

1Corinthians – Week 56

I. Review: 1Cor. 15:8-24

- A. God's grace highly impacted Paul, driving him to unusually great service to God!
- B. Paul did not view his service as self-generated but empowered by God's grace.
 - i. He was saved by grace and empowered by grace! (cf. Eph. 2:8; Heb. 4:16)
- C. Paul refutes the false teaching that was circulating in the church:
 - i. If there is no resurrection of the dead:
 - 1. Then Christ is still dead
 - 2. The gospel message is a lie!
 - 3. We are still in our sins, condemned to an eternity in hell!
 - 4. Everyone who has died in Christ are suffering the same consequences as the rich man of Luke 16:19ff
 - 5. We are to be the most pitied since we foolishly chose a life of persecution for a lie!
- D. But Christ did rise from the dead!
- E. And the dead will rise when Christ returns!
 - i. At that time, He will hand the kingdom over to the Father.
 - ii. This shows that Christ is reigning now (not in some millennial age)
 - iii. Even the next verse indicates this...

II. Continuation

- A. 1Corinthians 15:25-26 (ESV), “*For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.*”²⁶ *The last enemy to be destroyed is death.*”
 - i. His reign will continue until all of Christ's opponents, which include death, are destroyed!
- B. 1Corinthians 15:27 (ESV), “*For ‘God has put all things in subjection under his [God the Son] feet.’ But when it says, ‘all things are put in subjection,’ it is plain that he [God the Father] is excepted who put all things in subjection under him [God the Son].*”
 - i. Ephesians 1:22 gives insight into this passage:
 - 1. Ephesians 1:22-23 (ESV), “*And he [God the Father] put all things under his [God the Son] feet and gave him [God the Son] as head over all things to the church,*”²³ *which is his [God the Son] body, the fullness of him [God the Son] who fills all in all.*”
 - 2. The Church is the Kingdom (cf. Col. 1:13), over whom Christ reigns.
 - 3. And when all that opposes God is destroyed, all creation will be under harmonious subjection under the Father...
- C. 1Corinthians 15:28 (ESV), “*When all things are subjected to him [God the Father], then the Son himself will also be subjected to him [God the Father] who put all things in subjection under him [God the Son], that God may be all in all.*”
 - i. In other words, after the resurrection of the dead, God will be over all!
 - 1. There will no longer be a Mediator (that is, one who restores and reconciles relationships), for all creatures will be directly under the Father!
 - 2. For there will be no more sin to resist; There will be no death or sickness to experience! Nor will there be spiritual forces of darkness to contend with!
 - 3. At the end, God will truly be all in all – everyone under His rule!
 - ii. Now, Paul resumes his argument for the resurrection that was interrupted in verse 19...

D. 1Corinthians 15:29 (ESV), “*Otherwise, what do people mean by being baptized on behalf of the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptized on their behalf?*”

i. There are several views given for this passage, here are three major views:

1. View #1: Proxy baptisms were being practiced

a. There were some who were getting baptized on behalf of those who died without getting baptized.

i. Paul was not approving such a practice since:

1. There is no New Testament example of such a practice.

2. Baptism requires faith and repentance on behalf of the recipient (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:37-41; Col. 2:11-12)

ii. This view says that Paul was merely making the point that if there is no resurrection, then why be baptized for someone who will never rise again?

b. The Mormon cult practices proxy baptisms.

2. View #2: “The dead” refers to Jesus

a. The phrase “*on behalf of the dead*” is referring to Jesus.

b. In other words, if Jesus hasn’t risen from the dead, then why be baptized on behalf of a dead man?

c. This interpretation sees the verse as saying, “*Otherwise, what do people mean by being baptized on behalf of a dead man? If the dead are not raised at all, why are people being baptized on behalf of dead people, like Jesus?*”

3. View #3: “The dead” refers to all baptized believers

a. This verse is reflexive of all believers who were baptized into Christ and His death, with the hope of the resurrection

i. Romans 6:3-5 (ESV), “*Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. ⁵ For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.*”

b. This interpretation views “*the dead*” as those who became Christians.

i. If we, who are subject to death, will not rise again after we die, then why bother being baptized?

c. I personally lean towards this view.

ii. In any case, Paul’s point is this:

1. Baptism points towards the resurrection of the dead.

2. If there is no resurrection, then baptism has no purpose!

a. There is no forgiveness of sins for those who are baptized because if Jesus remains dead then we are still in sin (cf. vs. 17)

b. If there is no resurrection, then rising out of the waters of baptism, which reflects the resurrection of Christ, is a total lie.

3. Then Paul goes on to say...

E. 1Corinthians 15:30 (ESV), “*Why are we in danger every hour?*”

i. In other words, why choose a lifestyle of danger if there is no hope of the resurrection?

ii. Because of his preaching Christ, Paul made enemies wherever he went.

1. Secret plots were made against him to take his life.

2. He could have avoided it all by simply abandoning his profession of Christ.

3. In fact, it would have been wise for him to abandon it since if there is no resurrection!

- F. 1Corinthians 15:31-32 (ESV), “*I protest, brothers, by my pride in you, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die every day!*”³² *What do I gain if, humanly speaking, I fought with beasts at Ephesus? If the dead are not raised, “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.”*
- i. But Paul believed in the resurrection and he took pride in the fact that the Corinthians became children of God when they received and took their stand in the gospel (vv. 1-2)!
 - ii. And he died daily in that, he suffered daily for the sake of the gospel!
 - iii. And if there is no resurrection, then it’s best to take life easy because we are all going to die, never to rise again!
 - iv. Paul now warns them to stay away from those who teach there is no resurrection...
- G. 1Corinthians 15:33-34 (ESV), “*Do not be deceived: ‘Bad company ruins good morals.’*”³⁴ *Wake up from your drunken stupor, as is right, and do not go on sinning. For some have no knowledge of God. I say this to your shame.”*
- i. “*Bad company*” denotes, contextually, those who have been teaching the false doctrine under discussion.
 1. By keeping close fellowship with such persons, you will become as they!
 2. This principle is taught by Christ in Luke 6:40 (ESV), “*A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher.*”
 - a. A student will become as his teacher. If you hang around false teachers, you will adopt their doctrines.
 - b. I’ve personally have seen this from my own gospel children, who were taken captive by false teachers.
 - c. Note: It is good to stick to the Bible and avoid materials that will sway you into falling into false doctrines (commentaries, religious books, denominational preachers, etc.)
 - ii. Paul admonishes them by telling them remember the gospel message that saved them!
 1. Anyone who rejects the resurrection surely has no knowledge of God and is in sin!