

THE POWER OF THE RESURECTION

TEXT:1 cor.15:29-34

Paul has been discussing the future resurrection of the believer's body. He has stated that Christ's own resurrection is the guarantee of our own resurrection. Now, in verses 29-34, he says in effect, "And now apply this matter to your case." Or to put it another way, he tells us that the resurrection should serve as an incentive for certain things in our life as a believer. In verses 29-34 he instructs us to look at life through the resurrection.

We saw in verse 20 that the tense of the words, **"But now is Christ risen,"** speaks of a past event with present effects. The resurrection of Christ is a historical matter but the effects of His resurrection are still being felt today. How should we look at life in light of the resurrection? Let's notice the text and let me point out how the resurrection should affect our life as a believer.

I. THOSE WHO GAVE THEIR LIFE IN LIGHT OF THE RESURRECTION!

Notice verse 29, **"Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?"**

Verse 29 is considered as one of the most difficult passages in the Bible to understand. There are many different theories as to what Paul was saying and many disagree as to its meaning. It is a verse that has been used to support many strange and heretical interpretations.

Many have used the verse to teach baptism for the dead (the doctrine that a person can be baptized for those who died unbaptized).

Such a teaching would make baptism a part of salvation. Yet, we know that this is not what the scripture is teaching for baptism does not save a person while they are living and certainly cannot save a person after they die.

What is the scripture saying?

I believe that when one carefully breaks down the verse and allows the scriptures as a whole to guide them, we can come to an understanding of what is being said. Let me point out 2 things the verse calls to our attention.

A. THE BELIEVERS THAT ARE REMEMBERED.

It is obvious that Paul is talking about the dead. Three times he mentions the "**dead**" in **verse 29**. Paul is not talking about every believer in general but believers who are dead.

When Jesus was speaking of His cross He referred to the suffering of the cross in **Mark 10:38, "Can ye drink of the cup I drink of? And be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"** The baptism Jesus spoke of was His suffering on the cross.

I believe that the baptism referred to in I Corinthians 15:29 refers to the kind of baptism Jesus referred to in **Mark 10:38**, a baptism of suffering. The dead Paul is speaking of in our text are those, who had been identified with Christ through water baptism, but their identification with Christ had been a costly one.

When Paul spoke of the dead he was reminding them of those who had given their life to Jesus and for Jesus. He is remembering those who would not deny the name of a resurrected and living Christ even if it meant their own life. These are the believers he is remembering.

A. THE BELIEVERS THAT ARE REMEMBERED.

B. THE BELIEVERS THAT ARE REPLACED.

Paul not only remembers those who died for their faith in Christ, but also those who were "baptized for the dead."

The word **"for"** basically means "in behalf of, for one's benefit." it means in the prospect of death and as a continuance of the testimony for those who died for their faith.

This was what Paul had in mind when he spoke of those **"baptized for the dead."** He was challenging the Corinthian believers to rise up and take the place of those who given their life for Christ.

Paul asks in **verse 29, "if the dead rise not?"** He was saying, "If there is no resurrection why would these dear saints be willing to give their life?" They would been foolish to die for something that is not true. Yet, the resurrection is true.

Paul asks in the latter part of **verse 29, "Why are they then baptized for the dead?"** In case someone would ask why they should be willing to suffer and give their life," Paul says, "Because of the resurrection."

Here is the call for each of us. Who will step forward and take the place of those who are gone? Who will give their life in light of the resurrection?

I. THOSE WHO GAVE THEIR LIFE IN LIGHT OF THE RESURRECTION!

II. THOSE WHO GAUGED THEIR LIFE IN THE POWER OF THE RESURRECTION!

Notice verses 30-32, "And why stand we in jeopardy every hour? [31] I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily. [32] If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die."

Paul now takes the focus off those who died for their faith and talks about his own case and the Corinthian's personal situation. He speaks to them about how they should measure and gauge life.

A. THE PERSONAL PERSECUTION IN LIFE.

Paul asks in **verse 30**, "And why stand we in jeopardy every hour?"

The word "**jeopardy**" means "danger." Paul was saying, "We all live every moment in danger that we could be arrested and killed for being a Christian."

Paul and all believers in those day lived under the constant threat of being martyred for their faith.

Paul says "**we**" including the Corinthians. He was reminding them that there was the potential of each of them having to go through what others went through. Then Paul points to a personal example in **verse 32 when he mentioned how he "fought with beasts at Ephesus."**

A. THE PERSONAL PERSECUTION IN LIFE.

B. THE PROPER PERSPECTIVE FOR LIFE.

Paul asks in verse 30, "Why they lived in such danger." He was saying, "Why put my life at risk? Why live under the constant threat of death." He asks in verse 32, "what advantageth it me," literally, "what human motive can there be for living this way?"

The resurrection is the reason! The resurrection gave them a great cause to live for Christ, stand for Christ, and if need be die for Christ.

Notice verse 31, "I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily." The words "I protest" was a strong word.

OPPOSE/OBJECT/DISPUTE/CHALLENGE

He says in verse 32, that if there be no resurrection then, **"let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die."**

I. THOSE WHO GAVE THEIR LIFE IN LIGHT OF THE RESURRECTION!

II. THOSE WHO GUAGED THEIR LIFE IN THE POWER OF THE RESURRECTION!

3. THOSE WHO GUARD THEIR LIFE IN THE POWER OF THE RESURRECTION!

Notice **verses 33-34**, "**Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.**

[34] Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame."

In effect Paul says, "In light of the resurrection, you ought to live a godly life."

A. DON'T BE INFLUENCED BY THOSE AROUND YOU.

Again notice **verse 33**, "**Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners."**

There was plenty of bad company in those days to corrupt a person.

Their attitude was to live and enjoy every pleasure known to man regardless of how immoral and vile it may be. Paul says, "Don't be deceived. If you hang around that kind of people it will rub off on you and corrupt your manner of life."

Psalms 1:1, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful."

God gave these words of instructions:

Proverbs 4:14, "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men."

Proverbs 24:1, "Be not thou envious against evil men, neither desire to be with them."

"evil communications corrupt good manners." Paul is telling us to live a godly life and don't let anyone or anything keep you from being godly.

A. DON'T BE INFLUENCED BY THOSE AROUND YOU.

B. DON'T BE INDIFFERENT TO THOSE AROUND YOU.

Notice **verse 34, "Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame."**

Paul says that there are people that are unsaved and the way you have been living is not helping them to be saved. Instead of living lives that helped people get saved they hindered them.

**LIVE IN LIGHT OF THE POWER OF THE
RESSURECTION**

