

**1 Corinthians 15:29-34: The resurrection of the dead, defended.**

Paul defended the resurrection of the dead from the vantage point of having risked his life for the gospel, specifically, the doctrine and truth of the resurrection of Christ and the dead in Christ.

Paul had been beaten/stoned and left for dead for preaching the gospel of the resurrected Christ!

If the dead rise not, what in the world are we doing? Saith Paul! Why are we risking our lives, if the resurrection is not true, if there is no hope that we will be raised again at the last day?

At this point, I think it's important to understand that when this letter was written to the Corinthian Church, it was around 57AD, the Lord Jesus died and rose again around 33AD, (approximately 24 years had gone by), so there were STILL eyewitnesses of Jesus' resurrection who were alive when Paul wrote this letter! (Peter and John, other apostles)

The resurrection of Christ began to be preached from the Day of Pentecost; it is the capstone of the gospel! Brethren, if the resurrection is NOT preached today, the message of Christ is incomplete! Acts 2:22-24

In most of 1 Corinthians 15 Paul taught the doctrine and truth of the resurrection of Christ, and of the dead in Christ.

Now, in (V29), after having set forth those "last things" that shall come to pass at the end of the world, when the dead do rise, Paul now returns to his defense of the truth of the resurrection.

**1 Corinthians 15:29: (If the dead rise not): "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?"**

This is a very difficult passage to understand, but...what we do understand from the context of this chapter may help us: Paul wrote specifically about the resurrection of Christ and believers; remember, in the resurrection at the LAST DAY, the LAST ENEMY, (death), shall be destroyed.

This leads to what Paul wrote in (V30-32), of the constant dangers to his life that he was faced because he preached of the gospel of Christ.

The other thing to consider (about V29) is that Paul did not condemn what he called being baptized for the dead, therefore, this does not appear to be some heathen rite or heresy that was being practiced in the church.

Paul seems (here) to go back to what he wrote in (1 Corinthians 15:12-19); if the dead rise not at all, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins, the dead in Christ will not rise again. And those "new believers" whom you baptized, who professed faith in Christ, are still dead in their trespasses

and sins, that is, if the dead rise not. You're baptizing the dead!

**But if that be true, saith Paul: If Christ did not rise from the grave, and, if we have no hope rising from the grave, why am I risking my life for the sake of the gospel?**

(V30): If the dead rise not, why do we jeopardize our lives every hour to spread the good news of the gospel? (V31): I die daily, I put my life in danger "every day" for sake of the gospel and for the Name of Christ!

(V32): What do I have to gain, humanly speaking, what advantage is there of risking my life for the gospel IF THE DEAD RISE NOT? If I am just going to die and that's the end of my existence? What does it profit me?

2 Corinthians 1:8-10, 4:8-12

Beloved of God, in our day, (in America) we know little to nothing of risking our lives for the gospel, like Paul and the other apostles and saints of the 1<sup>st</sup> century!

We know little to nothing of openly professing faith in Jesus Christ, nor of the danger of openly/publicly being baptized!

**(V31): "I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily"**

Paul rejoiced/boasted in the fact that God had saved many sinners in Corinth, and therefore, he confidently affirmed that he was more than willing to risk his earthly life every day for their sakes and that Christ would be preached. I DIE DAILY! He rejoiced for their rejoicing which both he and they had in Christ Jesus.

The Corinthians WERE Paul's joy and affirmation of the truth of the resurrection of Christ! Therefore, Paul was more than willing to live every day of his life with a death sentence on his head, and to risk his life to preach the gospel of the resurrected Christ!

Acts 20:17-24, Romans 8:35-39, 2 Corinthians 11:22-33

2 Corinthians 4:11: "For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh"

**1 Corinthians 15:33: The dangers of "bad company"**

In Paul warned the Corinthians against "companying" with those that denied the resurrection of Jesus Christ and of the saints.

To deny the resurrection would be to live this life with no hope of eternal life! Remember what Paul wrote 1 Corinthians 15:12.

There are MANY in the world today, who are lost sinners, unbelievers, who deny every Word of the gospel of Christ, who LIVE for today, for the world, for the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, who have convinced themselves that when they die, there is nothing more; and that

there will be no day of reckoning or judgment to come, and no wrath from God or eternal damnation. Psalm 50:3-6  
The danger of "companying with or associating" with those that deny the truth of resurrection of Christ or of the saints, they will do their worst to corrupt your minds from the truth!  
2 Peter 2:1-3, 2 Timothy 2:15-18

Christian, it is YOUR responsibility to know the gospel of Christ and the Holy scriptures! If you don't know what you believe about your own salvation, you are in grave danger of being deceived; "tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine" by deceivers standing behind pulpits like this one! BE NOT DECEIVED, CHRISTIAN!

**(V34): "Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame"**

No one likes to hear the words "shame on you". But they're especially hard to hear when we should have known better! There are (2) words in (V34) that should be intuitively obvious for EVERY CHRISTIAN to live by: "SIN NOT".

1 John 2:1: "My little children, these things write I unto you that ye sin not"

Having been saved and forgiven for our sins by the blood of Jesus Christ and Him crucified and risen again, we should be a people who are always practicing "sin avoidance", always be "turning away from and mortifying sin" out of our Christian lives! "He is the propitiation for our sins!"

And so, Paul wrote: WAKE UP sleepy Christian! Don't allow yourself to be lulled to sleep in the world and so fall into sin and error!

Remember the Sadducees, who questioned the Lord about a woman who had (7) husbands, (each of them died before her), they insincerely questioned the Lord in their attempt to disprove the resurrection.

Matthew 22:28-33

In 1 Corinthians 15:34, Paul rebuked the Corinthian Church for not being able to resist these naysayers of the resurrection!

(V34): Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God, (BUT YOU SHOULD KNOW what you believe about the resurrection of Christ, Corinthian saints!); I speak this to your shame! 1 Corinthians 15:1-4

- a. Christian, can you earnestly contend for the faith of Christ and the gospel, which you profess to believe? Are you rooted upon, and do you stand upon the truth of the gospel of Christ? Are you well-versed in the scriptures so that you can you recognize errors when they arise, which compromise the truth of the gospel of Christ?

**Next time: More questions about the resurrection: 1 Corinthians 15:35: "But some man will say, how are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?"**

