

Sunday, May 29, 2011

# The First Resurrection

*“Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.”* This verse came in the book of Revelation to reveal the status and destiny of those who have a share in the First Resurrection. So what is the First Resurrection? What is the Second Death? What is the First Death essentially? And is there a Second Resurrection? Let’s answer these questions:

+ **The First Resurrection** (Revelation 20:4-5) is the Resurrection with Christ from the death of sin, it began with the Resurrection of Christ from the dead, and it is fulfilled for the believers in Baptism, *“buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead”* (Colossians 2:12), *“You died with Christ...”* (Colossians 2:20), *“You were raised with Christ”* (Colossians 3:1), *“Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection... Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him...”* (Romans 6:308).

We must know that this resurrection was not a confined event that happened in the past during our baptism, but rather it is a continual one that we live every day. This essentially means that, in Baptism, we took a power through which we may die to sin and a power of new life and resurrection so that we may live with this power everyday and every hour. Therefore, our teacher Saint Paul continues his talk through the Holy Spirit saying: *“Reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord... Therefore do not let sin reign (Once more) in your mortal body (which died in baptism), that you should obey it in its lusts. And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.”* (Romans 6:11-13).

The First Resurrection also includes what takes place after Baptism, when we are anointed with the Holy Spirit (the sacrament of Myron), so we become priests of God, i.e. anointed and consecrated to God, and our lives to be owned by Him. Thus, each one of us become **“Anointed to the Lord”**, this is the **“Common Priesthood”** that is shared by all Christians, men, women, children, and elderly where we all become Priests of God through the Myron. (Rev. 20:6)

This is of course different from the **“Ministerial Priesthood”** which is obtained through the **“Sacrament of Priesthood”** and is administered by the laying of hands (Acts 8:14-21, Acts 13:3, 1 Timothy 4:14, 1 Timothy 5:22, 2 Timothy 1:6) and the Holy Spirit breathing (John 20:22) so we become a stewards of the mysteries of God. (1 Corinthians 4:10)

As to the **thousand years** it is a symbol of the **heavenly life** with Christ. The number 1000 is always used as a symbol to the everlasting life with God which has no end. We must not forget that the bible tells us that *“With the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.”* (2 Peter 3:8). So the thousand year reign is a symbol to the everlasting kingdom of Christ, one unending day; the day of eternity.

Thus, we understand the meaning of the First Resurrection.

+ **The Second Death** is the eternal death and torment in the lake of fire prepared for the devil and his angels, as illustrated in (Matthew 25:41, Revelation 20:14)

+ **As to the First Death**, is implied in the explanation of the First Resurrection. The First Resurrection with Christ doesn’t come until after the First Death in Baptism, and continues in our lives every day by dying to sin and to the evil of the world. This is also what our teacher Saint Paul clarified through the Holy Spirit when he said: *“always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.”* (2 Corinthians 4:10).

This First Death is essential and without it we would take no part in the First Resurrection.

+ Finally, what is the **Second Resurrection**?

The lord Jesus tell us about it on more than one occasion, for instance: *“For the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.”* (John 5:28-29), This means that the Second Resurrection takes place on Judgment day at the second coming of Christ. For the righteous, it is everlasting life and inheritance of joy, glory, and light, while for the wicked, it is eternal death, or what is called the Second Death.

**In summary**, as Christians, we now live the First Resurrection, not only during the period of the Holy Fifties, but every day of our lives after Baptism, dying to the love of the world, being liberated from its evil bondage, living by the power of the Resurrection of Christ in us, being steadfast in His commandments, witnessing to His love, and coming to fruition for the glory of His name. This is the First Resurrection, *“Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.”* (Revelation 20:6).

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