**Resurrection Sunday, Trinity Bible Church April 12, 2020**

**“THE VICTORY” - I Corinthians 15:50-58**

I had hoped to have been able to preach this message in our church on Easter Sunday when we thought it would be our first Sunday back after this pandemic.

**THE NEGATIVE 15:50**

“Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption.” This is not good news since we’re all flesh and blood. Even if we do good works they’re done in the flesh so they won’t get us to Heaven. Titus 3:5 tells us that “it’s not by works” and Ephesians 2:9 says “not of works lest anyone should boast” and since we’re told in I Corinthians 15:50 that “corruption cannot inherit incorruption, therefore, we must have a sinless body to enter a sinless Heaven. The word “corruption” means the death of the sinner due to sin. Corruption cannot produce incorruption.

Romans 5:12 says: ”wherefore as by one man sin entered the world and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned.” And Romans 3:23 says “all have sinned and come short of the glory of God” that is, we’ve come up short, we’ve all missed the mark.

Adam’s sin brought the death penalty upon all his descendants.

But thank God there is a positive side.

**THE POSITIVE 15:51,52**

15:51 says “Behold, I tell you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—“

**Mystery** – in Scripture is a secret of Divine truth which the Holy Spirit gives to His servants and enables them to pass it on to others. Paul mentions in I Corinthians 4:1 “Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.”

In Matthew 13:11, Jesus referred to the parables as the mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven.

The mystery here is that “we shall not all die” the word “sleep” is used for this was the term for a believer’s death since the believer goes immediately with the Lord but the body is temporarily in the grave awaiting a resurrection. Because it will be raised incorruptible Jesus called it “sleep” since it will wake up at His call.

The Spirit of God sheds light on this mystery in the Rapture passage of I Thessalonians 4:15-17: “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. 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. 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.”

But first we must all be changed. “Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are the children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.” (I John 3:1,2). I Corinthians 15:52 says It will be suddenly, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. In Revelation 22:7 & 20 Jesus announces when He comes it will be quickly or suddenly. Thank God that Jesus changed the negative into a positive assurance for those who put their trust in Him. We are assured!

**THE POSITIVELY I Corinthians 15:53-58**

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

“Corruptible” refers to the body in the grave while “mortal” refers to we who are alive.

**“Must” is our assurance this will take place because when God says it must, be assured – it must!**

Verse 54 says “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.” This is a quote from Isaiah 25:8: “He will swallow up death forever, and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces;”

The words “has” and “shall” here reinforce the word “must” in verse 53.

Through Christ’s death on the cross and His resurrection, He conquered death and accomplished the victory. He, the Son of God, became flesh and blood for us and in our place took our judgment and won the victory that we might become children of God. It’s all of Christ!

Death has lost its sting on the believer and we have the blessed assurance “to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.” (2 Corinthians 5:8).

Above, in verse 54 I highlighted when and then for an important reason. It is **when** the Rapture takes place **then** Christ’s victory for us will be brought about through His own blood-bought possession. Christ conquered death at His resurrection and His victory is in the guarantee of **our** resurrection. Christ is the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep and afterward those who are Christ’s at His coming. (I Corinthians 15:20, 23).

Our Lord Jesus Christ was the first to be raised to eternal life over which death has no power. Death has no dominion over Him because He was and is sinless.

Christ is THE resurrection (firstfruiits), and His raising of believers will be the harvest.

In the Old Testament book of Hosea 13:14 we read “O death I will be your plagues! O grave, I will be your destruction. Pity is hidden from my eyes.” God will not change His mind about destroying death!

We already read in verse 54 that Death is swallowed up in victory and verse 55 says “O Death where is your sting? O Grave where is your victory?” Sin is the cause of death and the Law backs up the penalty by defining sin. But verse 57 says “But thanks be to God who **gives** us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” **Victory isn’t won, it’s given!**

God always was and is the Victor! He always was and is on the victory side.

Victory is given because we couldn’t win it. So God accomplished it for us in His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ!

15:52 says this will take place at “the last trumpet.” At the time of this Scripture the armies relied much on the sound of the trumpet. Certain tones were for preparing for battle, meal calls, etc. But the last call was for the battle is done, fold your tent and come home.”

And so verse 58 of chapter 15 tells us “Therefore my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”

Not only do we celebrate Jesus’ resurrection but because He lives, we too shall live.

*Happy Resurrection Sunday*

*Pastor*