

The Second Resurrection And Union With Christ

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As we begin today we will return to the adventures of Captain “Black Jack” Geary, from the series of books by Jack Campbell. Jack Campbell was a former naval officer and he turned writer of science fiction after he retired from the Navy. He used a lot of his navy experiences and knowledge such as living on a ship, being part of a fleet, understanding the mechanics of nautical warfare and how to get firing solutions on moving targets, and other knowledge that he gained from the navy, for these books.

Last time we left Captain Geary endeavoring to change the culture of the fleet that he was in charge of, from a dog-eat-dog and vengeful battle wearying one, to one that thought, cooperated, planned ahead, and had hope for a better life once they had returned to their homes.

He did not make any long speeches or preach at them telling them what they needed to do, but what he did do, as we saw in the last sermon, was that he just went ahead and did it. He was their example of honor, truth, mercy, understanding, and when he out-thought the enemy and got his fleet home, they had learned a great lesson. Of course when they returned home Captain Geary was a hero, so the Alliance government and the fleet headquarters had to promote him to Admiral.

Politics is always a factor when it comes to human beings, one of the philosophers said that we are political animals. In Geary's case, they thought of him to be too popular and thought that he would become a dictator and take over the alliance government, so they wanted to get rid of him.

So what they did was they finagled a way to get his fleet out after a very short leave, and they tried to short him in ships, especially those that would supply him or help with battle damage. But he outwitted them as he had done before in Syndic space and he went with his full complement of ships.

Now on this new mission that he was given, his job was to gather information on a new threat, an alien species that they had encountered on their long trip home. Remember, this is science-fiction. Their mission was to find out as much as possible about these aliens, search out the limits of their territory, and find out how strong they were, what their intentions were, try to communicate with them, and see if there was some way that they could hold them at bay. They knew very little about these aliens at this point.

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Besides the intrigue and the fact that they were trying to get rid of Admiral Geary because he was so popular, the members of the fleet and the officers were acutely aware that they are essentially flying blind into enemy territory. Now not only are they flying blind, but their ships, that had been built to only last a couple of years, were breaking down because of the long war they had just come out of. No one expected the ships to last very long with all these battle charges at one another. They did not build them with quality; they built them to be space-worthy and to be able to fire at the enemy.

So after this long trek back from Syndic space to Alliance space their ships were worn out, yet here they were going out on an even longer journey into enemy territory. The crew knew that these ships were going to just give out, so the first thing they had to do is make sure that the ships made it there and back again. But they were never sure when their ships were going to experience a critical failure, and as it happens, several of them actually do give out as they are accelerating into battle.

There were all kinds of things going on to make this a very dangerous and even fatal mission for all of them, but Admiral Geary has to hold them all together.

Now for our purposes today, the important element is that these aliens are, alien. One might think that all sentient life has to function along similar lines or that we all think the same. They find, as they encounter these aliens, that they do and they do not. Some elements of the way the aliens are, behave, or think are the same, but others are very strange and it is very difficult for them to wrap their minds around this very different way of thinking that these aliens have.

As they encounter these aliens more often, Admiral Geary and his staff begin to learn the instinctive behaviors of these alien peoples and they begin to have a little bit of insight into how these aliens think and it is at that point that the tide begins to turn. Because once they have a bit of a grasp on those instinctive behaviors and how they formulate their thoughts and what their goals are, Geary and his officers can predict behaviors and formulate strategies on how to deal with them. Before they were flying blind into enemy space and did not know what to do or what to expect, but now they begin to learn how they can approach these alien species even though they think very differently from them.

They call these aliens the Enigmas and for a good reason. They find out fairly quickly that these aliens are very secretive, to the point of paranoia. The first thing they tried on them, before they got back to Alliance space, was to hide from them completely. They did this by putting a worm in the fleet's computer systems, so that whenever their

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equipment sensed that they were out there the equipment would show that they were not there. The computer would mask them so that it would appear that no one was there even though if they looked outside the window they could see that they were there. So they had to find a way that they could find them even though they really could not see them on their radar.

If the Enigma's lost a battle they would destroy their own ships and personnel so that nothing remained for their enemies to learn anything about them. There might have been thousands of Enigmas on the ship, but if the ship was badly damaged enough that it could not get back to their own territory, it would self-destruct. They did not want the Alliance fleet to know what their equipment was made of, how their computer systems worked, what kind of materials they used, or anything. They wanted to be totally secret.

Their communications with Geary's fleet are cryptic and curt. It was basically: Stop; Leave; Stay; Die. That was their whole communication with the Alliance fleet, it was very cut and dry. When they fought they cheated, tricks was all they had in their bag. They would implant computer viruses to mask their presence, they would do a surprise attack, they had surprise tech, they would do hit and run tactics, and they would try to stab you in the back when you least expected it.

From these little things that they experienced with them they began to learn about them. Eventually the fleet does find one of the bodies of these Enigmas and they find out that they are amphibian-like, something along lines of a slithery, vicious salamander.

The fleet finally gets away from the Enigmas and out of Enigma space, but as soon they get out of Alliance space, their fleet barrels into a second alien race that they did not expect at all. These aliens immediately fire off an overkill barrage of missiles at them at point blank range. They have just enough time to out run them and finally they get to a place where they can destroy the missiles, but just barely.

Right after the missile attack, these other aliens send out a fleet of enormous battle ships that dwarf their battle ships by three to five times. They will not communicate at all with the Alliance fleet, so they learn little about them through communications. But they do eventually intercept a video and they find out that these aliens look like teddy bears with bovine faces, so they call them Bear-cows.

They find out, after their encounters with these aliens, that they exhibit herd-like behavior almost exclusively, even to the point of charging like bulls with their spaceships. Geary eventually figured out how to use this instinctive behavior, this herd-like mentality, against them.

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Now they eventually they get out of Bear-cow space and they find a third alien species and they are even different still. These aliens dazzled them. They look out the window or look on their sensors and they see this beautiful pattern of ships that are perfectly ovoid ships, or egg shaped. They are silvery and seamless and they just look so beautiful in the stars. All the movement and patterns that they do were just so beautiful and mesmerizing.

They found out that these beings were incredible engineers, because their ships were so beautifully intricate. Now they did see these aliens in person but they were horrified because, even though their engineering and their ships were so beautiful, these creatures were ugly. They looked like spiders with wolf-like faces, so they called them Spider-wolfs.

Now these Spider-wolfs eventually wound up communicating with them. They could not understand what they were saying so they ended up communicating in pictograms, in pictures that each one would recognize, but they did communicate and that was a big plus.

Now over a short period of time, they were able to come to a modicum of understanding and cooperation. So they ended up having a little bit of an alliance with the Spider-wolfs and the Spider-wolfs wanted to send emissaries to Alliance space to talk peace and have a treaty.

So what Geary does, in his interactions with them, is he finds out that they think in patterns, like spiders. Like a spider, everything has to be balanced and everything has to be anchored. If one anchor comes out there is a tendency for the “web” to become unraveled and unbalanced. So that is how they order everything. They are a very orderly species and they think like engineers, they want everything to work properly, and once Geary understands this, he responds to them in ways that gain their trust, and they become allies. It is very different from the other two sets of alien species.

Okay, enough about *The Lost Fleet* now. The important lesson for us on this last day of the Feast, is that if we want to reach people with the good news of God's Kingdom we have to understand who they are, what they think, how they think, what their goals are, where they are coming from. We have to understand what is in their minds and what their motivations are.

While the alien species of this book are caricatures of known animal types and animal behaviors, they are a teaching vehicle. I do not know if Jack Campbell meant it to be like that, but for me it works as a teaching vehicle akin to what is written in Jeremiah 13.

Jeremiah 13:23 Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots? Then may you also do good who are accustomed to do evil.

What is being told to us here, through the prophet Jeremiah, is that people change very little. Like a leopard, it cannot make the spots on its fur go away, that is just how he is. If you could change those spots you could change the behavior of the leopard, but it does not work that way. You have to do something greater than that to change the mode of behavior or the mode of thinking of a person who has been in the world for a long time.

There is no changing the world by ourselves, we cannot do it. We cannot even change an individual person by ourselves, because that way of thinking is deeply engrained and it takes the intervention of God Himself to turn a mind on and to listen to Him, otherwise it will not listen at all.

So people change very little from their basic makeup, or you could call it their foundational character. It is pretty much set in everyone until God Himself reaches down and changes it and even then, as we know, the process toward righteousness is agonizingly slow and painful. To God it may be like flipping on a switch in our minds, but for us, the light does not come on very strong at first and it takes a long time for us to come to a point where we are showing the right behavior, the right attitudes, and the right obedience towards God.

This idea that we are going to be encountering an alien species with set minds in this carnal world and in the way they live, is what we are going to encounter in the second resurrection, in the white throne judgment. We will be faced with the prospect of educating billions of people whose minds are completely alien to God's way of life and we will be charged, under Jesus Christ, with crafting approaches to them that will work successfully in transforming their minds and characters into the image of Jesus Christ.

Thankfully we have been given a template to do this and that is what I want to go into today, this template to approaching people whose minds are different. First let us go to Leviticus 23 and touch on this holy day in Scripture. I am just doing a quick overview of the day.

Leviticus 23:33-36 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the Feast of Tabernacles for seven days to the Lord. [We just finished that yesterday.] On the first day there shall be a holy convocation. You shall do

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no customary work on it. For seven days you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord. On the eighth day you shall have a holy convocation, and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord. It is a sacred assembly, and you shall do no customary work on it.

Leviticus 23:39 'Also on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the fruit of the land, you shall keep the feast of the Lord for seven days; on the first day there shall be a sabbath-rest, and on the eighth day a sabbath-rest.

So that is our instruction for this eighth day, as it is called here. So here in these initial instructions, that is what it is called, the eighth day. It is said to be a Sabbath rest, we are to give an offering, and we are not to do any customary work. There is not much more that is said about this day.

The Israelites, I am guessing, probably considered it as part of the harvest festival of Tabernacles and probably treated it no different than the Feast of Tabernacles. They probably just kept it as the final day of the Feast, the eighth day, on which they had a holy convocation. We do not know if there was any significance or meaning placed on the day from the Old Testament. It is only mentioned a few more times.

In Numbers 29:35-37 there is a listing of offerings to be given on this day and the offerings that are given there are no different than those that are given on let us say Trumpets. So it is obviously a holy day, a day of giving an offering, but there is no instruction there that says it is for this reason or that reason. It just says to give these offerings on this day.

Now it is only mentioned two other times in the Old Testament, in II Chronicles 7:9 and Nehemiah 8:18, but they are only mentioned in passing. No additional light is shed on this day from those verses. So you could say, thinking back to the introduction, that this holy day is an enigma. It was to the Israelites and it is now especially to the people out in the world. They have no idea what this day is about.

We have to go to the New Testament to find any kind of answers, so now let us go to Revelation 20. Christ reveals here that this Last Great Day pictures the Great White Throne judgment, the time after the Millennium. You will hear me say the "Last Great Day" even though the Old Testament or the New Testament does not call it that, it simply calls it the eighth day.

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Revelation 20:11-15 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

What we have here is the clues that unlock the mystery of this holy day. It pictures a time when all who have not been called to salvation will be raised from the dead and given the opportunity to live a lifetime with the knowledge of the truth of God and be judged according to their works. And with the addition of verses 14-15 we see that those who do not change and accept Christ, those who refuse and rebel against Him, will be cast into the Lake of Fire.

So we have this time from the end of what we call the Millennium and a thousand years to the second death, the Lake of Fire, and within those perimeters is this time of the Great White Throne judgment. Now let us go to Isaiah 65 and look at the conditions of this time.

Isaiah 65:20-22 “No more shall an infant from there live but a few days [meaning from Jerusalem], nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days; for the child shall die one hundred years old, but the sinner being one hundred years old shall be accursed. They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for as the days of a tree, so shall be the days of My people, and My elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

That is a good enough description what this time will be like just in general terms. We take the suggestion from these verses here that this Great White Throne judgment period will be a hundred years long, the length of a life of a tree, it says here. So the baby who rises in the resurrection will live for a hundred years and have an opportunity for salvation and the old man or old woman who rises in the resurrection will also have a hundred years to live under God's way and accept salvation and eternal life.

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However, it is also said here that the one who does not accept Jesus Christ, the one who remains a sinner, will have his opportunity over the hundred years and then he will be accursed and thrown into the Lake of Fire. So it parallels perfectly there with what is written in Revelation 20.

Now we can see that the conditions that are on the earth at the time are very much like the Millennium. Shown to be a very agrarian society, very peaceful, prosperous, and the people are content, they enjoy the work of their hands. So this is the atmosphere in which we will be working.

Now let us go to Ezekiel 37 and look at the classic prophesy of this period—the valley of dry bones.

Ezekiel 37:1-2 The hand of the Lord came upon me [Ezekiel is speaking here] and brought me out in the Spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley; and it was full of bones. Then He caused me to pass by them all around [almost as if he was being carried by the scruff of the neck and being shown this whole vista of the valley of dry bones.], and behold, there were very many in the open valley; and indeed they were very dry.

So we get the idea here that there is this huge “bowl” of a valley and it is full to the brim with bones. All there is bones and they are old bones that look like they have been there for a long time. It is as if that place is death.

Ezekiel 37:3-6 And He said to me, “Son of man, can these bones live?” [He did not want to say the wrong thing.] So I answered, “O Lord God, You know.” Again He said to me, “Prophesy to these bones, and say to them, ‘O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord! Thus says the Lord God to these bones: “Surely I will cause breath to enter into you, and you shall live. I will put sinews on you and bring flesh upon you, cover you with skin and put breath in you; and you shall live. Then you shall know that I am the Lord.”’

Now down to verse 11. After Ezekiel does this he says:

Ezekiel 37:11 Then He said to me, “Son of man [explaining what is going on here], these bones are the whole house of Israel. They indeed say, ‘Our bones are dry, our hope is lost, and we ourselves are cut off!’

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So the expectation of those who have died was nothing. They had died and all hope for life, for good, had died with them. But God is a God of hope, He is a God of life, and He had promised that He would give them an opportunity for salvation and He will do what He says.

Ezekiel 37:12-14 Therefore prophesy and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Behold, O My people, I will open your graves and cause you to come up from your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. Then you shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O My people, and brought you up from your graves. I will put My Spirit in you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken it and performed it," says the Lord.'"

Three times He says, "Then you shall know that I am the Lord." What an eye opener this is going to be to those people to live again. We know that this is a physical existence, because we see from the description here that their bodies are rebuilt from the bones out. The bones are gathered together and reconstructed, they receive all their organs and such. They receive a new brain, not a new mind, but a new brain, and God puts breath into them.

Spirit beings do not need breath, but physical life needs breath. So they take their first breath for the second time and begin a new life. But this time there is something different. They have access to God's Spirit and He is very willing to put it in them. He offers them the Holy Spirit so that they can, not just live physically, but truly live, living the life of God's way and having the opportunity then to live forever.

Let us consider these bones for a moment. They are clothed in flesh, breathing and standing there. They are the whole house of Israel. How many Israelites have lived since Abraham, we do not know, but it has got to be in the multiple millions or even billions of people. If we consider that there have been upwards of 50 billion people who have lived on the earth since Adam, the Israelites are going to be a percentage of that, so there is going to be a lot of people standing in that valley.

But it is not just the number of people. These are people who have lived since Abraham, since 2000 B.C. or so. There is a span of about four thousand years of Israelites and a lot happens over four thousand years.

Just in our own modern era things have changed so much over the last couple of

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decades. So if you think of the change of Medieval times, when they were thinking of structure, hierarchy, and God to what it became in the Renaissance and into the Enlightenment period and on into the more modern times where it is all individualistic, secular, and humanistic. That is a big change in attitudes and thinking.

The Israelites, back in Medieval times, who come up in the second resurrection are going to think far differently than the ones in George Washington's generation or from our generation. But it is not just that, we have to go back another three thousand years to pick up people like the other sons of Jacob. Go forward to David's time and the Israelites in the times of the judges—they thought differently. They thought differently in the Axial period. The Jews of Christ's time thought differently than them.

All throughout history we have different epics, different eras, different ways of thinking and we are going to have all these people from all these different times and they will be alien from each other and they will be alien from us.

But more than that, not only did they live in different times, but they lived in different places. Abraham lived in Ur of the Chaldees and he went up to Haran, then he came up to the Promised Land.

So we had Israelites that lived in those places, most of them for about eight hundred years or so. Some lived in the land of Israel. Some were taken to Assyria, others were taken to Babylon, and the ones that went to Assyria never came back to their land. They lived in the Caucasus of the region, moved up to the steppes of Russia, and then wandered over northwestward to the plains of Europe, then over to the plains of Britain, Scotland, Wales.

Then, what did the Ephraimites do? They exploded the Israelites all over the globe. So they went not only from the British Isles, but they went to Australia, South Africa, places like Rhodesia, America, Canada, Alaska, Hawaii.

And the Jews have gone everywhere, Russia, China, and who knows where else. The Jews have been pretty much expelled from everywhere they have gone but they just go down the road and pitch their tents somewhere else. They resemble that of travelers that get kicked out from one place and pitch their tents a little ways down the road.

Different places mean different ways of thinking. For example, if you have been on the steppes of Russia, you do not think like that of a person who is in the Colorado Rockies. It is just a different way of life and of course that means that, not only were there different times and different places, but there were also different cultures, languages,

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and religions, governments, educational systems, economic systems, and so on. They are all diverse from each other and they are all different, especially, from the way of God, so they are going to be very different from us. They will be aliens to us and to our way of thinking.

So during that time, the children of God will be faced with the challenge of teaching His way to people as alien as those that Admiral Geary of *The Lost Fleet* faced in his interstellar adventures. They will be humans, not bear-cows or spider-wolves, but their ways of thinking and doing things could well be completely alien to us—and that is just Israel at this point.

There will be people come up in that resurrection from Mesoamerica, the Aleutian Islands, Siberia, Mongolia, China, India, the plateaus of Iran and all of those Muslims throughout the Middle East, Africa, Madagascar, and all those islands in the Pacific.

We also have to remember that they are not only from all different areas, but they are also from different times, religions, cultures. There are multiple thousands of cultures that existed throughout history. And let us not forget that there will also be the millions and millions of people that were on the earth during the Flood that do not even know this earth the way it is now and how it has been arranged.

Am I getting across to you that the people that are going to come up in that second resurrection are going to be astounded of how things are different and we are going to have to deal with all of their different ways of thinking and present one message to them? Now how do we present that message to them in a way that they are going to understand?

We have to bring them to the point where they think like God, so we will have to find ways to make God's truth and way of life understandable and attractive to them, in ways that reach them and draw them to Christ. So like Admiral Geary, we are going to have to craft strategies in dealing with them and leading them in the way they should go.

We can be thankful that God has not left us without a template to do this. He has given us principles that we can apply when we encounter unbelieving people even now in our own time, because we are faced with a similar thing now and this is our practice training for things to come.

I Corinthians 2:16 says, "We have the mind of Christ" and they do not. If they have not been called, they have not been given that wonderful gift of His Spirit, so they do not think like we do. And if God is going to work through us to call these people, then we

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have to have a foundational pattern to approach people so that they understand what is important and are therefore directed in the right way.

The larger, more encompassing template appears in the gospels of the Bible through the life of Jesus Christ and His approach to people. Time after time we see little vignettes and experiences of Jesus Christ through His ministry where He has to talk to people, where they ask Him questions and He has to give them an answer to their dilemmas. It is in the way that He deals with them that is very interesting. Most of the time what happens is that He does things in just the right way to bring them to a tipping point, to where they have to either admit the truth and believe it, or admit the truth and reject it. It is either one or the other, there is no middle ground.

Think of the lawyer that came to Him and wanted to be His disciple. He brought that young lawyer to the point where he said, "if you're so much with Me, go and sell all that you have," because he was a rich young man. There was the tipping point. Do you sell all that you have and go with Christ who did not have a place to lay His head and traveled with the clothes on His back, a little money in the box that Judas had and was lining his own pockets with, or do you continue to live in luxury in your little Romanesque villa? That was the tipping point and he rejected it. He rejected Christ's offer and it says that Jesus was sorrowful, because He loved him and saw great potential in the man.

That is the kind of approach we have to learn to take. It seems like every time you read the gospels you are amazed because Jesus always seems to have exactly the right answer or He asks just the right question that pierces to the heart and He got results. He got an answer one way or another. The person either accepted it or rejected it. And it is this kind of thing that we have to do in our own lives and our own experiences with people and what we will be doing in spades in the second resurrection.

So the idea of following Christ is nothing new, it is the larger, more encompassing template. However I believe there is a more specific and pointed template for this specific period of the Great White Throne judgment and it is in the book of John.

If you go to John 7:37, this is the time when Jesus stood up and talked about the living water. We will read it here.

John 7:37-39 On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus

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was not yet glorified.

The series of sermons that my dad gave at the Feast in 2010, showed chronologically that this particular episode in Christ's life had to occur on the seventh day of the Feast of Tabernacles, not on the Last Great Day, as we call it, or the eighth day. Chronologically there is no other way that it can fit with all the internal clues that we get. This is the only time it could have been, on the seventh day of the Feast.

So this means that what happens throughout the rest of chapter 7 occurs on the seventh day of the Feast and you can see a clear marker at the end of the chapter, verses 53 and chapter 8:1, that night fell and they went home. Then in chapter 8, verse 2, it says it was early in the morning, meaning it was the very next day that the next things occurred. This passage, that day's activities, runs continuously through chapters 8 and 9 and all the way down to chapter 10:21. There is no break in the action, it all occurs on that one day.

So we have here, from Jesus Christ's life, an exposition of the Last Great Day and what Jesus felt was important to say on this day, the eighth day. So Jesus, without saying this information is for the last day (the eighth day) of Tabernacles, tells us that this information is for this particular holy day. It is important we get the gist of what He is talking about here.

We will now look at this three chapter section in overview to see how it applies to the time of the second resurrection. I am not going to read very much, but I want you to see, in your own Bible what is in the various paragraphs, then we can pull out the essential point of that particular paragraph. I will leave the deeper stuff to your own personal study.

Mostly what I want to get across today is that our Savior did not leave us without instruction on this somewhat enigmatic holy day. It is there in great detail in John 8-9 through John 10:21. In fact, He hits all the high points of what the day means and foreshadows what will need to be done to turn the hearts of humanity to God and His truth at that time. He does this in really neat ways. Our God, as the psalm says, is an awesome God and His mind works in ways that are just so wonderful to behold.

Now as we begin this overview, it is good to remember that the majority of people who have ever lived in this world will rise in that second resurrection because they did not have Christ in them. That is why they are there. They did not have the opportunity to hear the truth and accept or reject the truth and they certainly were not given God's

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Spirit. If they were given God's Spirit, there is a pretty good chance that they would be in the first resurrection.

Only those who have received God's Spirit are the children of God and have had their minds changed, the blindness of this world, and Satan's deceptions and the deceptions of this world removed. We saw this in Romans 8:9-11 and also in verse 14, Colossians 1:27, and also in many of the "in Christ" statements that we saw in my last sermon.

So we saw there that being "in Christ" or having His Spirit is what makes all the difference to us. In the same way it is God's Spirit, having Christ in them, during the second resurrection and at the time of the White Throne judgment, that will make all the difference to them in their lives.

From the very outset of John 8, in this passage of the woman caught in adultery, we are introduced to one of the main themes that goes through this section and that is, the dichotomy between the carnal mind and the godly mind. Here it is shown in an illustration, in something that happened. It was a real occurrence that happened. When the scribes and Pharisees brought this woman caught in adultery, threw her down at Jesus' feet, and said what are you going to do about this? The law says that such and such is to be done? They wanted to trap Him, they wanted to catch Him in a point of law that would give them reason to arrest Him and kill Him. So they thought they had put Him into a corner by bringing this woman caught in adultery.

Now this is where He says, "Let him who has not sinned cast the first stone." They all leave going from the oldest to the youngest because they all realized that they have sinned and do not have the character to make this judgment. They cannot because they have sins just as bad as this woman, so finally it is just Jesus and the woman left. The Perfect One could have thrown all those stones at her Himself but He did not. He said, "Woman, don't do this anymore. Repent! I don't condemn you." He knew that she had a carnal mind, she did not know any better. She probably knew the law, but she was functioning from a carnal mind and God had not called her yet, she was just living in her sin. That is the how carnality works.

So Jesus had compassion on her and showed the difference between the godly mind, His own mind, and the mind of the scribes and the Pharisees, who wanted to kill the woman. So immediately He shows that those who function on the carnal level essentially live a way of death. They wanted death for Christ and they wanted death for this woman. They wanted to use this woman and the godly mind does not do that, it does not use people, and it especially does not use them to death. It does not make points with peoples lives. A godly mind is a compassionate mind, it is a mind that wants

life, a mind that wants repentance and change.

So immediately, as we begin this overview, we see the mind we must have going in. We must have a mind that loves these people, a mind that is gentle, a mind that does not condemn, a mind that wants the best for them, and a mind that gives them time to change—a mind, that overall, works for life. We see it in a vignette, then he puts a capstone on this with what he says in verse 12:

John 8:12 Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, “I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.”

First of all, this is to us. He is saying here that if you are going to do your job properly, you have got to follow His example. We have to be the little lights of the world under Him, and that is what we are going to be in the second resurrection. He will be there, but we will be there too and we had better shine and lead these people to the truth, enlightening their minds and leading them to life. So that is the mindset that we have to go in with to do this, and following His example is the key.

Now verses 13-20 is when the Jews come up to Him and say, “Your witness isn’t valid because there is no one and nothing around to give a second witness that would make it true.” Jesus pretty much just laughs at them because He says, “What do you mean? My Father is My witness and My own testimony is good enough for a witness!” He is essentially saying that you have God the Father and you have God the Son which is good enough. He does not need another witness, because what He is saying is true. Truth is its own witness. If you can see the truth, see it work and see the results, then it is a good enough witness. If God the Father and Jesus Christ are behind it, then it is true.

So the first step in getting people to change is to help them recognize the authority of the witness of Jesus Christ. Immediately, in having the right attitude, we are throwing people toward Christ and essentially saying that is the direction that you have to go. He is the example, He is the Word, He has the words of life. We immediately turn their focus from themselves to Christ and show them that He is the Light of life and if you want life you have to look at that Light and take in what He gives.

What He gives is backed up by the Father. All of the supreme spiritual authority in the universe is behind Him and that message. It is the truth and it will work. Christ is the focus. It is not the church, yourself, or even the Bible, but rather the person, Jesus

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Christ, and the things that He said and did, and the grace that He gives. We have to make sure that we have a laser-like focus on the true center of this way of life, which is Jesus Christ.

Now in verse 21-30, Jesus tells them that He is going to die and that He is going to be raised up, but the important thing in this is that they do not know Him or His Father.

What He is pointing out here is the difference in their thinking. It has to be recognized that there is a great gulf in thinking the between heavenly and the earthly. So there must be a recognition that Jesus is not just a great man, but rather He is God. He is Yahweh.

If you go through this particular passage you will see that He keeps saying “I am.” He keeps giving hints about who He is. He is trying to let them know that they are dealing with their God, the one from the Old Testament, the one who called them His people and rejected them as His people because of their sins. You are dealing with the Judge! But they could not see it. It is very interesting what He says in verse 24

John 8:24 Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.”

And this goes in spades in the second resurrection. What is going to happen if they do not accept Him after the one hundred years of their time? They are accursed and they go into the Lake of Fire, they are finished, they will be non-existent.

So the key here is that they have got to accept Him as their God and Creator and that they need to change their thinking toward Him. They have to know that God the Father is behind all of this and there is even a greater authority behind Christ. Those two, the Father and the Son, are perfectly united. The Son will do the will of the Father in every case and all the children of God will also do the same because that is the goal—to please the Father and the Son.

So if we want to sum up this little section here, it is: believe—live; disbelieve—die. It is as simple as that and this is backed up by the Father and the Son. If you want to have life, do everything like Christ to please the Father.

In verses 31-36, is a very famous passage where He tells them that they need to accept the truth because the truth will make them free. So this next step beyond recognizing Jesus as Christ and God is to help an unconverted person recognize that the teaching of Jesus Christ is the truth. And only by the truth will a person have liberty to live fully.

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They have been enslaved by Satan and told that this is a wonderful thing, but it is a lie. They have to throw off that lie and believe the truth. If and when they believe the truth, their eyes will be opened and they will live.

It sounds a lot like what Satan tried to tell Eve, does it not? But it was all a lie too. It was not taking the forbidden fruit that was going to give them liberty, but rather it was obedience to God that was going to give the liberty. That was the truth. So Jesus says, "You have to believe the truth for in that is true liberty, then you will be able to grow."

Then we get into verses 37-47. The theme in this section is that there is an evil spirit. The one that was in the Garden telling Eve to take of that forbidden fruit—he has been behind everything in this world. His influence has gone out and has influenced them to such an extent that it is almost like people in the world are the children of the Devil and all they want to do is lie, cheat, steal, and kill like their father. They are so deceived and do not even know it. They think that they are happy and free, but they are not. Satan has them in his clutches and they are his slaves.

So what we see here is that the person in the second resurrection will have to be convicted of sin and of his worship of Satan, he has to be aware that he has been worshipping Satan all along through obedience to this rebellious, anti-God influence. He has to then reject that influence out of hand and put on God's influence by His Spirit, so that he can become of God, as it says there in verse 47

John 8:47 He who is of God hears God's words [telling the Jews at the time and actually anyone in the world that has not been given God's Spirit]; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God."

It is as simple as that, and there is the dichotomy again there. You have to change from being of this world and of Satan to being of God.

In verses 48-52, Jesus again here emphasizes the wideness of the gulf that lies between the two ways of life. Satan's way is the way of death, while following his words, he says in verse 51

John 8: 51 Most assuredly, I say to you, "If anyone keeps My word he shall never see death."

It is that extreme. On the one hand there is death, but on the other hand there is never

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death, rather eternal life. So He gives Himself as the proof, because He said, “Abraham longed to see my day and was glad.” But they said, “But you are young, how could you say that you have seen Abraham?” And He tells them, “I was alive then because I am God, I am Yahweh, I am He, “I am!”

Of course after He said that they picked up stones to kill Him because they thought He was blaspheming. But what He was showing was that He was alive. He was alive then and He is alive now, just in a different form, and as they go forward, even though they killed Him, He is going to live again, because He is the life of God. The life of God is living; eternal life; an abundant life. It is so different from the life of this world and of Satan.

So the thing that we have to teach them here is that God's way—the truth—is amazing. It is eternal life, whereas the other way leads to eternal death. All it takes after God opens one's mind, is to believe. Now we know that belief is a long hard process, but in the grand scheme of things it is easy and it is so wonderful.

I am not going to go into John 9. Martin already did that in his series a few weeks back, but what I want to show you is that chapter 9 is the same process that we went through in chapter 8, except He does it in terms of an actual illustration. It is almost like a repeat, in a way, of the introduction in John 8:1-12, but it is a lot longer and expanded.

It is about how Jesus Christ encountered the blind man who knew nothing about Him, but He was kind to him, spoke to him. He asked him if he wanted to have his eyes opened and to be able to see, he said he did. He healed him and then he had to go through a process, in front of the Pharisees, where he had to think things through and come to an understanding of what was going on. Then Jesus went back and encountered him again and said, “Do you believe in the Son of God?” He said, “show Him to me,” and He says “I am He!” He falls down and worships Him. It was that quick. It took place in just a few hours on this last day of the Feast, this eighth day.

Jesus knew the right way to approach him. He healed him, opened his eyes, he saw the griminess of the world, the politics of the Pharisees and even his parents, he saw that no human was really willing to help, but the Son of God was. He had given him the open eyes to see and so once he recognized Him as Savior, that was it, he was a changed man. So we see it in illustration there.

I mostly wanted to talk about chapter 8 so that you can see the progression of how Christ is emphasized over and over again here. But in chapter 10, we return to the focus on Christ and His works on our behalf when He talks about Himself as the true

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Shepherd; the door of the sheep; and the great Shepherd of the sheep. What He is showing here is that first, do not fall for the counterfeits because they are out there.

He says to watch out for the ones who come over the wall and try to steal the sheep, because the true Shepherd comes through the gate and He is the one that the sheep follow. He knows them and they know Him. He instructs that the true Shepherd knows the sheep, He feeds them and He cares for them and He even goes to the point of sacrificing His own life for them. That is how you identify the true Shepherd. So the sheep then respond to Him, because they know that everything they receive from Him is good and that His way leads to life, a true abundant life as it says here in verse 10

John 10:10 The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

That is the kind of life that the true Shepherd gives. So He is the center of their lives and if we want truly abundant lives, and if those people in the second resurrection want truly abundant lives, they are going to have to make Him their focus, because He is our all in all. He is everything to us.

So that is the template there. Put very simply, in the second resurrection, when we encounter all of those people, all those people with alien minds, what we will have to do is reveal and persuade the people, it sounds trite but it is true, that Christ is the answer. He is the answer to every problem and the way to live. He calls Himself "the way, the truth, and the life." That is going to have to be their focus.

It is His witness alone that is valid, His word that is true, His way that leads to life. And if we want to narrow this sermon down to one thing it is that we will be teaching and modeling the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. That is our template.

Let us finish in I Corinthians 1 and we can join with the apostle Paul in this statement. He says:

I Corinthians 1:20-24 Where is the wise? [Do we think ourselves as wise? I do not think so.] Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? [We are not those kind of people, but we are learning how to be wise in God.] Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.

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For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God