

THE RESURRECTION—VICTORY OVER DEATH!

Note to the speaker:

Build heartfelt appreciation for Jehovah's provision of the resurrection. Emphasize the reality of the resurrection hope and how it should move us to fine works

WHY A VICTORY OVER DEATH IS NEEDED (5 min.)

Religion has often portrayed death as a friend, a mere rite of passage between stages of existence

The Bible portrays death as an enemy—"the last enemy" (1Co 15:26)

Death often cuts down men and women in the prime of life

Death brings pain, shock, grief, loneliness, confusion, and a sense of loss to bereaved friends and family

Death is "the end of all mankind," eventually swallowing up everyone (Ec 7:1, 2)

Despite the efforts of science to battle it, 'death still rules as king' over mankind (Ro 5:17)

Mankind sorely needs a victory over death

IS VICTORY OVER DEATH POSSIBLE? (15 min.)

In order to answer that question, we must first know this enemy, death

Fallacies and superstitions regarding death have enslaved millions of people (Heb 2:15)

The Bible says that death is simply the opposite of life, that the dead have no conscious existence (Ps 146:4; Ec 9:5, 10)

Death is thus compared to sleep (Ps 13:3; Joh 11:11-14)

No "immortal" soul survives death (Eze 18:4)

Man does not possess a soul, he *is* a soul! (Ge 2:7)

When a man dies, he dies as a soul, or person

Bible reveals ultimate cause of death

Man was not made to die; Adam was given prospect of living forever (Ge 2:15-17; 3:22)

Death came about because of Adam's disobedience and spread to all of his descendants (Ge 3:1-6, 19; Ro 5:12)

Our situation is not hopeless

God promises to "redeem" mankind from death, to "swallow up death" (Ho 13:14; Isa 25:8)

What is the resurrection?

Greek word translated "resurrection" literally means "a standing up again" (*w*94 10/15 5)

Resurrection thus involves raising a person from the lifeless condition of death (*w*99 4/1 18)

Jehovah God can easily remember all the details of a person's identity (Mt 10:30)

JESUS SHED LIGHT ON THE RESURRECTION (15 min.)

Ancient men of faith like Job had only a partial understanding of what the resurrection involved

However, Job expressed faith in the resurrection (Job 14:14, 15; *w*98 7/1 13)

Jesus Christ shed light on the resurrection (2Ti 1:10; *w*98 7/1 13-14)

Promised heavenly Kingdom to a "little flock," numbering just 144,000 (Lu 12:32; Re 14:1)

Jesus inaugurated way into heaven by dying and experiencing heavenly resurrection (Ac 2:32; Heb 10:19, 20)

The 144,000 experience a similar resurrection (Ro 6:5)

There is no reuniting of a soul with a physical body—a teaching derived from Greek philosophy (*w*98 7/1 11-12)

They are given incorruptible spirit bodies (1Co 15:43, 44; Php 3:20, 21)

Vast majority of 144,000 have already experienced resurrection; only a remnant remain

Jesus said that he would also bring salvation to "other sheep," who will dwell on earth in Paradise (Joh 10:16; Lu 23:43)

Performed resurrections as a foregleam of what he will do during his Kingdom rule

Resurrection of son of widow of Nain demonstrated compassion Jehovah and Jesus feel toward those who have lost loved ones (Lu 7:11-17; *w*95 3/1 7-8)

Jesus promised to resurrect all in memorial tombs (Joh 5:28, 29)

Includes those who have pursued a righteous course

Includes millions who died before having opportunity to learn and apply Bible truths (Ac 24:15)

Reasonable to conclude that resurrection will be orderly, those having died most recently being among the first ones resurrected (1Co 15:23; *w*98 7/1 23)

No doubt preparations will be made to care for needs of resurrected ones (Isa 65:21, 22; Lu 8:55)

What a thrill to be alive and experience return of loved ones and faithful men of old!

BENEFITS OF THE RESURRECTION (10 min.)

The resurrection is one means by which Jesus will “break up the works of the Devil” and bring about fulfillment of God’s original purpose for humans to enjoy eternal life in Paradise (1Jo 3:8)

The hope of a resurrection brings benefits even now

Strengthens us to deal with illness and the prospect of dying (*w94* 7/1 31)

Helps us cope with loss of loved ones (1Th 4:13; *g96* 8/22 26-7)

Gives us courage in the face of the worst adversities (Mt 10:28; *yb99* 68, 144-6, 188-91)

Helps us avoid having a pessimistic, live-for-today attitude (1Co 15:32, 58; *w97* 8/15 12)

By reading the Bible daily and meditating on it, we strengthen our faith in God’s promise of a resurrection (Jude 20, 21)

If we make a good name with God, we are assured of a resurrection (Ec 7:1)

God ‘yearns’ to see faithful departed ones again (Job 14:15)

Like Paul we can say: “Thanks to God, for he gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!” (1Co 15:57)

By means of the resurrection, God gains the victory over death

May faith in it move you to become “steadfast, unmovable, always having plenty to do in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in connection with the Lord” (1Co 15:58)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)