

**Subject: *The Resurrection of Christ and Christians – Part 4***

**Scripture: *1 Corinthians 15:29-34***

This chapter is a powerful combination of doctrinal truth and practical living. Paul begins the chapter (vs. 1-4) by laying out the basic truths of the gospel and the doctrine of Christ's resurrection. Then (vs. 5-11) he confirms and supports the truth of the resurrection by the historical evidence and eyewitness testimony of many witnesses. After that (vs. 12-19) Paul considers the practical implications of the resurrection of Christ. Then (vs. 20-27) he states that Christ has risen from the dead and is the "first fruits" of all believers who have died. Again he shows that the doctrinal truth that Christ's resurrection is the guarantee of the believer's resurrection, that it will take place when Christ returns, and that all things will be restored to their original order in eternity. Now in verses 29-34, Paul shows how the resurrection has a practical impact on our daily lives. Here is a summary of 1 Corinthians 15:1-28, that shows the vital connection between doctrinal truth and practical application.

**Doctrinal Truths (five fundamental facts):**

1. The gospel (death, burial, resurrection) is our solid foundation (vs. 1-4)
2. The resurrection is confirmed by eyewitnesses (vs. 5-11)
3. Christ's resurrection is the guarantee of the believer's resurrection (vs. 20-23)
4. Christ will conquer every enemy (vs. 24-27)
5. Christ will restore all things for God's glory (vs. 28)

**Practical Implications (five important consequences):**

1. Preaching the gospel matters (vs. 14)
2. Faith in Christ matters (vs. 14)
3. Apostles of Christ are reliable witnesses (vs. 15)
4. Believers are forgiven in Christ (vs. 17)
5. Believers have hope after death (vs. 18-23)

Now in verses 29-34, Paul mentions three more ways the resurrection motivates us:

**1. Resurrection motivates us for *salvation and baptism* (vs. 29)**

Many Bible commentators tell us that this is one of the most difficult verses to interpret correctly. While it is impossible to be dogmatic about its meaning, we can be dogmatic about what it doesn't mean. Some false teaching is based on this verse. Mormons say this verse teaches baptism for the dead or proxy baptism and other groups teach that salvation depends on water baptism or baptismal regeneration. Both of these are false ideas.

The Bible makes it clear that we are not saved by baptism or any other work or ritual. We are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone (Eph. 2:8-9). If baptism can't save a

living person, we know it surely can't save a dead person. The Bible says that no one can be saved after death. It is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment (Heb. 9:27).

What then does verse 29 mean? The reference to baptism is used as a synonym for the conversion experience and the defining moment of confessing salvation before men. Every believer in Christ was baptized (if possible). The word "for" can mean "because of" and so the idea is that people were being saved and baptized, then being killed for their faith. Others were motivated by their faith and courage and so were in effect being saved and baptized in their place. This would only make sense if there was a resurrection and life after death.

## **2. Resurrection motivates us for service and sacrifice (vs. 30-32)**

Paul and others put their lives in jeopardy (danger) every day. These verses refer to life-threatening dangers. They were exposed to death daily. It is unclear whether Paul is talking about encounters with wild beasts or people who acted like wild beasts, like the riot incited by Demetrius the silversmith in Ephesus. The men who were part of the silversmith union were filled with wrath (Acts 19:23-30). We can read about Paul's suffering and sacrifice.

**2 Corinthians 11:23-28** *...in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths often. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.*

If there is no resurrection, why make sacrifices and suffer for Christ? If there is no resurrection, then we ought to live like the world, just eat and drink, because one day we're going to die. Grab for all the gusto you can while you can.

Paul's point can be reduced to one this question: If this life is all there is, then why endure pain and why not pursue pleasure?

## **3. Resurrection motivates us for sanctification (vs. 33-34)**

Because of the resurrection we live a life of moral purity and holiness. Paul cautioned these believers not to be deceived. Evil communication (company) probably refers to false teachers and their false teachings. Some were teaching that there was no resurrection from the dead. If you follow that false teaching it would lead to filthy living. Believers are to spiritually awake and alert. We are to live right and avoid sin, and we are to teach others the truth and teach them to live the same way. This is the knowledge of God (includes the truth about God, Christ, and the gospel).

What we believe determines how we live. Right doctrine is always connected to right living. Truth is something not only to learn and believe. It is something to practice and live out. The bottom line is this: the resurrection affects how we live our daily lives. What God has done for us in Christ is the very reason we do what we do for Him.

The resurrection is not just a once-a-year celebration at Easter; it is an everyday motivation for godly living. Even Jesus was motivated by His own resurrection and ascension.

**Hebrews 12:1-2** *Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

# THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST AND CHRISTIANS – PART 4

## Practical Impact of the Resurrection

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4. Christ will \_\_\_\_\_ every enemy (vs. 24-27)
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### Practical Implications (five important consequences):

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Paul's point can be reduced to one this question: If this life is all there is, then why endure pain and why not pursue pleasure?

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