

## **Chapter 5**

### ***FOUNDATION 5***

#### ***RESURRECTION AND ETERNAL JUDGEMENT***

##### ***SECTION 1: RESURRECTION***

Introduction: Resurrection of the dead is one of the key and foundational truths of the Christian faith. Our hope of eternal life is based on the reality of the resurrection of Jesus Christ after His crucifixion and burial. In this section we will look at what resurrection is and is not and we will see what the Bible says about resurrection and how it affects our life and faith as Christian believers.

- I. Resurrection of the dead means that a person who was actually dead has come back to life.
  - A. Resurrection is not re-incarnation. The myth of re-incarnation is that a person who is dead comes back at another time and place as another person or creature. The re-incarnation myth has various forms. In one form a person is said to come back to life in another time or place as a different person, of a different nationality or even of the opposite sex. Another idea is that according to a person's goodness or evil in life he or she is reincarnated as a lower creature or as a higher creature. The idea of re-incarnation has no basis in scripture.
  - B. Resurrection is not a near-death experience. Much has been made in recent years of near-death experiences in which people are declared clinically dead and then revived through heroic medical procedures. People often describe similar experiences of being out of their body, seeing a bright light, then returning to consciousness with a different perspective on life. This is not resurrection, but resuscitation.
  - C. Resurrection of the dead means that a person is actually dead, possibly for hours or even days. Our medical knowledge assures us that after only a short time decay and breakdown of cell structure would make resuscitation impossible. Then the person is restored to life by supernatural means. The person remains the same person, having been actually dead, but now actually alive again.
  - D. The Bible contains many accounts of resurrection of dead people. In the Old Testament there are accounts of dead people being brought back to life by prophets and an account of one man who came back to life when his dead body was put into the tomb of a dead prophet. In the Gospels and Acts we find accounts of Jesus raising the dead, of Peter raising the dead, of the graves around Jerusalem being opened at Jesus' resurrection, and of course of the resurrection of Jesus Himself by the power of God's Spirit.
- II. Here are some of the things the Bible says concerning the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment. These are some of the scriptures on which we base our belief in resurrection and eternal life.

*Foundation for Christian Service – Term 1 – Chapter 5 – Foundation 5*

- A. The Bible teaches that every person has an eternal soul and that after death we will be resurrected (made alive again) to face judgment and then to spend eternity with Christ in heaven or with the devil and his angels in hell. (John 5:24-29; John 11:25; Hebrews 9:27)
  - B. Even though many people in Old Testament days, in Jesus' day, and today, believe that death is the end of all things, the earliest writings of the Bible teach resurrection of the dead. (Job 19:25-27; Matthew 17:3; Matthew 27:52)
  - C. Here is what Jesus taught concerning resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment:
    - 1. That all who believed in Him would live eternally. (John 3:16)
    - 2. That both good and evil, rich and poor were conscious and alive after death, the righteous in comfort and the wicked in torment. (Luke 16:19-31)
    - 3. That after His resurrection, he was ascending to the Father to prepare an eternal dwelling place for us with Him. (John 14:1-3)
- III. The resurrection of Jesus Christ reveals some important truths about Jesus and about us in relation to the issue of death and eternal life.
- A. The resurrection of Jesus reveals that Jesus is the Christ - the Son of God. (Romans 1:4)
  - B. The resurrection of Jesus reveals that death is defeated by the power of God. (Hebrews 2:14-15)
  - C. The resurrection of Jesus reveals that we as believers are justified. (Romans 4:25)
  - D. The resurrection of Jesus reveals that there is a new life source in our body, soul, and spirit. (Romans 8:11)
  - E. Because of Christ's resurrection we who are believers shall possess new bodies. (1 Corinthians 15:51-52; Philippians 3:21)
- IV. Clear knowledge of what the Bible says about the resurrection of the dead is vitally important to us as a basis for our faith. Here are some of the reasons we need to know what God says about resurrection of the dead:
- A. The Bible is clear that if there is no resurrection of the dead our faith is in vain. (1 Corinthians 15:13-14)
  - B. Our faith in the resurrection of the dead gives us hope in times of trouble and hardship. (1 Corinthians 15:19; 1 Peter 1:3)
  - C. The hope of resurrection enables us to overcome the fear of death. (Hebrews 2:15)

## **SECTION 2: ETERNAL JUDGEMENT**

Introduction: The Bible clearly teaches that God is a God of justice and mercy. God's justice requires that both sin and righteousness be judged; that righteousness be rewarded and that sin be punished. But God's love for man tempers His judgment of sin with mercy. The Old Testament shows us the enactment of God's righteous judgment on both nations and individuals. The New Testament tells us of God's love and His gift of His Son, Jesus Christ who gave Himself as an offering for sin. It is important that we know what the Bible says about God's righteous judgment for all men, those who believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and those who do not.

- I. Here are some of the things the Bible clearly teaches concerning eternal judgment:
  - A. Every person who ever lives must face eternal judgment. This means that after each person dies, he or she will be conscious and aware and will stand before God to be judged. Following this judgment, each person will spend eternity with God in heaven or eternity with the devil and his angels in hell. (Hebrews 9:27)
  - B. Those who believe in Jesus Christ will be **judged by their faith** and **rewarded for good works**. No one will be admitted to heaven or sent to hell on the basis of having done more or less good works or evil deeds. The determining factor is whether the person has put his or her faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Those who believe in Jesus Christ will be judged worthy of heaven solely on the basis of their faith in Him and in His sacrifice for their sins. They will then be rewarded in heaven on the basis of good works or acts of faith they have done in life. All believers will be in heaven but some will be rewarded more than others. (Matthew 25:31-32; John 3:18; 1 Corinthians 3:13-15; Revelation 20:12-15)
  - C. Unbelievers will be **judged and condemned for rejecting Christ** and **punished for their evil deeds**. Those who are judged unworthy of heaven will be judged so because they have not put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and have not accepted the sacrifice He made to pay the full price for their sins. Of those whose eternal destiny is hell, those who have done much evil and have often rejected God's grace will be punished more severely than those who have done lesser evil and have had less opportunity of God's grace. (Luke 12:47-48; John 3:18; Revelation 20:12-15)
- II. The Bible teaches that there are a number of factors that enter into the process of how believers will be judged.
  - A. We will be judged by our faith in Jesus Christ - for eternal life. Faith in Jesus Christ alone determines that we will have eternal life. (John 3:16; Romans 3:22-24; Romans 6:23; Romans 10:9-10; Ephesians 2:8-9)
  - B. We will be judged by our works - for reward. God's grace through faith saves us, good works of faith reward us. (1 Corinthians 3:13-15)

## *Foundation for Christian Service – Term 1 – Chapter 5 – Foundation 5*

- C. We will be judged by our faithfulness. The Bible clearly teaches that faithfulness is rewarded with greater responsibility, trust, and authority. (Matthew 25:14-30; 1 Corinthians 4:2; 1 Timothy 1:12)
  - D. We will be judged by our treatment of others. (Matthew 25:31-46)
  - E. We will be judged by our motives. (1 Corinthians 4:2-5)
  - F. Points B through E are basis for rewards, not to determine heaven or hell.
- III. Hell is described in very vivid terms in the Bible. Whether one believes that these descriptions are to be taken literally or to be interpreted symbolically, there is a clear picture of the nature of hell and a clear warning to avoid it.
- A. Hell is described as a place of torment. (Revelation 20:10)
  - B. Hell is described as a place filled with unholy souls. (Revelation 21:8)
  - C. Hell is described as a place of sorrow and despair. (Luke 13:28)
  - D. Hell is described as a place of darkness and loneliness. (Matthew 25:30)
- IV. Heaven is also described vividly in the Bible, and again whether one decides to take these descriptions literally (streets of gold) or symbolically, there are some things about heaven that are made very clear.
- A. Heaven is a place where Jesus is. (John 14:2-3)
  - B. Heaven is a place of worship and praise. (Revelation 7:11)
  - C. Heaven is a place of indescribable beauty. (Revelation 21:10-27)
  - D. Heaven is a place of peace and comfort. (Revelation 21:4)

### **QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION**

- Chapter 5      Foundation 5 - Resurrection and Eternal Judgment
- 1. How would you explain the difference between Resurrection and Reincarnation?
  - 2. What is the difference between the way in which Christian believers will be judged and the way in which unbelievers will be judged?

