

## 09.01.2024 - It's Important

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There have been times we've covered areas that everybody said, yeah, I knew that. Other times we've covered areas it's like, that's in the Bible? Sometimes we've crossed some things, it's just what I call a head-scratcher and you go, why is that there? But it's all the Word of God. Most of chapter 15, it starts off with the gospel, but it continues on where he teaches about the resurrection and the importance of the resurrection.

The fact that when Jesus Christ died, was buried, and rose again, as we talked this morning in Sunday school, he stayed rosed, I mean risen. He stayed out of the grave, and then just before Pentecost, he was caught up together with the Lord God the Father in the air. Resurrection.

And we have that hope. We have that hope if you know Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, if you've trusted him by faith and believe that he died for your sins, was buried and rose the third day, that when you die, to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. Or, if that trumpet should sound, I hope and pray that if the trumpet would sound today during this worship time, that there wouldn't be a single person left here.

That the Lord would take us all. But apparently there were some that didn't believe in a resurrection, and that's why Paul had to teach the Corinthians over and over again about the importance of the resurrection. Here in verses 30 through 34, he covers a few of the reasons why it's important, or rather, what would happen if it's not really true.

Look at verse 30, 1 Corinthians 15 verse 30. Paul writes, And why stand we in jeopardy every hour? I protest by your rejoicing, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord. I die daily.

If, after the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantage is me if the dead rise not? Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die. You see, when you believe in the resurrection, it's important because it will affect the choices that you make. Paul here says, first of all, Why stand we in jeopardy every hour? If you read the story and what Paul recorded here, it seemed like everywhere he went, nobody liked him.

He preached the gospel of Jesus Christ, and they didn't want to stone him. They didn't want to kill him. They wanted to shipwreck him and just let him die.

That's what he was saying. He goes, if there's no resurrection, why am I going through this? Why am I going through all of these problems, these trials, these tribulations? Because when you follow Christ, despite the trials, because you believe there's a resurrection, there will be a change in your life. Sometimes, from an earthly standpoint, it won't be a good change.

But from a heavenly standpoint, it's what God wants from us. Ask yourself this. Would you put your life in jeopardy today to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, to stand up for the Word of God, to do the will of God, if you knew that when you died, you just go in the grave and that's it? No.

That's why he said before, if there is no resurrection, we are of all men most miserable. Because we're hoping that something doesn't happen. I believe that one day I'm going to be standing before the Lord.

And because of that, I know that His Word says I need to share His Word with other people. Despite how many people laugh at me, despite the fact that even in some countries today, sharing the Word of God gets you put in jail. And who knows? That may happen in America in just a few years, depending on the way things turn out.

There's a lot of things in God's Word we have to stand up for, and because of that, people are going to not like you. So why put your life in danger telling people what the Word of God says if it's just going to be dust when you die and nothing else? And we do have to stand up for the Word of God. In Genesis it tells us in the beginning that God created one man and one woman and He married them off and said, go forth and multiply.

And today the world wants to change all of that. And if you stand up and say, I believe in a marriage between one man and one woman and that's it, I believe that the only sexual activity allowed by God is between that one man and one woman who are married to each other, people are going to say, well, you, you're a bigot. You're a hater.

No. I'm a follower of God. When Paul walked through streets proclaiming God, there were many there who wanted to stone him because they said, there is no God.

There is no Christ. There is no resurrection. And the fact is, if you're standing up for the Word of God, you're going to have to believe there's a resurrection.

You're going to have to believe that there's a point to life after this life. Because otherwise, why do it? Instead, on verse 31, when he says, I protest by your rejoicing, he's just meaning I'm proclaiming that because of all the Corinthians that are rejoicing in the love of God, rejoicing in the salvation they've received, because I've shared the gospel, I face death every day. When he says, I die daily, that means every day Paul knew that today could be the day that they take my life because of what I do for God.

How many of us have trouble following the will of God, but somebody say, would you go to jail for God? Oh, yeah, I'd go to jail for God. Would you die for God? Yeah, I'd die for God. Would you go to church every time the doors are open? No.

That's too much trouble. I've got things to do. Well, wait a minute.

See, if you're willing to serve God in some areas, not other areas, isn't that called a hypocrite? But Paul says, no. I die daily. I'm willing every single day for the good of those that I witness to, for the good of those I serve, I'm willing to die every single day.

And that's, if you believe in the resurrection, I know this is kind of hard to say, you should be willing to die for Christ at any moment. Any moment. Just like he said.

But instead, verse 32, he says, if after the manner of men I fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantage of me if the dead rise not? Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die. See, that's the way many people believe. They say, listen, if there's no resurrection, what advantage is it? Even dying a martyr.

Advantage means profit. Something that's good for you. What do I get out of it? If I'm going to die a martyr, Paul says, what do I get out of it? If there's no resurrection, you get nothing.

If there's no resurrection, and your chance of seeing Christ for now and eternity, it doesn't profit you anything. There's no advantage. He says, if that's the case, we might as well say, well, I'm just going to eat and drink.

Tomorrow I die. In other words, let's just party. Let's just satisfy myself.

He actually quoted that from Isaiah. In Isaiah 22, the Jews were about ready to be defeated by the Assyrians. They saw them coming.

They knew they didn't have a chance. God said, basically, you need to pray. You need to fast.

You need to lift up your voices to me and do these things. But instead, the Jews, they didn't listen to what the prophet said. They didn't listen to what God said.

They said, there's no hope. We're going to die anyway, so we might as well party. And that's the way many of us as Christians feel sometimes.

If we're not careful, we say, all of this work I'm doing, people are laughing at me. I might as well just go along to get along. If all the world is partying and having a good time, I might as well have a good time too.

Isn't that sad? A Christian should be different. I think I've told you this story before. In the early years, even when Paul was alive, Paul had delivered some of the Christians to the Roman Colosseum.

Here's the sick people that they had that night. They thought it was normal. People would come and fill the Colosseum.

I've been there. It's huge. Then they would lead people out to the middle.

Then they would turn the lions over. They would have a good time watching people getting ripped to shreds. Woo-hoo! And if it was Christians, that was even better.

Most people, when they were let out there, as soon as the lions were let loose, they would run. They'd try to climb the walls. They would bloody their fingers trying to get away.

The lions would still get them. The crowd would cheer. They'd lead a group of Christians out.

They didn't run. They didn't yell. They didn't scream.

They kneeled down in the middle and started singing psalms and praying to God even as the lions were jumping on them. There was nothing to cheer at. Why aren't these people running? Why aren't they trying to climb the walls? Why are they praying to their God? Because they knew God would deliver them.

They believed in a resurrection. And many of them sitting up in the crowd says, I don't know what they have, but I want it. See, when we stand up for the Word of God, when we stand up and do what God has asked us to do, to live differently, we're a new creature.

We should be changed. We should be beacons of light instead of hiding our light under a bushel. But Paul said if there's no resurrection, what's the use? I might as well eat, drink, and be merry.

And sadly, that's the attitude many Christians live with today. The resurrection is also important in choosing who we hang out with, our friends, our acquaintances. In verse 33, Choosing good friends, choosing good people to learn the Bible from is important.

If you don't believe that, he says you're deceived. You see, that word communications doesn't mean what we think it means today. Communication actually means companionship or fellowship, where you're sitting around a table discussing an issue, that companionship.

That's what he means by communication, the act of discussing amongst a group of people. But what does he say here? He goes evil communication, evil groups of friends, people who don't care about God, or they have their own idea of what God should be like. They corrupt good manners.

You know what corrupt means? It means the same here as it does today. But good manners just means your habits. It means your morals.

It means your character. If you hang out with the wrong people, with people who could care less about God, or care less about what God's word says, they will tear you down to

their level. You know, it's the old story.

You put one bad apple into a bushel of good apples, the good apples will not make the bad apple good. It's quite the opposite. So I just want to encourage you.

Hang out with people that will lift you up, that will edify you, that you can talk the word of God with in a reasonable manner so you can learn together. You don't want your habits, you don't want the things you do, you don't want your character to be totally torn down because you're learning from the wrong people. This could be your friends.

This could even be some TV Bible preachers, some books written by different people. Be very careful because some, although they sound good, if you read them closely, they don't really go along with what the word of God says. Now I'm going to say something that, for some of you, may shock you.

You know I use the King James? We have the King James in all the pews? I like the King James. I'm King James only, but I'm not King James crazy. Don't tell anybody, don't tell any very conservative people I said this, but there's so many people that they found a verse in King James that's nowhere else in any other things and they'll build a whole doctrine on that one verse.

Or if they didn't have that, they'd have nothing. Study. That's what we're supposed to do.

To show yourself approved. Learn what words mean. It's like that word we just saw.

Evil communications. You think, well, listening to the wrong thing over the radio is bad. No, that's not what that means.

When you do some study, you find out what it means compared with other words. You find out what it really means. Companionships or fellowships.

That changes what that verse means, but it changes it to what God wants us to understand. Watch out who your friends are. Watch out who you learn from.

A few years ago they came up with a term called Christian Atheist. Anybody ever heard that? Christian Atheist. People believe there's a God, but act like there isn't.

They say they're a Christian, but they act like they never heard of Christ. Christian Atheist. Don't be one of those.

Be careful who you follow. If you find somebody who is, that may not believe the same way you do though, be willing to discuss. Say, okay, let's open the word of God.

Show me what you got. And when they show you what you got, you can show them what you have. Share, learn.

You know, I'm addicted to Facebook, especially groups that talk Bible. There's some of them, I read what they write and I went, where did they get that? And I look it up. And I'll be honest, most of the time I can't find anything that goes with what they say, but sometimes they really make me think.

And consider, maybe I've been thinking about this all wrong. The word of God, study it. Why? Because there will be some that don't believe in the resurrection that would say, just eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow you die.

So be careful who you associate with. Who you talk Bible with. I was going to say theology, but that gets too deep.

We'll just stick with Bible. Now, so, the resurrection is important in who you choose as your friends, especially the ones you talk the Bible with. The resurrection is also important in the goals you have.

Look at verse 34. Awake to righteousness, and sin not, for some have the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame.

Knowing about the resurrection should affect or be important in the goals you have and the life that you live. He says awake to righteousness. That word awake doesn't mean just you're sleeping and you're not sleeping.

It means to awake out of a drunken stupor. Now you don't have to raise your hands, but I'm sure some of you remember drinking all night and waking up the next morning and wishing you hadn't drank all night the night before. That's what this is talking about.

Don't walk around with your head in the clouds. Don't walk around being affected just like you're drunk. Instead, wake up.

And when you wake up, awake to righteousness. Stop doing the things that are leading you astray. Start doing the things that lead you closer and closer to God.

Righteousness means doing the right thing. To acting justly, following God and His word. Wake up.

So many people need us to be sober and serve God. Awake to righteousness. And notice also, and sin not.

Don't just wake up and say, yeah, I know what's right and I know what's wrong. Well, wake up and know what's right and what's wrong. And don't do the wrong.

Talk about some things that God doesn't teach. There's a big push today about pro-choice. And that whole abortion thing.

I shocked some people once. I said, yeah, I'm pro-choice. What? I said, yeah, I believe in

free will.

We all have a choice. I said, if you choose to murder your unborn baby, that's the wrong choice. Just because you're pro-choice doesn't mean every choice is the right one.

Awake to righteousness. And sin not. That word sin not actually means, well, I have a quote here.

For those of you who like quotes, it's out of the commentary of Jameson Frost and Brown. He says, it means don't give yourselves to sinful pleasures. The Greek expresses a continued state of abstinence from sin.

Thus, Paul implies that those who live in sinful pleasures readily persuade themselves of what they wish, namely that there is no resurrection. So if you're living in sinful pleasures, if you're living in sin, you're hoping there's no resurrection because that means you're going to have to answer to God. If you're a believer, you're going to have to answer to Christ at the judgment seat of Christ.

Do you really want to do that? When everybody else is being told, well done, now good and faithful servant, Christ looks at you and goes, what happened? You know? I gave you everything to do. I gave you my will. I showed you the path and yet you kept, what happened to you? You'll still be in heaven.

It's just a lot of them rewards that everybody else is going to be getting, you won't get any. Sin not. Be in a continual state of sinlessness.

You're saying, well wait a minute, I live in this flesh. It's going to sin. Well, you can't be sinless, but you can sin less.

And how do you know what's a sin? Back to the Word of God. It tells us. And if it's not written in here specifically, let's see.

Pray. And say, Lord, let the Holy Spirit guide me in the right direction. The Holy Spirit will never guide you into sin.

That's a guarantee. Never. Maybe that's why we're supposed to be filled with the Holy Spirit and be not drunk with wine.

To be guided. So wake to righteousness and sin not. Instead, it says, the reason this is because there were some people that weren't awake to righteousness, that didn't believe in a resurrection, that weren't teaching the right way of God.

They had people teaching the wrong way. And because of that, they were being veered away from the message. And that's why Paul could say to the Corinthians and to us, for some have not the knowledge of God, I speak this to your shame.

Some don't know the basics about God. Why do you, as a believer, why do you think you were left here? I was left here to worship God. You can do that for eternity in heaven.

I was left here to try to live a sinless life. Well, you get to heaven, you're going to be living a sinless life. There's two things that you can do on earth that you can't do in heaven.

One is sin. And we don't want to do that, just told us not to. You know what the second thing is? Witness to sinners.

Why do you think God left us here? So we can live a long life? Life's just like a vapor. He left us here to tell other people about the love of God. Left to tell other people so that we're not shamed for not telling people.

And I'll be honest, I'm just ashamed as many of you are, because I've missed opportunities to tell people. I always had a good reason for it. I don't know about you, but I don't know if God is going to buy that.

So it's real simple. The resurrection is important in how you live. The resurrection is important because it will allow you to live your life boldly for Jesus Christ, even willing to face death if you have to.

Believing in the resurrection and knowing that you're going to be with Him in heaven forever will allow you to choose your friends and your companions wisely, hoping that when you go up there, so will they. Believing in the resurrection makes us realize that since there is an afterlife, we need to make sure that we do our job in this life to get as many people there as possible. Do you know Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior? If the trumpet should sound and take all the believers to heaven with Him during the rapture, would your seat be empty? I hope so.

Because if not, you need to get that right today. We don't know when the Lord's coming back, but every day He tarries is a day closer to when He'll be here. Let's bow our heads for just a moment.

And everybody consider what the Word of God has taught us today. Even though you might believe in the resurrection, do you live like it's important or like it's not important? If you're living like it's not important then you just eat, drink, and be married because that's it. But if you believe it's important, it will change the way you're living.

It will change the way you look at what God wants for you. It will change the way you look at people. Instead of just looking at people as people, maybe someone that's in your way, you'll look at people and think to yourself, do they know Jesus Christ? And will they be in heaven with me? Because there's people of... there's a lot of people that need Jesus.



So, whether you believe in the resurrection or not, it will affect the choices you make, the friends you have, and the goals you try to attain. I hope they're all for God and led by the Holy Spirit. We're going to pray and as I pray, just lift up your heart to the Lord and you pray too.

If there's sin in your life that you fail to seek forgiveness for, ask Him to forgive you. If there's perhaps you've never trusted Him as your Savior, talk to Him today. Say, Lord, I believe that I'm a sinner.

I believe that You died for my sins. I believe that You were buried and that You rose again the third day and You're waiting on the right hand of the Father for me to come. For Him to tell you to come get His own.

Let's pray together. Heavenly Father, Lord, we thank You for Your Word. And Lord, sometimes it seems a little difficult, but Lord, if we just take the time to read it, contemplate it, let the Holy Spirit guide us, Lord, we'll find out that You love us so much.

You've given us Your Word to teach us, to exhort us, to correct us when we're wrong. So Lord, as we're waiting for the resurrection, as we're waiting for that time and when we're in Heaven with You for eternity, Lord, let us do what You've left us here to do. Let us stand for the truth and the Word of God.

Let us show people, Lord, that they need the Savior. We thank You, Lord, for everything. In Jesus' name.

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