



The Resurrection of the Dead

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October 28, 2009

1 Corinthians 15

Week 1, 15:1-11/ Week 2, 15:12-19/ Week 3, 15:20-28/ **Week 4, 15:29-34**/ Week 5, 15:35-38

Situation: Some of the Corinthian church doubted the resurrection. Paul seeks to correct, instruct and rebuke the doubters by emphasizing the impact of one of our central doctrines of faith, which is the *Resurrection of Christ*. We will pick up tonight after Paul has expounded Christ being given authority over all things from God through the death and resurrection.

Vs 29: “If the dead will not be raised, what point is there in people being baptized? Why do it unless the dead will someday rise again?”

- Christian baptism is, according to the Bible, an outward testimony of what has occurred inwardly in a believer’s life. Christian baptism illustrates a believer’s identification with Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection.
- Romans 6:3-4
- In Christian baptism, the action of being immersed in the water symbolizes dying and being buried with Christ. The action of coming out of the water pictures Christ’s resurrection into
- So to does resurrection of the dead fulfill the illustration! That, we too, will one day rise again just as Christ did and enter into new life eternally in heaven with Him.
- Resurrections happen everyday: We need to believe in resurrection of dead things!

Vs 30-31: Paul goes on to support the “everyday” death and resurrection concept. “Why risk our lives hour by hour. I face death daily.”

- Why? This is spiritual warfare. Satan is not seeking to destroy those on his team. He is seeking out believers. He seeking out those on the front line for Christ.
- No need to fight for what you do not believe in. But IF you believe, then you should be willing to fight.
- Verdict: It’s better to BELIEVE!

Vs. 32: “What value was there in fighting wild beasts in Ephesus?”

- Now there has been much debate over whether or not Paul actually fought “wild beasts”
- RECALL: “Women Be Silent In Church” 9/23/09: Pastor Frank presented an analogy of two ways we should interpret scripture as opposed to law:

_____ vs. _____.

- Well here we have an example that helps us maturely interpret scripture context LITERALLY or FIGURATIVELY
- “Wild Beasts” Literally
 - Does this mean he fought in the 25,000-seat arena in Ephesus?
 - 1: He would have likely not survived, or we would have heard about that feat!
 - 2: He does not recount it along with his other sufferings and hardships in 2 Corinthians 11:23-29. He makes no mention of it in Acts.
 - 3: Acts - If he had been thrown *ad bestias* (term for Roman death penalty) he would have lost his Roman citizenship. We know that he still held it when he went before Ceasar.
- “Wild Beasts” Figuratively
 - Paul preached to the wild beasts, those who opposed him with whom he contended for the gospel.
 - Since Plato and at least up until that time, “fighting the wild beasts” was euphemistic for struggling with human passions. This school of thought was that of the Epicureans who held the “Let us feast and drink, for tomorrow we die.” school of thought. Isaiah 22:13
 - Essentially, Paul was contrasting the Christian faith to the Epicurean philosophy that held no resurrection hope. Many of these people were his most violent and dangerous enemies as he preached a belief system that so opposed their ideology and philosophical views, one they even felt threatened their economy later stimulating a riot.....angry town hall meetings!
 - This struggle Paul did mention and is recalling in his metaphor of fighting “wild beasts”

Vs. 33-34:

Paul warns us to not believe everything we hear

- Vs. 33 “Don’t be fooled by those who say such things, for bad company corrupts good character.” REVIEW: Spiritual gifts sometimes reveal bad

- Vs. 34 Think carefully about what is right, true, and denounces sin. For, its shame but true, that everyone you encounter in here, does not know God at all.
- 2 Timothy 2:15