

Resurrection Warnings (1 Cor 15:12-49)

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[0 : 0 0] alright so we're reading 1 Corinthians chapter 15 12 to 49 I'll be reading from the NIV version so it's a very long passage but let's begin but if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead if there is no resurrection of the dead then not even Christ has been raised and if Christ has not been raised our preaching is useless and so is your faith more than that we are then found to be false witnesses about God for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead but he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised so for if the dead are not raised then Christ has not been raised either and if Christ has not been raised your faith is futile you are still in your sins then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost if only for this life we have hope in Christ we are of all people most to be pitied but Christ has indeed been raised from the dead the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep for since death came through a man the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man for as in Adam all die so in Christ

Christ all will be made alive but each in turn Christ the first fruits then when he comes those who belong to him then the end will come when he hands over the kingdom to God the father after he has destroyed all dominion authority and power for he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet the last enemy the last enemy to be destroyed is death for he has put everything under his feet now when it says that everything has been put under him it is clear that this does not conclude God himself who put everything under Christ when he has done this then the son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him so that God may be all in all now if there is no resurrection what will those do who are baptized for the dead if the dead are not raised at all why are people baptized for them and as for us why do we endanger ourselves every hour

I face death every day yes just as surely as I boast about you in Christ Jesus our Lord if I fought wild beasts in Ephesus with no more than human hopes what have I gained the dead are not raised let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die do not be misled bad company corrupts good character come back to your senses as you ought and stop sinning for there are some who are ignorant of God I say this to your shame but someone will ask how are the dead raised with what kind of body will they come how foolish what you sow does not come to life unless it dies when you sow you do not plant the body that will be but just a seed perhaps of wheat or of something else but God gives it a body as he has determined and to each kind of seed he gives its own body not all flesh is the same people have one kind of flesh animals have another birds another and fish another there are also heavenly bodies and there are earthly bodies but the splendor of the heavenly bodies is one kind and the splendor of the earthly bodies is another the sun has one kind of splendor the moon another and the stars another and star differs from star in splendor so will it be with the resurrection of the dead the body that is sown is perishable it is raised imperishable it is sown in dishonor it is raised in glory it is sown in weakness it is raised in power it is sown in natural body it is raised in spiritual body if there is a natural body there is also a spiritual body so it is written the first man

Adam became a living being the last Adam a life giving spirit the spiritual did not come first but the natural and after that the spiritual the first man was of dust of the earth the second man is of heaven as was the earthly man so are those who are of the earth and as is the heavenly man so also are those who are of heaven and just as we have born the image of the earthly man so shall we bear the image of the heavenly man thank you Ivan for reading that marathon reading and thank you for listening in please do keep that passage in front of you it is important that we see that what I am about to preach comes from these living words of God how about we pray and let us ask God to help us Lord we thank you for your word these resurrection warnings and we thank you that because Jesus is alive we will be raised with him do warn us and encourage us today help me to speak graciously especially on this particular topic give us soft hearts to listen to you now in Jesus name we pray amen this here is a picture of a bucket at home just a standard

Kmart version we use it to carry our laundry from time to time sometimes you may find a toy or two depending on which child has been there occasionally when the kids were young we would bathe them in these buckets they were small enough to fit of course when we use the term bucket sometimes you may have heard this term the bucket list right things to do before we kick the bucket we're talking about death here it's a polite way sometimes to talk about death and dying we do share our bucket list right perhaps you are thinking and dreaming even now what's on your bucket list one reason I think we talk about death this way right with a euphemism is because we don't like thinking about death and dying naturally do we and I get it maybe you're here and you are raw from a recent passing maybe you're here and you just come from a culture and in your culture we don't talk about it maybe you're so stressed actually about uni starting up again work deadlines

[7:10] I work so many hours death is just a far away thing that we talk about or think about and yet we can't hide from death in this life it is an intruder an enemy it is an unwanted guest at our dinner parties death is the reason we rush to hospitals the reason we grieve at funerals I've intended actually ironically more funerals than weddings here at PCBC but actually that's more like real life isn't it friends Paul did not write these words at a funeral but he is a pastor who writes to Christians in Corinth and to churches everywhere including us and no doubt some of them had their own bucket lists I'm sure ambitious Corinthians right careers to fulfill places to be people to become and this kind of puffed up thinking had led them to start dividing start to think in ways that affected the life and health of the church in Corinth and so

Paul had to speak to them the gospel and apply it to their very situation we've just come off a couple of chapters about different ways to worship and different opinions on spiritual gifts and while we may have different opinions ourselves right and Paul addresses them as we heard last week from Pastor Albert it is the gospel that is of first importance right let's try it together right off memory for what I received I passed on to you as of first importance that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures that he was buried that he was raised on the third day according to the scriptures do you believe this there is no greater truth is there no better news than this Christ did not kick the bucket praise praise God our sinless savior he gave himself up willingly an atoning sacrifice for your sins and for my sins he took upon himself

God's righteous anger against our rebellion against him he died for our sins he was raised on the third day and so that is why all over the world here included we celebrate Sunday in honor in honor of Jesus the risen king amen and so the question that Paul is trying to answer here is why does the resurrection of Christ matter why does it matter that Jesus rose again for you and for me what difference does it make should it make to our lives right now is it just an Easter Sunday thing is it something that should guide our entire existence this is what Pastor Paul wants to address as he writes these final chapters from the book of 1st Corinthians as you've heard from Ivan this is a lengthy passage we won't dig through every verse feel free to drop your specific questions into the Q&A; board or text Fran if you want an answer look what is important to note though is that the verses we heard come as part of one lengthy argument you can put up those ones can you see that if there were three movements to chapter 15 you would see it in these verses there's an argument this is our first importance the gospel

Christ died and was risen again and then he addresses an argument some people don't believe that Christ has been raised from the dead and that there is no afterlife and then finally he wants to give encouragement to people so those are the three movements and we heard about it last week the first part today we're going to look at the second part what does it look like that Jesus' resurrection how does that address this belief among the Corinthian church that there is no afterlife that's what we're going to look at today and so next slide please Donald looking at today's section look Paul did not write with verse numbers so we don't need to go verse by verse but with the time we have I want us to first look at this argument that was circulating among the Corinthians we're going to consider the objections that they had to Paul's firm belief and firm preaching about the resurrection and we're going to hear some of Paul's warnings as well so three points the argument the objection and the warnings so is there a life after death does it even matter to us let's find out listen again verse 12 what does it say but if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead how can some of you say that there is no resurrection from the dead in other words

Paul is addressing the Corinthians who were telling each other there's no afterlife friends the world here is all you've got now does that sound familiar because it should you and I are surrounded by this message every single day are we not we're told we need a one true love otherwise we die alone we're sold this car this gadget this holiday because only then is your life complete and we are bold enough even to tell others you need to buy a house now or else dot dot dot dot you need to get into this school or this job or this university or else dot dot dot friends brothers and sisters what is the message behind all these hopes and dreams of the here and now that there is no afterlife no resurrection from the dead this is what scholars call our pleasure pain view of the world what's in our head is not an inner lawyer saying you're guilty these days no one has that anymore what's in our head is not an inner grandma saying you should do this what's in our head these days is an inner therapist who says there's no afterlife so you do you and Paul right verse 13 to 19 he kind of plays with their view a little bit doesn't he if you if you listen in again he's like oh well if there's no resurrection from the dead no afterlife well even Jesus hasn't been raised and then he keeps talking if the Messiah didn't actually rise from the dead as foretold in the scriptures then hey what I'm preaching what you're listening to false hope don't worry about it in fact arrest me for blasphemy give up on your faith it's empty false listen again right verse 19 if only for this life we have hope in

[13 : 59] Christ we're to be pitied more than all people but praise God Christ is risen he is in a sense the first fruit from all who have died okay imagine you're a florist you wake up super early don't you right to get the best flowers the first flowers at the markets right Jesus is the same he is the first flower the first fruit the prime example of all of us who have and will succumb to death the reason you and I can be sure of an afterlife is not wishful thinking it's because on the 5th of April AD 33 Jesus got an afterlife his heart began to beat his lungs filled with air again that precious blood that he poured out on the cross three days earlier it courses through his veins again and he appears to the women the men even 500 people in one go and by faith he appears to you and me he is more alive friends than he ever was just as our first parents brought death to all

Jesus Christ our risen king he brings new life to all who have fallen asleep but there is an order right we see this in verse 23 to 28 Paul tries to explain this order look Christ comes first then all who belong to him and then there's going to be a time when every enemy is destroyed and put under the feet of Jesus the king right this is a Jewish hope that he Paul is referring to the Jewish hope of a messiah Psalm 110 talks about this king right that's going to crush all of God's people's enemies under his feet as if it was a footstool and as the earliest Christians declared at the name of Jesus every knee will bow every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord look if this world is all there is then of course we're going to be living as if there's no tomorrow we're going to just put our eggs in the here and now buckets we would just hustle and work ourselves to the ground just to get ahead because we're only thinking of this life we just build our kingdoms we tear each other apart and yet we just fill our bucket lists with our own selfish desires but please remember this world is not all there is there is an afterlife don't be deceived friends let me borrow

Paul's words look at verse 23 again right it says here Christ when he comes he will then lead those who belong to him and gather them and so can I ask you this honestly do you belong to him truly can you honestly say I'm a Christian because not because I talk the talk or that I look respectable on a Sunday but because I live my life for the coming of Jesus Christ my schedule my goals in life they are geared towards eternity with him not the here and now can I ask you do you belong to him do you have your sins forgiven if you don't you need to come to Jesus Christ the risen king his arms are this wide for you come to Christ belong to him by faith because the bible is clear every human king eventually dies except one the risen king

Jesus the son of God and you can either embrace him now and he embraces you or you will have Christ subject you under his feet there are two ways to live I heard a great illustration from a pastor recently his name is Nathan actually he'll be here in two weeks so the other day we were in a little group and he gave this great illustration when thinking about the same passage and he got us all in this group to imagine our alarm clocks now I want you to do the same imagine your alarm clock okay see if you can picture the ringtone in your head right okay you've got it right look the first time you heard that ringtone what was your response wide awake instantly right okay it was so novel it was so real it was right there in your ear so fresh and annoying what about the next time the next time the next time after a while you know what happens to alarms snooze ignore drop in the next room or something

Paul is saying that for you and I for every believer there is a ringtone and the ringtone is this Christ is risen from the dead but if we're honest when was the last time we listened to that ringtone let it wake us up start our day let it buzz in our heads Easter Sunday maybe when did the resurrection of Christ this ringtone for all of life changed a single decision we made in this past week every human being has an innate sense that there is a life beyond this one whether you're a Christian or not right you talk to people that work they'll share what they think the afterlife is like you might have friends and family who worship different ways right maybe lighting incense maybe doing certain rituals look we all bear

[20:10] God's image everyone and every culture comes up innately with some story some myth of rebirth of new life and perhaps there are practices out there to remember the dead that you know of and Paul seems to refer to some of these himself here in verse 29 right some who are baptized on behalf of the dead but sadly what Paul describes and many other things that we observe in life they're like a distant ringtone a dull whisper attempts to raise the dead outside of Christ but Christ is risen remember that he's risen indeed death could not hold him the tomb is still empty how can that not change our lives completely Paul tells us this is his ringtone right you look at how he describes his life from verse 29 to 34 he says every day

I die he says every hour I put myself in danger he says every moment I'm offering myself to the Lord why because his ringtone is loud and clear Jesus lives it's in his head all the time otherwise what's the point otherwise why waste your time after all if there's no afterlife if the dead are not raised let's take a leaf out of those who believe and ignore God in Isaiah 22 for example they say stuff like this let's eat drink tick off our bucket list there's no afterlife right fact Christ is risen fact there is an afterlife you deny it I deny it at our own peril we defy that at our own danger but you and I embrace Jesus no matter what happens in this life good all that you will live with him again in the new creation the life to come

I I can tell you this as sure as they cannot find the body of Jesus as sure as the disciples ate and worshipped with the risen king this is the argument Paul makes from Jesus resurrection right this is the argument that Paul addresses but then there comes an objection do you notice that verse 35 some may ask how are the dead raised with what kind of body will they come how foolish what you sow does not come to life unless it dies all right let's take a step back this is what Paul says today in 2023 not normal to speak like this today is it right William how foolish right why yes I am thank you look God has preserved his inspired word as we hear Paul's argument right and he's preserved an objection from some people in Corinth in his kindness he has not preserved the tone of voice and how this has been said and so look was this a challenge from some foolish

Corinthians who had no knowledge of God or was this more of a genuine concern maybe someone who is like oh what's going to happen to my body after I die well this objection works both ways doesn't it maybe you don't believe God exists and you're listening in you might have just been thinking about all the stuff I said about Jesus is alive and go that is a logical impossibility that's as real to you as a zombie movie how are the dead raised don't be silly that's how you're thinking right now but if you're a believer like I am maybe will grandpa need a wheelchair in heaven how old would he look will I see my miscarried child in heaven look if my body gets burnt up in a car crash or something like that what will my life in the new heaven look like

Paul doesn't address all these sub questions and neither can I today but let's listen in because he takes the time to respond to this kind of question how will the dead rise and you know what Paul answers this as he's done all through the letter he says look to Jesus look to the risen Lord Jesus look at verse 35 onwards right if we keep reading he works backwards he starts with an illustration look he says Corinth you guys grow food you should know this when you plant a seed that seed needs to die before a plant comes out of it don't you know that so think about it does a seed look the same as the plant no it doesn't does it God is gracious keep looking keep thinking about it friends he gives different things in our world different bodies each each seed sprouts different kinds of trees and flowers

[25 : 30] Paul's reaching back as he talks right here to the creation account in Genesis 1 he says look our maker is not boring in what he makes in heaven and earth look at the sun how bright it is look at the moon beautiful in its splendor and the stars look how he leads out these constellations like Matariki different different degrees of splendor and once you've marveled at God's creative handiwork Paul says verse 42 so it will be with the resurrection of the dead right so it is with the afterlife don't fret your body your bones your ashes they're just like seeds they're like husks at your funeral you are just planting your tired body in the ground with certain hope that one day

Jesus because of him we will blossom for eternity church when you die because of Jesus everything about your body that you are ashamed of not proud of that is weak saggy broken beyond repair won't matter anymore the seed will be gone you'll rise again more than restored more beautiful than you can even imagine right now trust your maker on this says the bible after all you can trust him he raised his son on the third day did he not and when he was risen Jesus was as human as the guys he had breakfast at the beach with John tells us in the gospels more alive though than ever right if you want to be superhuman if you want to never fail a test if you want to paint and sing like you never could

Christ is risen he's coming again let that encourage you give you hope our bodies here are temporary from the earth we come to the earth we return Jesus though changes everything so every diagnosis you have every body issue every pain and sorrow will be left in the dust today you and I we bear the image of the man of dust yes tomorrow one day soon it's coming we will bear the image of Christ the man from heaven forever even if your bucket feels empty look to Jesus in Christ you get more than a bucket you get Christ himself a resurrected body like his every pain erased every joy in him how are the dead raised they say how are they not we say

I was a follower of Jesus for around two years when I got the text mum's passed away and in the rush we had to fly back she was in Malaysia when it happened it was a whirlwind two weeks of funerals and rituals and too many relatives to remember to be honest I was a new Christian and I didn't really know where I was headed I knew about Jesus was I really following him was I really living and making all my choices in life around the risen Christ I'm not sure but at that funeral it was as if God turned on the eternal alarm clock Christ is risen wake up and

I would never wish it on anyone but today I can say with the teacher and Ecclesiastes it is better to go to the house of mourning than the house of feasting that's what happened to me how about you how about you can I suggest that Paul gives us three ways to warn us not to push the snooze button on Christ is risen okay this eternal alarm three warnings for us as a people of God here at PCBC English they're right there verse 33 34 I'm not making it up so here are three quick applications for us firstly don't be deceived don't be deceived by ungodly ways can can can I tell you a secret nobody denies the risen Lord Jesus instantly it almost always starts with changing the company we keep from good company to bad company it can happen lots of ways you fancy a non

[30 : 42] Christian so you want to date them more than you want to be with the people who know Jesus with you there might be a new crowd of people you want to be welcomed by them so you start to ditch your old crowd and go hang out with them whatever they do and look we're called to be salt and light I'm not saying stay away from the world but don't be deceived by bad company Paul says all your goody two shoes Sunday school upbringing is no match it's torn to shreds if you do not cling to the risen Lord Jesus alongside those who worship him don't be deceived if we're going to beware the bad company what's the alternative friends brothers and sisters how are we growing here as a community of good company can we honestly say that when people come in they will have good company where will your friend who needs Jesus who needs a different crowd than the ones that they have no choice to hang out with where will they find it will it be here people devoted to the apostles teaching breaking bread sharing life will they find it among us how will you play your part so don't be deceived secondly wake up wake up from your earthly haze we need to imagine our life as if we are living in a fog of war and it whispers there's no afterlife don't worry there's no afterlife don't worry wake up please your earthly dreams cannot go with you to the grave right paul even describes it as a drunken stupor here imagine that you have a hangover that is what is going on when we live as if there is no afterlife we are staggering through the streets of auckland drunk drunk on the empty promises of this world wake up because jesus is alive so sober up please ask yourself am i doing this am i making this choice just for my pleasure just to avoid pain and suffering and if you can't answer that question straight because you're you're drunk and in a spiritual sense you need a sober driver alongside you don't you right to help you evaluate your thoughts and decisions come along ask someone you trust here let them into your life filled with the holy spirit they can tell you what's going on our king is returning wake up he's coming again and finally paul just says it straight right verse 34 stop sinning stop sinning under his lovely gaze we've heard lots about the ten commandments i mean take that last one we heard last week you shall not covet imagine your heart having hands grasping what is it grasping for that only jesus can satisfy let's be honest but let's not stop there let's confess that to jesus and let's go and sin no more friends some have no knowledge of god but you and i do and he is risen he has conquered your sin at the cross he has left everything behind your shame in the empty tomb he died for you just as you were let all the temptations of this world just sit there buried in the ground next to the beauty of his risen face martin luther must have had a very short bucket list because he once said this quote and i quote him there are only two days on my calendar today today and that day so which day are you living for which day are you dying for make it the day of the risen lord jesus and when he comes again let's pray hallelujah thank you lord jesus for you have conquered death and sin you are risen from the dead in you there is eternal hope a living hope death has lost its grip on us and so we want to bring our whole life back to you we want to confess how we have not lived with the resurrection in mind and we want to submit to your lordship we thank you we pray all these things in jesus name amen