



# CAPITOL COMMISSION™

The Best Is Yet to Come

Tuesday, 7 October 2014

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## CAPITOL BIBLE STUDY

monthly (interim) schedule

\*\*\* 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the month \*\*\*

TUESDAY, 7 OCTOBER 2014

12 NOON in 123 CAP

Capitol Commission (Interim) Bible Studies are held the *first* Tuesday of every month at 12 Noon. The Bible study is nonpartisan and nondenominational. We are currently studying First Corinthians, chapter-by-chapter, and verse-by-verse. I pray that this study will be edifying to you. The ministry of Capitol Commission exists *solely* to serve you and to be a resource for prayer and counsel. Please accept my study in the Word of God, as evidence of my desire to serve you.

– Dr. Ron J. Bigalke, Georgia State Minister, Capitol Commission

### Capitol Commission (Interim) Bible Study

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Tuesday, 7 October 2014

#### First Corinthians 15:35-58 – “The Best Is Yet to Come”

*Macbeth* is among the best known of William Shakespeare’s plays; it was first printed in 1623, and is an eminent tragedy in English fiction. Near the end of the play, Macbeth received news that his wife – the queen – suddenly died. Macbeth appears unfeeling in response to the report of his wife’s death. With absolute hopelessness, he lamented:

Tomorrow, and Tomorrow, and Tomorrow,  
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day  
To the last syllable of recorded time,  
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools  
The way to dusty death. Out, out brief candle!  
Life’s but a walking shadow, a poor player,  
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,  
And then is heard no more; it is a tale  
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,  
Signifying nothing [*Macbeth*, act 5, sc. 5]

Centuries later, many today also share Macbeth’s despondency that history has no apparent purpose. Even at Disneyland, the updated Tomorrowland is a retro “future that never was.” Without the Holy Bible as a guide, many believe there is no goal for human history, either in general or for the individual in particular.

The biblical understanding of the future is that God has a plan and purpose for history. First Corinthians 15 communicates the certainty that the Lord Jesus will bring “all things” into subjection, and then God will be “all in all” (v. 28; cf. Rom 11:36; Phil 2:9-11).

What should be our response to God’s eternal plan? Philippians 2:9-11 tells us that God has “highly exalted” the name of Jesus, so that at his name, all “will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Therefore, we should seek to exalt Jesus Christ now in our current, daily lives. A little more than a couple decades

subsequent to *Macbeth* being published, the English Parliament convened an ecclesiastical gathering in London, England, named “The Westminster Assembly.” The result of the Assembly’s work was the publication, in 1647, of the famous *Westminster Confession*, in addition to the *Larger* and *Shorter Catechisms*. The Westminster Assembly conveyed the biblical answer to Macbeth’s lament, and to the question as to whether history has a purpose. “What is the chief end of man?” The Shorter Catechism answered, “Man’s chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.”

“WHAT IS THE CHIEF END OF MAN. . . ?” “MAN’S CHIEF END IS TO GLORIFY GOD, AND TO ENJOY HIM FOREVER.”

Do you agree with Macbeth or with the Westminster Assembly? How can believers in Jesus Christ demonstrate our belief that history is progressing with purpose? One of the most important expressions of our beliefs is “not forsaking our own assembling together” (Heb 10:25). Those who trust in Jesus ought to be committed to worshipping Him as a primary goal, which would include the following: Bible study, evangelism, fellowship, and service works. God calls his people to be worshippers: glorifying and enjoying Him.

### THE NATURE OF RESURRECTION

First Corinthians 15 explains the nature of the believer’s resurrection: (1) how it may be compared (vv. 35-38); (2) how it cannot be compared (vv. 39-41); (3) how the believer will be raised (vv. 42-49); and, (4) the necessity of resurrection (v. 50). Evidently, some individuals denied the possibility of a bodily resurrection, and formulated certain criticism to discourage belief in the doctrine. One censure was regarding how bodily resurrection could occur, and one more was concerning the type of body with which one is raised (v. 35).

“You fool!” is the answer to arguments denying the certainty of bodily resurrection (v. 36) because such reasoning excludes God from consideration. Scripture explains, “That which you sow does not come to life unless it dies.” When a seed is sown, it must first die prior to the kernel becoming a plant that produces fruit. Furthermore, what grows is from the seed, yet it is also different from the kernel (vv. 36-38). The same is true concerning various types of flesh: humans, animals, birds, and fish (v. 39).

Furthermore, the heavenly bodies are not all the same: some are brighter and others are less luminous (vv. 40-41). The nature of resurrection is similar. The body sown in corruption is raised imperishable; it is “sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body” (vv. 42-44).

“So also it is written, ‘The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL.’ Christ Jesus “became a life-giving spirit” (v. 45). The emphasis of verses 35-45 is upon differences and similarities. The natural body is first; “however, the spiritual is not first.” The earthly is first, “then the spiritual,” which is the work of Jesus Christ – the

## Capitol Commission (Interim) Bible Study

1<sup>st</sup> Tuesdays (monthly) @ 12 Noon - 12:45pm, 123 CAP

# Capitol Commission Georgia

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second Adam – who gives new life. The resurrection life that Christ gives means the resurrection body will never die (vv. 46-49).

Perhaps you wonder, “Why is *bodily* resurrection important?” The resurrection of the body is an indication of God’s redemptive purpose for creation. God declared his creation “good” in Genesis 1—2, thus He is not going to destroy and discard his work; rather, God purposes to undo the effects of the Fall, which means that He is profoundly concerned with the human body. If the Lord were not concerned, then He would leave the body decayed in the grave and bid it farewell.

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**THE BODY IS . . . A GOOD COMPONENT OF GOD'S CREATION, WHICH HE DESIGNED WITH PURPOSE AND THUS THE LORD PLANS TO REDEEM THE BODY.**

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The human body is not an afterthought to God, nor is it a husk to be discarded. Dualism is a philosophical perspective common in pagan Greek thought, which expresses a dissonance between matter and spirit. The idea is that the body is only the husk for the true person. Therefore, it is better to live without the constraints of the body. Scripture, however, affirms that the body is essentially good and just as much an aspect of the true person as the immaterial (cf. Gen 2:7). The body is not an entity that houses the spirit/soul; it is a good component of God’s creation, which He designed with purpose and thus the Lord plans to redeem the body.

The doctrine of bodily resurrection is vital for all who trust in the Lord Jesus because it protects Christians from embracing a false notion that has occasionally arisen throughout the history of the church. For example, some have expressed dualistic tendencies by practicing extreme forms of asceticism, which sought to deny the body even simplest pleasures. God is concerned not only with the redemption of souls, but also with redemption of the body (and all creation ultimately).

The resurrection of the body is evidence that God has tremendous concern for our bodies. God’s care for our bodies should profoundly affect our thinking regarding the body. Christians should care for the body and ponder the redemptive goal that God has for our bodies.

We live during a time when both men and women are encouraged to detach from their bodies. Some men detach by adopting abrasive and harsh actions (as opposed to blending humility and strength in perfect harmony) or usurping authority structures that God has established, whereas other men abuse their bodies when they experience the tragedy of being enticed by women, and then live with the subsequent calamity of being distanced from God in the process. Some women detach from their bodies by adopting unfeminine appearances and behavior in male-dominated workplaces, whereas other women detach by using their bodies as sexual power tools.

An ungodly dualism is the result when the holistic self is undermined. The Christian response should be more than a defensive reaction; it should be redemptive. The doctrine of bodily resurrection

should compel believers to recapture God’s intent for the body, and redeem the body for his purposes. Any language or practice that bestows an inherent shame, devalues the body, or that ignores the body is a manifestation of an unbiblical theology that is inconsistent with Christian doctrine. God created the body, and thus the doctrine of bodily resurrection compels us to use the bodies that God has provided to give glory and honor to Him, as opposed to serving the sinful desires that all human beings possess.

### THE MYSTERY OF RESURRECTION

First Corinthians 15 declares a new revelation: some believers will never die (“sleep”). Whatever occurs or may occur, death will be overcome by either translation of living believers or resurrection of deceased believers when Christ returns. The kingdom of God is one in which there is no corruption (v. 50). Consequently, “we will all be changed . . . in the twinkling of an eye” (vv. 51-52). “The dead will be raised imperishable.”

The trumpet blast will summon all Christians home to heaven (cf. Exod 19:16, 19; 20:18; 1 Thess 4:16). Those who are living when Christ returns will “put on immortality” and all will become deathless (imperishable), which means be prepared for the kingdom of God by means of the resurrection (1 Cor 15:53-55).

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**VICTORY OVER CONDEMNATION IS BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST. . . . “THANKS BE TO GOD THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. . . !”**

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“The sting of death is sin” (v. 56; Rom 6:23). The law of God is what defines sin (Rom 7:7-11). Jesus Christ overcame sin and fulfilled the law; therefore, death has no power upon Him (Rom 5:12, 20). *Victory over condemnation is by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ* (1 Cor 15:57; cf. Rom 8:2). Every believer can say, “Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!” (Rom 7:25).

First Corinthians 15 concludes with an exhortation to live morally as one considers the reality of the truth of the resurrection (v. 58). Believing in the resurrection and return of the Lord Jesus motives the believer to recognize that the best is yet to come, thus we can give God our best now. *Is life without meaning or purpose?* Scripture answers, “No!” All labor for the Lord Jesus “is not *in vain*” and will thus be rewarded.

*Thank you for allowing Capitol Commission the honor to provide Bible studies to you. If you have any questions, please talk with us, or contact by email or phone.*

### About Capitol Commission

Capitol Commission state ministers teach ongoing verse-by-verse Bible studies for the entire Capitol community, and also meet personally with many government leaders (and their staff) to proclaim God’s grace, to encourage our leaders, pray with them, and provide biblical counsel. Capitol Commission is a charitable and religious nonprofit corporation under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Capitol Commission is supported by the generous gifts of businesses, churches, and individuals. Capitol Commission is not state-funded; rather, those with a heart for the Capitol community fund it. *Please join us in this ministry!*



**NEXT CAPITOL COMMISSION (INTERIM) BIBLE STUDY:  
TUESDAY, 4 NOVEMBER @ 12 NOON in 123 CAP  
(always the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of each month, during interim)**