we know that counted worthy of being saved is because we are worthy. We had to be redeemed. So here we have worthiness coming in. They that shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world. And the resurrection which is out from among the dead. Neither marry nor give me marriage and so on. So again, you see there's a special emphasis upon the fact that there is a different resurrection from what you might call the general resurrection, that which is out from among the dead.

[00:35:24] And one more passage which comes to your mind without turning to the verse in the epistle to the Hebrews, it speaks about those who would not accept deliverance because they look for a better resurrection. A better resurrection than the

ordinary one. Well, that's strange, isn't it? Well, that's what the scripture says. That resurrection is the fruit of redemptive love and belongs to every person who is saved. But those who, in any measure, walk worthy of their calling or run for the prize of the high calling that was in view when the apostle said, If by any means I might attain to the resurrection that which is out from among the dead, that has to do with the prize and not the hope. We may have to deal with that again as a special subject, but we leave it for the time being. We've tried to encompass in the brief space we have the wonder of this glorious fact that although sin has brought death into the world, our Savior by dying has put away sin and extracted its sting. And he has guaranteed that because he lives, we shall live also. And if we say, And what shall we be like? Let's be satisfied that God has predestinated every one of us who believe that we shall one day be conformed to the image of his son. And if that doesn't satisfy us, I don't know anything else that will.