

Every Knee, Every Nation – Week 3

Authority Over Our Future: Hope 1 Corinthians 15:20-28

I. Series Introduction: The Authority of Jesus

- **Week 1:** Jesus has authority over our *past* — He forgives sins *on earth*.
- **Week 2:** Jesus has authority over our *present* — He sends us into mission where He already reigns.
- **Week 3:** Jesus has authority over our *future* — He secures our hope and guarantees the defeat of death.

Key Big Idea:

If you knew the ending was joy, you could face a hard chapter with perseverance. The risen Christ guarantees that ending.

II. Introduction: Hope Strong Enough for Real Life

- Grief, loss, and pain are real places we all eventually walk.
- Even in the heaviest moments, Christians whisper hope—not sentiment, but truth rooted in Christ’s resurrection.
- Resurrection hope is not denial—it is confidence in the King who holds tomorrow.

III. Context of 1 Corinthians 15

- Corinthian believers questioned **bodily** resurrection.
- Paul argues resurrection is not optional to Christian faith—it’s essential.
- Without Christ’s resurrection: preaching is useless, faith collapses, sin wins, and death reigns.
- Paul pivots with the turning point of the chapter:

“But Christ has indeed been raised...”

- Everything that follows builds on this foundation.

IV. Exegesis of 1 Corinthians 15:20-28

A. v.20 Christ the “Firstfruits”

- Greek: ἀπαρχή — the first sheaf of the harvest, guaranteeing the rest.
- Jesus’ resurrection is the **down payment** of our resurrection.
- N.T. Wright: Jesus’ resurrection launches God’s new creation.
- We don’t hope for resurrection—we **await** it with confidence.

B. vv.24-27 Christ Reigns Now, Subduing All Enemies

- “**He must reign**” (δεῖ βασιλεύειν): divine necessity, present reality.
- Echoes **Psalm 110** and **Psalm 8** — Jesus fulfills the human vocation to reign.
- Christ’s reign is **already/not yet**.
 - Already enthroned
 - Not yet visibly complete
- Suffering does not mean Christ is absent—it means His reign is still pushing back darkness.

C. v.26 — The Last Enemy to Fall Is Death

- Death is not a friend; it is an enemy.
- Greek: καταργέω — abolish, nullify, make powerless.
- Death’s defeat is guaranteed, though not yet fully seen.
- Grief is real, but grief is not final.

D. v.28 — “God Will Be All in All”

- The ultimate goal (telos): creation filled with God’s unhindered presence.
- No rival powers, no sin, no sorrow.
- Revelation 21–22 imagery — “all things new.”
- Michael Gorman: hope transforms us now because we belong to the new creation already dawning.

V. What Paul Wants Us to See

1. Christ’s Resurrection Guarantees Ours (vv. 20–23)

- Jesus is the “firstfruits” — the guarantee of our bodily resurrection.
- Christian hope isn’t escape; it’s **new creation**.
- If He walked out of His grave, *we will walk out of ours*.

2. Christ Reigns Now (vv. 24-26)

- The coronation has already happened.
- His enemies persist, but their defeat is certain.
- We live in the overlap of ages—His reign advances even when we don't see it.
- Your current struggles do not contradict His authority.

3. Christ Will Finish What He Started (vv. 27-28)

- Every enemy will bow—including death itself.
- The end of the story is God filling everything with His life and presence.
- Suffering and evil do not get the last word.
- Our hope rests in God's future, not our circumstances.

4. Therefore... Steadfast (v. 58)

- Because resurrection is true—your labor matters.
- Nothing done in Jesus' name is wasted.
- Hope fuels perseverance, courage, holiness, and endurance.

VI. Applying the Hope

A. Grief

- We grieve honestly, but not hopelessly.
- Death is real, but temporary.
- Resurrection turns “goodbye” into “see you again.”

B. Perseverance

- Keep serving, loving, giving, praying—your King sees every act.
- Small faithfulness echoes into eternity.

C. Holiness

- Future hope shapes present obedience.
- You are becoming who you will fully be in the resurrection.

D. Practice for the Week

- Write a resurrection promise on a card:
 - Philippians 3:20–21
 - Revelation 21:5

- Place it where you feel worry most (dashboard, mirror, phone).
- Let resurrection hope interrupt anxiety.

VII. Conclusion

- Jesus has authority over your past (forgiveness).
- Jesus has authority over your present (mission).
- Jesus has authority over your future (hope).
- His resurrection is your future.
- His reign is certain.
- His victory is final.

Because He lives, we can face tomorrow.