

## 1 Corinthians 15 pt.3 v.29-49

Chapter 15 is all about resurrection.

The fact that we are in the Easter season is not lost on me.

In this chapter Paul addresses the historicity of Christ's resurrection, the implications of Christ's resurrection, and the implications if there was no resurrection. He also addresses questions that were circulating among the churches in his day relative to the purpose, timing, and effect of the resurrection for believers.

Standing on the foundation that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is an historical fact, attested to by a great number of eyewitnesses and recorded as an historical fact, Paul addresses some additional implications for what if the resurrection didn't happen

V.29-34 - Continuation of 'what-if' scenarios. Paul examining the thought process and logic presented by those who deny the resurrection.

v.29 -30 Paul uses contemporary action to support the fact of the resurrection. We can restate the questions like this.

If the dead do not rise...if Christ is not risen...if there is no hope past this life...then, what will they do who are baptized for the dead?

\*It is important to note that this is the scripture that Mormons will use when defending their heretical doctrine of baptism for the dead. They believe that people can be baptized as a proxy for people who died outside of Mormon baptism and that work is equally effectual.

You can see, the most direct and contextual reading of this passage does not support that belief.

Paul says, look at the field...all these people who are being baptized (keep in mind baptism has always been an important part of our faith). If Christ is dead, if he's in the ground...why? Why are you baptized for a dead man? What's the point?

By implication Paul is stating the Baptism is important, it means something.

One of the significant points of baptism is that it signifies that we share both in Christ's death by submersion and we share in His RESURRECTION by being symbolically raised up in His likeness.

Then Paul says, "If there was no resurrection, why do we stand in jeopardy every hour?" This is very straightforward but there are a lot of layers. We know that in Paul's past life he was violently opposed to Jesus Christ and the new church that was spreading across the region. And now this man who once persecuted the church, places himself willingly in danger hourly for the gospels sake. What could motivate one to do such a thing? In Paul's case is what the fact that he saw the risen Lord, spoke with Him, was instructed by Him.

It's not only Paul though, all of the saints that stand in jeopardy hourly proclaiming this blessed hope...Christ died for our sins according to God's word, he was buried, and that He took His life back up on the third day and conquered death.

Their individual actions in standing firm for the gospels sake in the face of tremendous peril is a testament to the compelling truth of the resurrection.

It appears that Paul counts his time among the Corinthians as a time of peril as well (REF - traveling to them in ACTS).

[1Co 2:3 NKJV] 3 I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling.

[Act 18:9-10 NKJV] 9 Now the Lord spoke to Paul in the night by a vision, "Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; 10 "for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city."

[1Co 4:11-13 NKJV] 11 To the present hour we both hunger and thirst, and we are poorly clothed, and beaten, and homeless. 12 And we labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; 13 being defamed, we entreat. We have been made as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things until now.

He implies that they, the Corinthians, are fruit of this labor in Christ and that he dies daily.

We pay a lot of lip service to this idea of dying daily in the life of the Christians. Such a glorious term huh? There is a resurrection to be had.

In the daily dying we find a daily resurrection. Death to the flesh, life to the spirit.

Conversely, if there is no resurrection then we find ourselves in a pitiful, depressed hole, unable to crawl our way out - having not embraced the hope of the resurrection of Christ. We would be miserly, dark, brooding souls with no hope AND certainly no reason to place ourselves in any peril for the souls of our fellow humans.

V.32 - fighting with beasts at Ephesus - Paul adds some detail to his daily struggle of ministry. While we paint American persecution as ridicule or sneering or mocking - Paul faced physical, emotional, spiritual harm hourly, daily. The only way he could continue was mortifying the flesh - dying daily and allowing the Spirit to give life to his mortal body.

He asks rhetorically, if the dead do not rise, if Christ is not risen, if there is no future hope of resurrection for us...why do I put myself through such tremendous hardship and conflict?

Specifically, his contemporary circumstance at Ephesus. REF Acts 19

\*the bottom line for these 3 verses is that those who believe in the resurrection who have embraced that hope live their lives in real time in a way that declares, "Christ is risen, we are all in."

As opposed to the alternative of partying it up, because YOLO.

Paul gives allowance for the attitude that if this is the only life we have then eat, drink, because tomorrow you may be dead.

If there is no resurrection - then we may as well make this life heaven.

This idea was so pervasive in Corinth that there was a term in the greek language meaning "to live like a Corinthian," [korinthiazesthai - 4th century BC] - and meant to live with drunken and immoral debauchery...one source indicates that if ever a Corinthian was shown on a stage in a play he was depicted as being drunk.

Certainly our own culture shares similarities in both attitude and lifestyle.

V.33 BUT - we are warned - don't be deceived! Don't listen to those around you who whisper other things to you. Don't buy into their counsel who say "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!"

This isn't the case. Since the resurrection is a certainty and we look forward to a day we will live forever with Christ in his eternal kingdom. By God's grace, we live in a way that stands as a living testament to the resurrection. - we do receive baptism, we do go in harm's way for the sake of the gospel

that others might share in Christ's resurrection, we do fight with beasts and wrestle against powers and principalities and rulers of darkness in heavenly places. Because there is a resurrection!

We are all quickly approaching the platform into the eternal when we will leave behind all of this! We must be about our Father's business in the meantime, not forsaking our traveling partners to the perils of the road!

V.34 - Wake up! Many of us slumber through our lives neither dying daily, standing in any peril for the gospel, or making war against the enemies of the cross. Because we haven't found the message of the resurrection wholly compelling we sleepwalk our ways through a half-hearted existence in some sort of dream state.

Wake up! This attitude is shameful. And as Paul says to the Corinthian church of his day and so it is true for the universal church of our day - some among us do not have the knowledge of God in our very midst! Wake up sleeper!

[Rom 13:11-12 NKJV] 11 And [do] this, knowing the time, that now [it is] high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation [is] nearer than when we [first] believed. 12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.

V. 35 - Immaterial questioning. REF The woman at the well. Foolish lines of questioning meant to subvert the more important issue or deflect when we get convicted. Yeah but...?

V.36-44 Over the next several verses, Paul instructs on the ignorance and short-sightedness of man. He illustrates the expansive glory of the created world and the sovereignty and will of God in design. And in doing this he illustrates how much we don't know about this present age and the age to come.

V.36 - foolish one! We must admit we are often foolish when it comes to the doctrine of resurrection, especially when we begin to speculate and theorize apart from God's word.

What makes a man foolish in this regard is supposing that we do know how this all works out. We do know a few things.

Paul reminds us again that we must die. Following Jesus is a call to die, in the best sense - to take up our cross, that public instrument of death and humiliation. To mortify the deeds of the flesh, to die to self, to die daily - casting off the husk of the old man, sharing in Christ's death.

"...that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any mean, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead." Phil 3:10-11

If we are to find life, we must die. This is a hard saying.

V.37-38 what we sow - what we plant in the ground - isn't what we get back - God has designed something special. This is where we derive the

concept of a glorified body. Which is a tremendous prospect for those whose bodies have failed them in this life.

V.39 - your biology lesson

V.40-41 - your earth sciences/astronomy lesson

V.42-44 - so also is the resurrection - glorious, complex, profound, orchestrated by the hand of the Living God to declare His glory - just like all creation. Even what we see now with our own eyes won't compare with God's new creation. This is all decaying, fading, depreciating - just like our bodies, but will be raised incorruptible, whole, infinite, and without decay.

V.45-49 Adam, the first broken man, is a representative of our failure, brokenness, frailty, sinfulness.

Jesus Christ, God with us became the first glorified man in the resurrection. He pulls us incomplete humans into perfection in His person. By His righteousness we are made right with God, as opposed to our former state - by Adam's sin we were separated from God.

We say, from dust to dust, and that is true on this side of eternity. But we who are dust, who are now found in weakness, will bear His eternal image forevermore because of Christ's resurrection.