

“The Dead Will Be Raised”

John 5:24-31

24 Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.

25 "Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, 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 also to have life in himself. 27 And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man. 28 Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice 29 and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.

30 "I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me. 31 If I alone bear witness about myself, my testimony is not deemed true.

This passage includes two of those double Amen's, which is unique to the Gospel of John.

Amen, amen! [Verily, verily! Truly, truly! Most assuredly!]

The Scriptures are very clear that Jesus of Nazareth is, in fact, very God.

To deny the **deity** of Christ requires that a person either reject the authority of the Scriptures or that they twist the Scriptures to their own condemnation.

The context of John 5:17-47 is the Lord Jesus Christ's sermon on His deity. Only a person who is Himself God can make the claims that Jesus makes for Himself.

Let's review what Jesus said about Himself in 5:17-23.

The Jews sought to kill Him because **they understood** His claim to be equal with God the Father [17-18].

Jesus answered the Jews by declaring that He does nothing of Himself but only does what the Father does [19].

Jesus said that the Father loves the Son and gives all knowledge to Him [20].

Pause and think about this. **“The Father loves the Son ...”**

It is my belief that a person cannot begin to understand the mercy of God in His eternal purpose, so far as He has revealed His purpose, until they grasp something of the significance of **“the Father loves the Son ...”**

Colossians 1:15-18

15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. 18 And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.

Colossians 2:8-10

8 Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. 9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; 10 and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.

It is not possible to overstate the importance of a correct view of Jesus Christ. I fear that too many in our day are trivializing “Jesus” because of a deficient understanding of His person! Read Christ’s sermon on His deity over and over and keep it in mind every time the name of Jesus passes between your lips.

Jesus declared that as the Son, He is the sovereign over life [21].

Jesus said that all judgment is committed to Him as the Son of God [22].

And Jesus said that if He is not honored, that the Father could not be honored [23]. A person dishonors the Son when they allow that there is any other way to come to God apart from Jesus Christ [John 14:6]!

All of these claims come under the first “**double amen**” [19].

In case you missed my explanation, only John records the “**Amen, Amen**”. [Truly, truly; verily, verily; most assuredly]

“Amen, Amen.” alerts us to things that Jesus is saying that are singularly important! Things that we should meditate on deeply and keep them in our hearts and minds as we worship King Jesus!

“**The Dead Will Be Raised**”

John 5:24-30

"Amen, amen [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 Amen, amen [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, 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 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. 30 I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.

At verse 24 we have the **second** of the three double amen’s in this sermon by Jesus Christ on His deity. The **third** double amen [25] is followed by an explanation of verse 24 as to death and life.

Let’s consider vss. 24-30.

Quickening, or giving life to the dead, and pronouncing judgment are two of the “greater works” that the Father shows the Son [20, 21].

We now learn how the Son performs this work.

In this present age, spiritual life is given [24, 25] and in the final judgment, physical resurrections occur [28, 29].

The **authority** given to Jesus is because He is the Son of Man [26, 27].

The Son of Man is a favorite title that Jesus gives to Himself and it means that He is as truly Man as though He were not God.

“Tempted in all points, yet without sin.” **The sinless Man!**

Verse 30 brings us back to the unity of the Father and the Son [Cf. 19].

In order to explain John 5:24-30, which speaks of the resurrection of the dead, it is necessary to consider **eschatology**.

Eschatology is the doctrine of last things.

What will happen immediately before and after the return of Christ?

Your eschatology will determine how you interpret Scripture.

Your **eschatology** will be tested in this passage.

The way that most people come to their view of last things is that they hear a preacher or Sunday school teacher that may or may not have seriously studied the subject. Most often the preacher or teacher has read some commentary and without too much personal study simply repeat what they have read.

Then others have “learned” something about eschatology. It is a matter of pride to think that the first thing that you learn about a subject must be correct. We should always be teachable and that includes this preacher.

One dear lady, after reading a commentary, said, “You know the Bible sure does shed a lot of light on this commentary.”

Now I use commentaries and have many in my library. But I test what another man says against the entire Scripture. As much as I highly esteem Charles Alexander and Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, I don't accept everything that they write.

So please do not tune me out because, "This is not what you have always been taught."

Or, "Brother So and So was such a fine man and he taught me etc."

If you would come to a correct understanding of last things I suggest that you read a good translation, such as the ESV. Put aside all the other questions you have and read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation and look for eschatological passages.

All I ask is that you pay close attention and only use the Bible as your sufficient authority!

When I first began to seriously study eschatology, now well over 40 years ago, I read the Bible through two times with only eschatology in mind and made notes each time. I did not have a particular view to protect. All I wanted to learn was what the Bible actually taught about the return of Christ.

So bear with me this morning because there is nothing more likely to affect your understanding of the Bible than your **eschatology**.

I repeat, "Your eschatology will interpret Scripture for you."

There are two resurrections in verses 28- 29.

...all who are in the graves...

... those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

The popular eschatology of our day says that there is a literal 1000-year period that separates the resurrection of the just and the resurrection of the condemned. This view of a literal 1000-year span of time, is, I believe, imposed on this text in order to sustain a certain system of interpretation.

Nowhere in this text is there a hint of a literal 1000-year period that separates the resurrection of the just and the resurrection of the condemned.

The only way a person can sustain this system of eschatology is to bring certain preconceived notions to the Bible and impose them on the text.

Charles Alexander said, “Never underestimate the power of a preconceived notion.”

We will take a look at where the idea of a literal 1000 years comes from.

If you want to be consistent with your eschatology you must compare what you believe about the events that are to occur immediately at the return of Christ at the end of this present age with the whole of Scripture.

There are only **two ages** mentioned in the Bible itself. They are “**this present age**” and the “**age to come.**” All the other “ages” are the mere inventions of men.

The most popular view in our day is the basis for the “Left Behind” series of books. If you have read these books you have been reading fiction with enough Bible thrown in to make them seem Scriptural.

I will try to give you a summary of this view in a paragraph.

The essence of the popular teaching today is that when Jesus came into the world that He tried to establish an earthly Jewish kingdom and **failed** because the Jews rejected Him. Then as an “afterthought” God established the church. And **then** after a period of time the church will be taken away in some secret “rapture” and **then** an earthly Jewish kingdom will once again be established with the Jews restored to all of their glory as in the times of David and Solomon, and Christ will reign on earth for a literal 1000 years.

Some time ago a lady asked me if I believed in the “rapture”. When I said “No”, she almost collapsed. “You don’t believe in the rapture?” “Well,” I said, “I believe in what the Bible says about meeting Christ in the air but I don’t believe all this fiction about a “secret rapture”.

The eternal purpose of God regarding the nation of Israel is made clear in Romans 9, 10, and 11 and in other NT writings that show that national Israel was rejected because of her unbelief. Not only was she rejected it was prophesied that she would be rejected completely and forever!

Mathew records what Jesus said to the Jewish leaders:

Matthew 21:43

Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it.

Now those of the popular view will be quick to say, “Yes, but the nation will be restored in the “millennium.” I simply cannot find that in the NT. The only way you can come up with a future restoration of national Israel is if you allow the OT to override the NT interpretation.

The Apostle Paul makes it clear [at least it is clear to me] in his NT writings that the church is made up of elect Gentiles and the elect remnant of the Jews from Adam until the end of this present age.

Jesus taught that the kingdom of God is at hand and that there is nothing in the future that will replace the church!

My main objection to any teaching of a future restoration of a Jewish nation is that it is based on God having mercy on a people because of their birth certificates. Romans 9:6-8 clearly says that no Jew was ever saved [called to be a child of God] because he was a Jew.

My second objection is that this view does not allow the NT to interpret the OT prophecies.

Then where does the view of a literal 1000-year span of time come from?

It boggles my mind but here is what you are required to do in order to believe in a future literal 1000-year reign of Christ on earth.

The only mention in the NT of the “thousand years” in an eschatological context is in Revelation 20. Revelation is a **symbolic** book. There is no way that most of Revelation can be understood to be literal.

Then come to Revelation Chapter 20, which is loaded with **symbolic** language, and then take the phrase “thousand years” and insist that it must be a **literal** 1000 years? Almost everything else in Chapter 20 is symbolic but the “thousand years” is a literal 1000-year period of time.

In addition to that inconsistency, the Greek references point out that the word translated “thousand years” is plural. So it would be thousands of years and not 1000 years.

chilioi (khil'-ee-oy); plural of uncertain affinity; a thousand:

All right, Jim if it is not literal, what does a “thousand years” mean?

In my understanding the “thousand years” is a perfect period of time from the coming of Christ into the world to save sinners until He returns in judgment at the end of this present age.

Jesus Christ is reigning now and His people know who King Jesus is! We are not waiting for a “millennial reign”! We are right now in the “millennial reign” of Jesus Christ!

The **first resurrection** is the new birth or regeneration that occurs in this present age. The **second resurrection** is the physical resurrection of the dead at the judgment in the age to come.

Believers are **born twice** and **die once** while **unbelievers** are **born once** and **die twice**.

Believers are born physically and spiritually and they only die a physical death. Unbelievers are born physically and they not only die physically but they die an eternal death in hell!

Now try to decide what is symbolic and what is literal as we read:

Revelation 20

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. 2 He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; 3 and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.

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, 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. 5 But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished.

This is the first 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.

7 Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison 8 and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. 9 They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them.

10 The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

11 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them.

12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. 13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. 14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire.

This is the second death.

15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

Neither the Gospels nor the Revelation or any other NT writings teach that a literal period of 1000 years will intervene between the physical resurrection of believers and the physical resurrection of unbelievers.

Look at all the other NT references to the resurrection of men and please see that there is no mention of a literal 1000-year span of time.

The reason that I have labored on this matter of eschatology is because it is my belief that the purpose of Christ and His majesty and His absolute rule is compromised when He is presented as having **failed** in an attempt to establish an earthly Jewish kingdom.

Back to John 5:24-30:

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.

This verse is a summary of the Gospel and shows the method of salvation.

“Hearing” and “believing” here mean the same thing. This is not merely an outward hearing of the Gospel, but the inward receiving of its truth that results in penitent faith and humble obedience to the Savior.

Christ, in verse 24, calls on the OT prophet Isaiah:

Isaiah 55:1-3

"Ho! Everyone who thirsts,

Come to the waters;

And you who have no money,

Come, buy and eat.

Yes, come, buy wine and milk

Without money and without price.

2 Why do you spend money for what is not bread,

And your wages for what does not satisfy?

Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good,

And let your soul delight itself in abundance.

3 Incline your ear, and come to Me.

Hear, and your soul shall live;

And I will make an everlasting covenant with you —

The sure mercies of David.

The Jews for the most part died in their unbelief.

There was Simeon and Anna in the temple when Mary comes for her purification under the law. There were a few fishermen and a tax collector. There were a few Pharisees. But for the most part the Jews all died in unbelief. The way we measure “success” today what Jesus did didn’t amount to very much. But Jesus accomplished exactly what He came to do and that was to save sinners.

God rejected the Jewish nation and the church is established. Christ loved His church before the foundation of the world. The church is made up of all the elect Gentiles and the elect remnant of the Jews. Christ loves the church now, and Christ will love her into eternity, as she is the bride of Christ.

I will close by reading the text again. As I read the text think about the implications of two bodily resurrections and of imposing a literal 1000 years between them. The idea of two resurrections is based on a faulty interpretation of Revelation 20 and has no Scriptural support in the analogy of Scripture.

*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, 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 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. 30 I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.

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