

**Read: 1 Corinthians 15:19-26**

## I win because Jesus won

### **1 Corinthians 15:19-26**

If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.

But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. But each in turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

*In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

There was a thing armies would do long ago. An agreement would be made between the two opposing forces. Each would send out their best soldier. These two soldiers would then fight each other. Whoever won, the army of the winning soldier would win the battle. Instead of hundreds or thousands of men being wounded or killed, it was just one soldier. While only one fought, the victory would go to the entire army.

The same thing happened about 2000 years ago on the cross. Jesus was fighting for you against some powerful enemies. He was going to battle against the devil who hates Jesus and those who follow him. He was fighting against sin, and against death, which comes because of our sin. They all seem so powerful—we all sin, we all fall for the devil's temptations, and no one can escape death. If Jesus lost, all of us would lose too. If the devil would win, we would be separated from God forever. We would never get to heaven.

But we know what happened! Jesus didn't lose. We heard it just a few days ago on Easter! Christ is risen! Jesus rose from the dead. He died to pay for our sin, and then on Easter, he rose from the dead. He was victorious. He had won! He has defeated sin, the devil, and death. And the best part: Jesus' victory counts for you!

That is what Paul is saying when he talks about Jesus being the "firstfruits." The "firstfruits" was a way of describing the very first fruit or grain that was gathered. It was given as a special offering to God. By giving the firstfruits, they were also trusting that God would bless the rest of the harvest. Jesus is the "firstfruits"—he died and rose again and won. His resurrection is the promise that God will raise us too! Jesus was the first to overcome death, and because he did it, we too will rise from the dead and overcome death. His victory is our victory.

Because Jesus did it first, we can be sure God will keep his promise to raise us from the dead and that we will live with him forever in heaven! When Jesus comes back on judgment day, our bodies will be raised to life and we will be alive again, just like Jesus, ready to live with him forever!

*The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.*

### **Questions for the Younger Children**

- How did Jesus defeat our enemies?
- What do you think is the best blessing that comes from Jesus' victory?

### **Questions for Elementary Age Children**

- What does Christ's resurrection assure us of?
- True or false: Without the resurrection, our faith is useless.

### **Questions for Middle School and Above**

- Why is Jesus' victory so important for you and me?
- Paul describes death as "the last enemy." How is death our "enemy"?

### **Closing Prayer:**

Jesus, thank you for defeating my enemies and giving your victory to me. Help me to remember that victory when I feel sad or scared. Fill me with joy in knowing I will be with you forever in heaven. Amen.