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A D D R E S S,

delivered by

J. S. G.,

on

L O R D ' S D A Y E V E N I N G,

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in

L Y N I N G T O N H A L L,

West End Lane,
N. W.

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Scriptures Read:-

1. Corinthians,
Chapter, 15,

Ver. 20 - 58.

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There are three things, dear friends, that we - the christian generally - little apprehend. The first is what this scripture calls "order" - the "order" that we are of. And the second is that the christian should know a heavenly Person; and the third is the wonderful victory that God has already secured and which, in Divine grace, is given to us. Now I wanted just to say a few words in connection with each - and in the order that I have just mentioned; because it is of great importance that every christian should understand what this, and many other scriptures, call "order". You see that little word "order" is used in different senses in the English language. You see, we can put these chairs in order; that is, we put them in rows. That is not the sense in any way of the passage we read. The thought of "order" in this passage is more the idea of "kind" - the "kind of person". And if you have followed a little what I have been taking on previous Sunday evenings, you will no doubt have apprehended the meaning of the word as it is used in scripture. You will remember that I said that the Bible was about two men - the first Adam and the last Adam. When scripture speaks of the first and the last, it is speaking of two heads of races. There are two races, and there are two races today. And every person is either connected with the first Adam or the last Adam. Now what confuses the christian a little is this:- outwardly, visibly, as scripture shews, I am connected with the first Adam just the same as I have always been. Inwardly I am connected with the last. The difficulty for the christian is to view himself in those two different aspects. I will just repeat it. Outwardly, I am just the same person as I was before, by the Grace of God, I was converted. Inwardly, God has made a difference. By this inward work I am connected - linked with- the last Adam, God's Beloved Son. Now it is of the greatest moment that the christian should know what it is to pass from the first to the other - in the faith of his soul, that he should know what it is - through grace - to enjoy being connected with the last Adam. Now in the 15th. of Corinthians the great subject running through the chapter is "resurrection". Resurrection is what people call a miracle. It cannot be explained by any scientific means. It is what God brings to pass, and no one can bring it to pass but God. And it is of great moment for us to have the scriptural idea of what resurrection means. Now resurrection is brought about wholly by the power of God. The whole Creation teaches us the lesson and we can see the principal of it in the works of God. It is brought about by the power of God and the principal applies to what goes into death. And it is the mighty power of God in operation, to bring out of death - not for this life - and that is properly "resurrection". If you remember, when the Lord was here upon earth, there were four persons who were raised from the dead; and that is for a testimony of who He was, the Messiah, the King of the Jews. He was there and

He had all the power of God and that was seen in raising people from the dead. And if He was the Messiah, what was going to take place? Well, He would come and He would call people out of the grave to come into the blessing of the Millenium. That is resurrection - in recalling people to this life. He bore witness to the fact that He had the power. But that is not what the 15th. of Corinthians calls resurrection. No person returns to this life if once risen from the dead. Resurrection is not recalling from the dead to this life; resurrection is calling recalling people from the dead to another life altogether.

Now we will just seek to follow the scripture down a little so that we may see how that is unfolded. The Spirit of God presents the Blessed Person of Christ in the verse we read as the One that has risen from the dead and so He is "the firstfruits of them that slept". Now just ponder those words. Look at the fact that is stated. Christ is risen and - Christ being risen - He is the "firstfruits of them that slept" slept". Who were those that slept? Why, clearly all the Old Testament believers. The Old Testament believers had slept; they had been put to sleep by the mighty power of God. But Christ has now risen and He was the "firstfruits". If you want to get clearly the thought of "firstfruits" you must go to the 27th. of Leviticus. And you will remember, before they gathered any harvest they took a sheaf (the "firstfruits") and presented it to God. And Christ was this sheaf. When He was raised from the dead He was "the firstfruits of them that slept".

Then you have a simple and very wonderful statement;- "If by man came death, by man came also resurrection from the dead". Have you, dear friends, ever pondered those words? How did death come into this scene? It is the judgment of God and God brought it in; but it came in "by man". God never made man to die; He made man to live and man died by disobedience. How must God bring in resurrection if He is to triumph? "By man". Resurrection must be brought in by man and he was universally under the power of death. It is the gospel that answers that wonderful question. God's Own Son came. He was never under death. He came out of Heaven - came down to this scene, the One that had life in Himself, the One that death had nothing to say to. And, dear friends, there was One, when He went into death - what must take place? He was bound to come out - because of who He was; not only because of Who He was, but because of what He was. He must come out from it and so resurrection has been brought in "by man" - "the Man Christ Jesus". Then we get a very full statement;- "Every man after his own order" every one "after his own order";- "Christ the firstfruits -" (Now you notice that expression is repeated and then come two or three other words and you get the whole of the heavenly hosts) "- afterwards they that are Christ's at His coming". Now just for a moment remember the word "coming" is the same as "presence" and you could read there;- "Christ's at His presence"; that is, the Lord Jesus Christ's coming again. And when He comes He will sit upon the throne of His glory. And who will sit there with Him? All those of Christ, the whole of Heaven will be there. There will not be one missing.

Now the Spirit says that Christ is the "firstfruits" and "afterwards those that are Christ's at His coming"; that is, the whole of the heavenly hosts - all in association with the Person of Christ - reigning with Him on the Throne of His Glory. If you compare - when you get home - with the 25th. of Matthew you will see that it says there that the Son of Man was seated upon the Throne of His glory. It is upon the throne of His glory that His heavenly people will sit and they will be in association with Him when He judges this world - all that are "Christ's at His coming". Now every man after his own order. Now I don't say that there are only going to be four heavenly families (at the same time, the scripture tells of four) but each of those four families - every one will be "after his own order" If you remember the the last verse of the 11th. of Hebrews we read (speaking of the Old Testament saints) that "they were not made perfect"; they are waiting. And what are they waiting for? They are waiting for the resurrection of those who form the Church. ~~All the Old Testament believers~~ And then will be fulfilled that word:- "That they shall not be made perfect -". That is, they will have their full place with God, but they will never have it until those who form the Church have theirs. Now this expression here:- "those that are Christ's" includes all those who form the Church, all the Old Testament believers, those that are slain during the last week of Daniel (both the first and second Halves) this expression takes in the whole - "they that are Christ's" and "at His coming". Now after that comes in (we will miss a few verses for the sake of time) Christ will reign until every enemy is subdued. The last enemy is personified; the last enemy to be destroyed is "death" "Destroy" is scripture, is the idea of "annulling"; never "ceasing to exist". You can "destroy" these chairs; but there are the ashes. It is not in man's power to annihilate. God never annihilates - never annihilates. Man cannot. Those foolish people who think if their bodies are burnt - they have in their minds the idea of annihilation. It is ^{is} easy for God to gather the ashes together as it is to bring the body out of the grave. The last enemy to be destroyed is death, and when that enemy is destroyed Christ yields up the Kingdom; that is, He yields up His Mediatorial Kingdom. He yields up the Kingdom where He Himself is owed. The One who has been rejected will be universally owned and He will reign thus until there is no enemy left - no enemy left. This reign has fulfilled its purpose and He gives it up that God may be All-in-all; and there we reach Eternity. It says "that God may be All-in-all". That is, after sin and hell goes. Then God will be all-in-all because all will be made partakers of Divine ~~new~~ nature.

Now after that, Paul returns again to the subject of Resurrection. Now I will make a few remarks with regard to the second part of this verse which rather puzzles many people. I will take the 29th. verse:- "Else what shall they do which are baptised for the dead?" Now you know this verse has caused great controversy and it is a verse that is made difficult to many minds - while it is very simple. The word translated "for the Dead" is "in view of the dead". If you think of ~~the~~ this, it will make it plain.

You know the Roman armies were marked for being successful, for many centuries, in war. The western part of the world they conquered largely through infantry. And it will always be so. You will find that in the future it will be infantry that will win in the west. But with regard to the north and north-east it will be cavalry. And if you go through scripture, you will find that distinction. In the future, the hordes that come from the north and north-east is cavalry, while infantry will characterise the west. Now there was one regiment of Roman soldiers that was formed "by baptism"; they were "baptised to death". That is, by being baptised they took this place:- that they would die and never flinch before the enemy. Now take this regiment marching along. The enemy shot down six - six that were right in front. What is the next thing? The next rank step into their place; they are shot down - six more step in and take their place. That is the simple argument that is now pressed. It is seen the same in christian work. Christians die, and others come in and take their places. Do you mean to say people take their places if there is no resurrection? It is to shew the absurdity of the statement that there is no resurrection - to shew how absurd is the doctrine that there is no resurrection. Would people be so baptised if they had no hope beyond death? Of course they wouldn't! So, dear friends, the very fact that the christian ranks are continually being filled up proves that there is the hope of resurrection. Now if you follow me, you will see that that is what is followed up. "But we stand in jeopardy every hour". Why, dear friends, what folly for me to stand here preaching if there is no resurrection; it would be a foolish thing! If there is no resurrection, what is the good of preaching? If there is no resurrection what is the wise thing to do? "I protest by the your rejoicing which I have in Christ". "I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord". "I die daily" The apostle went there and what did he meet? men ready to shoot him, stone him - wherever he went. Wherever he went, people were ready to kill him. He said:- "I have death continually before me". Then he gives them a positive instance:- "If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus -" by the "beasts" he meant men who were like beasts. That is, he had come into contact with them and you remember the uproar that took place at Ephesus; that is the 19th. of Acts. Paul alludes to them in this epistle and says he "despaired of life". In his mind he "died daily". "If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus - what advantage if the dead rise not"? What would be the good of it? Well, "if the dead don't rise, let us eat, drink, for tomorrow we die". Let us make the best of it, make the best of this life and done with it! If there is no resurrection, it is foolish to go on and suffer for Christ. If there is no resurrection, the wise thing is to make the best of this life and done with it.

Now he gives a word of warning:- "Be not deceived; evil communications corrupt good manners". That is a verse people little apprehend. Remember all evil work flows from wrong doctrine, and every bit of false doctrine brings a corresponding finish in life.

"Awake to righteousness and sin not for some have not the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame". He did not infer that some christians did not have the knowledge of God. Some christians maybe very ignorant, but they have some knowledge of God. What he does infer is, that there are some people that were not christians at all. Let me ask you - are you a christian; are you a christian? What is a christian? A christian is one that has Christ. Some years ago now, I got into a Great Western Railway train at Highworth; I was going to Swindon. And I got into conversation with an old lady and she was a believer in the Lord Jesus, and we had a nice little chat together. And there was a young lady by her side and I noticed she appeared to take great interest in our conversation. So when we came to a station where the old lady got out, I turned to this young person and said:- "May I ask you a question?" "O yes". "Are you saved?" "O yes; I am saved". "Oh", I said, "I am pleased to hear it". "Would you be kind enough to tell me how it is you are saved?" "Why", she said, "I am brought up in it. I was brought up in the Sunday School. O yes; I am saved". Well, dear friends, I knew it was no good for me to say anything. But I quietly turned over my Bible to the 2nd. of Romans, and I began to read these verses:- "There is none righteous, no, not one". And then I looked at her and said:- "Except you". "They are all gone out of the way" - "except you". I read down about six of these statements, each time looking at her and saying "except you". And she stopped me. "You don't believe that?" I said:- "It is God's word; I am bound to believe it". "Oh, if that is true, I am NOT saved". "If those words are true, well, tell me, how any person can be saved". Ah! my dear friends, make no mistake - I was brought up in the Sunday School and I was a teacher in the Sunday School; but I never knew what it was to be born again. Do you; do you? Ah! my dear friends, let us remember we may be as full of religion as we can be and as particular with all the forms and ceremonies and yet be a stranger and not have the root of the matter in us. Oh! friend tonight, I appeal to you, are you a christian; are you a christian? A christian is one that knows he is hopeless - hopeless. But then, because he IS hopeless, he places his whole hope in Christ, and because of what Christ has done - he is given hope, through grace. Well, dear friends, we are called to "awake to righteousness and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God". "How are the dead raised up?" How are they? Now just notice how the Spirit of God replies to these wise people:- "Thou fool". The man that raises such a question is a fool. What is he referred to? He is referred to nature. Look at nature. "That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die; And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body that shall be-" Supposing tonight we plant a few potatoes - you don't plant the potatoes that shall be. If you bury a person tonight, you don't bury the person that shall be. You bury a person in the body that is corruptible. You plant two potatoes; perhaps you get sixty potatoes. Ah! dear friends, God has put the principal in those potatoes so that there are sixty results.

Just the same with wheat and barley - everything of the kind. But remember, if you sow wheat you don't get barley; and if you plant potatoes, well, you don't get wheat. There is the identification with what is sown, but what is sown has no identification with what is raised; yet there is the connection. Now dear friends, let us look at this wonderful verse:- "God hath given it a body as it hath pleased Him". Thus there are different kinds of flesh; you can see that with man and beasts. The flesh of one is not the same as the other. And then look at the heavenly bodies - they teach the same lesson. There are the stars, and yet every star is different. And so it will be with the saints. Every star will be different, and yet every one will be in his own order. What a wonderful thing, dear friends, is resurrection! Take for instance - keeping to scripture;- the disciples went on the mount. They saw Elijah and Moses. But Moses was not Elijah and Elijah was not Moses. No, dear friends, and yet every one will have a resurrection body like Christ. Everyone saved in the present time of grace will be conformed to the image of God's Son and yet everyone will have what is distinct; each one will be known just the same as Moses and Elijah. Why, dear friends, you have the same thing in the Godhead - the same as we were taking today:- the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit gives us what is distinct in connection with each Person and yet the three are one God - one God. Ah! dear friends, the works of God take character from what God is. I will just say this:- "One star differeth from another in glory" - it is generally applied wrongly. It is applied as though it were a difference of reward. Difference of reward is true; but this is not the point in this chapter. It is a question simply of resurrection - each one having his own distinct place in resurrection.

Now we have this simple statement:- "So also is the resurrection of the dead" "It is sown in corruption" "Sown in corruption". Ah! dear friends, we stand around an open grave. We cannot look at the body in this country; but in other countries, what will they see? They will see what you see before the person is screwed down. You see the working of corruption. Of course, at different times it is seen quicker. You can quite understand Abraham, as he looked upon Sarah, saying:- "Bury my dead out of my sight" Why try to keep it? That is what they do in China. They put them in the coffin and then worship them. What is God's order? "Bury it out of my sight". And any person that is of God - they want it "buried out of their sight" Why? What has brought those marks of death? - the judgment of God. Bury them out of sight. And do you know the meaning of "Macpelah"? "Macpelah" means "the way through" - "the way through". That was the grave of Abraham that he bought. God has made "a way through". Abraham didn't understand - as we understand - "Resurrection", but he saw very well that God had made "a way through". And, my dear friends, because he learned that God had made a "way through"- ah! he could bury Sarah - bury her in simple faith in God. And if you want to know and learn that God made a "way through" - read the 22nd. of Genesis. God told Abraham to take his only son. And Isaac said:- "Here is the wood and fire, but where is the lamb"? "God shall provide Himself a lamb". He does not say God will provide a substitute for Isaac. "God shall provide" - not to save Isaac. No.

"God shall provide FOR Himself". God provided a ram; and the ram is Christ's devotedness to God. The ram was caught in the thicket by the horns. Thus ~~Christ~~ Christ came - in all the power of Divine love - to seek ~~me~~ only the glory of God and so He was God's lamb. Now you see when that had ~~taken~~ place Abraham could say; - "Let me bury my dead out of my sight" Why? Because God had made a "way through". "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption" What does the power of God do? There are these people put in the ~~grass~~ grave - nothing but corruption. They are going to come out. (I am speaking, of course, of the saved) How? It is the doctrine of some still to believe that the dead are going to be raised in corruption and then ~~these will~~ there will be a change to incorruption. "It is sown in corruption" and "raised in incorruption". Thank God! you will come out, not in corruption, but in incorruption. And then "it is sown" - "it is sown"; why? Why have we to bury the dead out of ~~oursight~~ our sight? Because sin has come in - "by man" and now, dear friends, we have to bury the dead out of our sight. And so "it is raised in glory". And what is it to be raised in glory? The wonderful triumph will shine forth in it, the power of God displayed in resurrection - that is His glory. "It is sown in weakness" Ah! how weak it is! the person succumbs. "It is raised in power". Did you ever think of it dear friends? If you ever go down into that grave, how will you come out of it? In incorruption and glory and in power; and that is resurrection blessing on the very earth you died off of; and every saint on earth will put his foot on the earth again. That is the victory of God. And you know it will ~~only~~ be for a moment because you are destined for Heaven. "It is sown a natural body". What is a natural body? A "natural body" is a "scallish" body; it is the human body supported by the soul. And dear friends, for it to be supported you have to eat and drink; and if you don't well, the result is, you will die. The natural body is supported by what is natural. Now, dear friends, a "spiritual body", what is that? A spiritual body is a body that is supported by the Spirit of God. That is, the Spirit of God will be the life of your changed body. So you will not have to eat or anything of that kind, because you will have a body that is supported by the Spirit - the Power, of God. If you think of our Beloved Lord. When the Lord had risen and He came and shewed Himself to His own they were terrified. He said; - "Handle Me; a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see Me". And then He took a piece of fish and ate it before them. Not that He had to eat, but He did it to shew that He was the same Person - a real, living Man. And, dear friends, He was with them for forty days - plenty of ~~time~~ time for them to find out if they had made a mistake. And if you notice, there are several important things in those forty days. Just the same as He did miracles by the Holy Ghost, He gave them commandments by the Holy Ghost. At the end of those forty days, He led them to Bethany and He went up - visibly - into Glory. He went up. Ah! what a wonderful thing that was! He went up - He was carried up - He ascended - ascended to the Blessed Presence of God; and they beheld Him.

He had been with them forty days. And what I wanted you to notice was - "He gave commandment by the Holy Ghost" That is what will be true with regard to you. When you have your risen body, everything will be in the power of the Spirit of God. You will not have any blood - you know. Instead of blood in the spiritual body, the Holy Ghost takes the place of the blood. There can be no going grey or anything of that kind. Well, "it is raised a spiritual body and so it is written - the first man, Adam, was made a living soul". "The first man Adam was made a living soul" Just let us recall how he was made a "living soul". God took the man and He formed the man; that is, simply his body. And so when God formed the man, there was simply a lifeless mass. And then what does God do? He "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul". The beasts had souls, but, dear friends, they did not get souls by the "Breath of God" as man did. Man became a living soul by the immediate Breath of God; and consequently he has a soul that could never - never die; because it is by the immediate Breath of God. Adam became a living soul with an individuality ~~was~~ responsible to God. The "last Adam" was a "life-giving spirit". He had life to give others. Adam had no life to give others and he sinned, and passed on death. Here is the One risen from the dead and He is a "Life-giving Spirit" so that He gives life to others. "Howbeit, the spiritual was not first but the natural". And we have to close. The first man, then, he was out of the earth. The second man was the Lord out of Glory. And notice that He "came from Heaven"; He had a heavenly origin. And now I will leave you with the next verse:- "As ~~is~~ is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy". "As is the heavenly such are they also that are heavenly". Are you a christian? Do you believe that? Do you believe tonight, as you sit ~~ej~~ on that chair, that you are "as the heavenly". I gave an address once in Canada on these words and a man there said:- "That man ought to be put in gaol". Well, dear friends, there it is - in the Book:- "As is the heavenly" (that is Christ) "so are the heavenly" "ones" - literally. "As is the heavenly" ONE "so are the heavenly" ONES. To convey it a little more to your minds, I will ask you a question. (I have often asked this in conversation) "Who was Seth like"? You would be surprised, the funny answers I have got. Who was Seth like? "Well, I don't know, I should like to say:- 'like his father' ". Well, understand he could not be like anyone else! Seth WAS like his father. What is his father but a fallen sinner? As connected with the first Adam, you are a fallen sinner. What is the triumph as connected with the last Adam? You are heavenly! As connected with one you answer to the head of a race. As connected with the Other, you answer to the Head of that race. Of course, what marked the first was - as the "responsible" one. And the spiritual one was the thought of the Blessed God. "As we have borne the image of the earthy -" you have his image tonight. You are bearing the image of the earthy; so am I. Whence these grey hairs?

How is it my teeth decay? Because I am in the image of the earthy. But we shall bear the image of the ~~earthy~~ heavenly. Outwardly, you and I, we are still connected with the first. Inwardly, by grace, well, we are connected with ~~the heavenly~~ the last. The first, "earthy"; the ~~second~~ last, "heavenly". What are we waiting for? Just for the moment to come when our Beloved Lord will appear! May the Lord keep us until that moment in the light of that wonderful fact when, through the grace of God, we have been caught up; and it is given to us through Jesus Christ Our Lord.

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