

The Power of the Resurrection

I Corinthians 15:20-58

11/4/01

Intro

- The men's retreat
- Pray for our President and our nation.
- Baer's 50th.

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The church in Corinth was in trouble. There was division; there were factions, there were those who felt spiritually superior because they had more outward spiritual gifts. Yet at the same time there was an amazing amount of immorality.

There were also some in Corinth who did not believe in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Paul is very concerned because the result of such a belief could be very harmful to the church.

What's interesting is that today there is a lot of attention being given to what Islam teaches and Islam teaches that not only was Jesus not resurrected, he was never crucified! They believe that God took Jesus up and allowed someone else to die in his place. (This is the opposite of the Christian doctrine that Christ died in our place.)

Muslim fanatics use suicide killing for several reasons, but mainly for these two reasons:

- They are trying to impress God (to assure entrance into heaven)
- By showing they have no fear of death.

This doctrine is so opposite that of Jesus Christ. He said that He came that we might "have life, and have it more abundantly." It was the enemy who came to steal, kill, and destroy.

The resurrection gives us the hope of eternal life, not killing people.

Imagine the surprise when these people awaken to the reality of what they have really done.

These verses give us insight into the resurrection of Jesus Christ and show us the reason why it is so important.

I. The resurrection changes our priorities.

Vs 20-34

Vs 30

A. "Why are we in danger every hour?"

- "I die daily," Paul says in verse 32.
- "Was it from human motives that I fought with wild beasts at Ephesus?"
- Paul gives his own life as an example of making spiritual things a priority.

Vs 32

B. Otherwise, let's eat, drink, and be merry.

- For tomorrow we die.
- If there is no resurrection, we should be partying it up, Paul says.
- The emphasis here is on our priorities. What is important in our lives in light of the resurrection?

Vs 33

C. Do not be deceived, bad company corrupts good morals.

- Which is to say, don't keep company with these people.

Vs 34

D. We need to become sober-minded.

- If we have a knowledge of God, it should translate into our living.

II. We are in the process of both dying and living.

A. Nature itself teaches this process.

Illus- A gladioli bulb is rough and scaly, yet becomes something much more in new life, so, too, with us.

Illus- The difference between being in the womb and in the world is nothing compared to leaving this world for heaven.

B. Our body wasn't made for heaven.

- It was made for earth.
- The same 17 elements that make up the ground, make up our bodies.
- From dust to dust, the bible says.

C. While our bodies are in the process of dying, our souls are in the process of living.

III. We have this treasure in earthen vessels.

- A. Sometimes we try to bring attention to ourselves, but we are earthy.
- B. There is a certain sadness in growing old.
 - Yet there is hope in the fact that we have life in Christ.
- C. The sting of death is gone.

Conclusion

The resurrection is not just a fact of history, it is also a present power to change our lives and give us a future and a hope.

It should give us new priorities. If there is a heaven, and we're going there, then we should live with heaven as a priority.