

The Difference the Resurrection Makes

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[0:00] 1 Corinthians chapter 15. We'll read the first 26 verses. And then we're going to go down to verse 51 and read the rest of the chapter.

! So 1 Corinthians chapter 15 and verse 1. Now brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken.

By this gospel you are saved if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you, otherwise you have believed in vain. 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, and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the twelve, and after that he appeared to more than 500 of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep.

Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all he appeared to me also as to one abnormally born.

For I am the least of the apostles, and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God, I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect.

[1:30] No, I worked harder than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me. Whether then it was I or they, this is what we preach, and this is what you believed.

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. 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 to be pitied more than all men.

[2:44] But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits 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 all will be made alive. But each in his own turn, Christ the firstfruits, 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 to be destroyed is death. Verse 51. Listen, I tell you a mystery.

We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed. In a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.

[3:53] For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true.

Death has been swallowed up in victory. Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting? The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.

But thanks be to God, he gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm.

Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

Well, it was Sunday after Friday's crucifixion and burial of the Lord Jesus, and those must have been two of the saddest days for the followers of our Savior.

[4:56] And yet they were to give way to the happiest day of their lives. For early Sunday morning, on the first day of the week, some women went to the tomb and found it empty.

And they heard the angels say to them, He is risen. He is not here, but is risen, as he said. And they ran to tell the others, the eleven, He is risen.

And when the risen Christ started appearing, first to this one, then that one, this group, and the others, the news started to spread like wildfire. He is risen.

He is risen. He is risen. You know, there are some places on earth today where Christians use this as a greeting to one another during the Easter season.

So instead of seeing each other and saying, Hello, how you doing? Good afternoon. They rather say, He is risen. And the other responds, Indeed.

[6:00] He is, or excuse me, He is risen. Indeed. Indeed. And that has made its way even into the liturgy of many churches around the world on Easter Sunday morning.

The pastor will greet the congregation, Christ is risen. And the congregation responds, He is risen indeed.

So church, are you ready? We're going to do that. He is risen. He is risen indeed. I think we can do even better than that.

That was good. He is risen. He is risen indeed. Amen. That's part of the good news. No small part of the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

And it's cause for joy, not just today, but every day. The bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ changes everything for the believer. It even changes the day on which we worship.

[7:05] We now worship on the first day of the week instead of the seventh. Why? Because He is risen. And He rose from the dead on the first day of the week. And though this event happened some 2,000 years ago, it still is making a staggering difference in the lives of people today.

And that's what I want to tell you this morning. I want to preach on the profound difference that the resurrection of Jesus Christ makes in the believer's life. And I want to speak very personally about the difference that He makes in my life.

And I want you to take a believer very personally of the difference that He makes in your life as well. Christ's resurrection means in the first place that the whole of the Christian religion is not a farce, but it's true.

It's not a farce, but it's true. Who is this Jesus of Nazareth anyway? Is He just the carpenter's son? Is He just some religious fanatic?

When He was 30 years old, He started preaching, and He made some amazing claims about Himself. He claimed to be God, the great I Am, the only independent, self-sufficient being in the universe.

[8:25] He said, that's who I am, equal with the Father, the Creator, the one from eternity, who had come from the Father, sent by the Father, and was returning to the Father, the one who would come back and judge all men.

That's who He said He was. He stood on this earth and said that to His contemporaries. He claimed to be the only way for a sinner to get to heaven.

I am the way. I am the truth. I am the life. And no one can come to the Father except through Me. Indeed, whoever believes in Me will not perish, but have everlasting life.

Staggering claims He's making for Himself. And so along with those claims, Jesus performed many miracles, many supernatural deeds that confirmed His claim to be God, that proved that He's not just a man spouting these things, but He really is who He says.

And it's because He does what only God can do, those miraculous signs. And so in Matthew chapter 12, some Pharisees and teachers of the law came to Him saying, Teacher, they're wondering, how can we know that you are who you say you are?

[9:49] We want to see a miraculous sign. A miraculous sign? Wake up, fellas. The lame are walking.

The blind are seeing. The lepers are cleansed. Every kind of sickness and disease is cured. Demons are cast out. Water has turned to wine.

Bread and fish have multiplied to feed thousands and thousands. Thousands of people. But in the presence of such miraculous signs, they still refuse to believe His claims.

And instead, they ask for more signs. Oh, how our world hankers after signs. You know, the world would rather believe in heaven because a four-year-old boy has been there and back than to believe it because we have four gospel accounts that tell us that it's so.

Show us a sign. Give us a sign. Jesus said, A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign, but none will be given it except for the sign of Jonah.

[11:00] For just as Jonah was in the, for three days and three nights in the belly of the fish, in the same way the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the belly of the earth.

That's the sign. That's the ultimate sign that will prove I am who I claim to be.

I will rise from the dead on the third day. Destroy this temple. And in three days, I will raise it up.

Now, do we understand then what's at stake here?

If Jesus Christ's physical body that hung on the cross, that was killed and taken down and put in the grave, if that self-same body does not rise from the dead, then you can dismiss all he ever claimed to be, all he ever taught, all that he ever said.

Throw away your Bibles as worthless pack of lies. Not worth having. The Apostle Paul understood this, and he was willing to stake it all, the whole Christian religion, on this one event, the bodily resurrection of Christ from the dead.

[12:16] You see it in verse 14 of our text, 1 Corinthians 15. Very pointed. If Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless.

It's not worth a little bit. It's not worth coming to church to hear once a week or once a year. It's useless. And so is your faith. If Christ has not been raised, the whole shoot and match of Christianity is useless.

I love the way Paul is one for not playing games at religion. If it's not real, then get rid of it. Life is too short to waste on playing religious games.

If Christ is not risen, then the dead are not raised. And if the dead are not raised, then let's eat, drink, and be merry because tomorrow we die, and that's it and that's all. So let's stop the charades of religion in Jesus' name.

If he is not risen, oh, but if he is risen, as he said, then you must now deal with everything that he's ever said about himself.

[13:30] For he is declared with power to be the son of God by his resurrection from the dead. He really is God. The resurrection says so and validates all his claims.

You really do owe him all your worship, your trust, your obedience, your loyalty, your love, your life, your all.

He really is the only way to heaven. You must repent. You must come to God through him or you will not get to heaven. And whoever does believe in him will not perish but have everlasting life.

He really is coming again to judge all men. And every eye will see him and every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that he is Lord.

It's all true. The resurrection proves it. You see, it's an all or nothing proposition that Paul is putting before us. There's no middle ground for any of us.

[14:37] If Jesus Christ is not risen, then he's not worth a day of your life. Not even Easter Sunday morning. But if he is risen, he is worthy of all the days of your life.

If Jesus Christ is worth anything, he is worth everything. And here they are thinking that they could dismiss him as a pretender, a false messiah, a nobody.

And so they would kill him, stuff him in a grave, write him off. And all that he said is religious mania. But only one problem to that. He just wouldn't go away.

But on the third day, up from the grave, he arose. He arose. Do you see the difference that makes in my life? It means that the whole of the Christian religion is true and demands the whole of me.

It means I have a Bible worth reading. It means I have a Christ worth worshipping, a God worth knowing, a Christian life worth living.

[15:53] I have a message worth preaching and worth your believing. It's all true. And when I give myself to this living Christ and all he's ever said, I am not wasting my life on religious nothings.

I am living the life that is really life. Life as it was meant to be. Life as we were created to live. All because he is risen.

Hallelujah. The second thing, Christ's resurrection means that all my sins are forgiven. Now this is a huge one.

Because sin is the thing that sends people to hell. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming, Colossians 3, 5. And oh, it's a heavy burden to live with the wrath of God hanging over your head.

Do you know that the guilt of sin spoils every pleasure on this planet? Because I realize that at the end I've got to deal with God. The God I've rebelled against.

[17:04] The God I've sinned against all my life. How can you really enjoy sin when you know that's coming? Oh, it's short pleasure because of the goads of conscience that prick you and poke you.

It's a terrible way to live. What a wonderful freeing thing it is then to be out from under the guilt and burden of sin. To have them all paid for.

To have them forgiven. Cast behind God's back. Never to be brought up against me in judgment.

Buried in the depths of the deepest sea. Separated as far as the east is from the west from me.

And this is the blessing given to all those who trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ. Christ who died for our sins on the cross. Christ by his death paid the full penalty due us.

But I want to tell you that his death is only effective in taking away our sins if he rises from the dead. That wonderful death, that wonderful blood that he shed, it is only effective in taking away our sins if he rises from the dead.

[18:23] Those are two parts of his one great salvation and without the resurrection his death means nothing to us because a dead savior can do us no good. Notice how Paul puts it in verse 17.

If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile, you are still in your sins. Oh, but he died. If he's not been raised, you are still in your sins.

That death for sin is only effective in taking away sin if he rose from the dead. That's huge. Only a living savior can present his sacrifice for sin before a holy God in heaven.

We have a picture of this in the Old Testament worship of the Old Testament priest. priest, the Old Testament high priest. He had two tasks to perform chiefly.

First of all, outside the holy place on the altar, he would make a bloody sacrifice for sin. But then the high priest would take the blood of the sacrifice and he would go into the holy place, into the presence of God to present that sacrifice for sin and to plead with God that for the sake of that sacrifice, which pointed forward to the Lamb of God being sacrificed, that he would forgive the sins of his people.

[19:52] There was the sacrifice and then the presentation of the sacrifice in intercession before God for the forgiveness of sins. Jesus Christ is presented in the book of Hebrews as the great high priest who fulfills that Old Testament picture of a high priest.

And as a high priest, the Lord Jesus had this two-fold work as well. He had to make a blood sacrifice for sin. And so Hebrews 9.26 says that he appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself.

The blood of bulls and goats can't wash away sin, so he gave the one sacrifice that could take away sin. It was himself. So the high priest is also the Lamb of God and he sacrifices himself.

There on the altar of Calvary, the Lord, as our high priest, spilled his own blood unto death, making the ultimate sacrifice for us. But there's more to be done, remember, for the forgiveness of sins.

There's the intercession that must be made, the presentation of the sacrifice before God, the prayer on behalf of the merits of that sacrifice, that all of his people should be forgiven of all their sins.

[21:21] That requires a living high priest. But the living priest died. He gave himself death. Who will present that precious blood before the father's throne?

Well, it requires a resurrection of the priest, doesn't it? And that's exactly what happened. God raised his son from the dead that he might then present the sacrifice and intercede for us in heaven. He himself is the sacrifice. His presence in heaven is the presentation of the that which merits the forgiveness of our sins. So Hebrews 9, 24, Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that is only a copy of the true one.

Christ entered heaven itself, now to appear for us in God's presence. So he's a lot better than those Old Testament priests. Chapter 7, 23, now there have been many of those priests since death

prevented them from continuing in office.

But because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood. Therefore, he's able to save completely those who come to God through him because he always lives to make intercession for us.

[22:42] He's able to save to the end because he always lives to make intercession for us. Such a high priest meets our need. that's why my sins are forgiven.

My high priest not only made the ultimate sacrifice, but then took himself as that sacrifice and now appears before God pleading the merits of his own blood, his own sacrifice on my behalf.

Behold in there the risen lamb, my perfect spotless righteousness, pleading the merits of his sacrifice on my behalf. But if Christ is not risen, then I have no one in heaven to plead the blood to cover my sins.

If Christ has not been raised, you are still in your sins. even though Jesus of Nazareth died on a cross, you are still in your sins.

Oh, but he is risen. He ever lives above for me to intercede. His all redeeming love, his precious blood to plead. So John the apostle is able to write, dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin, but if any man does sin, we have an advocate.

[24:06] We have one who pleads with the father, Jesus Christ, the righteous one. And right now he is speaking to the father on my defense. Forgive him, Lord.

Oh, forgive he cries, nor let that sinner die. Yes, John, he is a wicked man. Yes, he sinned against you. Yes, he's broken every one of the ten commandments. Yes, he is a vile man.

He has nothing to commend himself to you. But father, here I am as that sacrifice, that was offered on the altar of Calvary. You took my life instead of his.

Now take my righteousness instead of his sin. Father, you are holy and just, so forgive his sin for my sake.

And God the just is satisfied to look on him and pardon me. Do you see why I say that the resurrection of Christ is a wonderful thing for me.

[25:07] It is the way that my sins have been covered by the blood of Christ as Jesus Christ presents himself on my behalf.

So Paul says, who is it that can condemn this? Believer? Who can condemn? Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus who died, more than that, who is risen again, is even at the right hand of God interceding for us.

There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. What a difference that made for me. A high priest in heaven right now pleading the merits of his blood for me.

Third thing, because Christ is risen, I have a living Savior every day of my life. And folks, nothing else will do for this sinner.

For I need to be saved from myself every day of my life. As one theologian put it, every day in a thousand ways I am trying to put myself at the center of the universe.

[26:16] That's the way I was born. Stuck on myself. Living for myself. What's in it for me? I need to be saved from that. You say, but you trusted in Jesus.

Yes. Yes, he's there pleading. But I need right now, today, to be saved from my own flesh, my own sin, that love of self.

And the living Christ is redeeming me from sin and self. He's actually come to live inside of me by his spirit. For I am crucified with Christ.

Nevertheless, I live. Christ lives within me. To what end? That he might save me from myself. And the destructiveness of myself going astray.

He lives in me to set me free from this love of self that I might love him and I might love my neighbor as myself. How different I would be if Christ were not alive and living in me, saving me from myself, saving me from living for my will, my kingdom, my name.

[27:29] But because he's alive, every day I am supplied with supernatural, spiritual energy needed for living the Christian life. How do you live the Christian life?

How do you love your enemies? How do you forgive those who mistreat you and not be bitter against them?

How do you turn the other cheek? How do you go the second mile with people over and over again? How do you exercise patience?

How do you kill pride and life-dominating sins? How do you live the Christian life?

Well, Jesus tells us, I am the vine and you're the branches. And whoever abides in me and I in him, the same will bring forth much fruit.

[28:27] Because without me, you can do nothing. You're just a branch out there. It's been cut off. There's no life there. But his resurrection, believer, means that I am attached to a living vine.

Not a dead stump. A living vine. The nourishing sap of his divine life flows moment by moment from him to me, enabling me to live beyond myself, enabling me to do things that I otherwise would never, could never do.

Equipping me with everything good for doing his will, all according to his power that is at work within me. You see, it takes the living Christ to live the Christian life. And because he is alive and lives, he supplies grace to us that we might live differently.

How different I would be without a living vine. I'd be a withered branch. And because he's risen, I have a living Savior who hears and answers prayers.

Jesus told his disciples in the night of his betrayal, I'm going to the Father and I will do. I will do whatever you ask in my name so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name and I will do it.

[29:52] This is Jesus who's promising to answer the prayers of his disciples. But if he's still in the tomb, he cannot do that. What a comfort it is to know in every one of my trials, Jesus lives to hear and answer my prayers.

My prayers are not self-talk. My prayers are not lost in space somewhere. They actually reach the ears of the living Lord Jesus Christ.

He hears them and he sympathizes with me in my weakness as I cry out to him and he sends me grace to help me in my time of need.

What a difference that makes in all of life. Every day, the living Savior to answer our prayers. And because he's risen, every day I have a living King who's seated upon the throne of the universe.

And because he lives and exercises such a rule over the whole universe, therefore, he has promised that nothing can happen to me but what he will work together for my ultimate good.

[31:05] What a blessed reality of a living King who reigns. And because he's risen, I have a living prophet who comes to me by his word and he teaches me the will of God.

And I need that because I am ignorant. Because of the resurrection, he's a living shepherd who daily leads me and feeds me and protects and defends me.

He fights against the powers of darkness for me. He will not let me be tempted beyond what I'm able to bear. But with the temptation, we'll make a way of escape so that I can stand up under it.

A dead Savior can't do that. The living Christ not only can but does. He restores my soul. He comes after me when I stray.

His rod and his staff, they comfort me. They bring me back. They renew repentance and faith. This is something he's doing every day. Every day, goodness and mercy, following me.

[32:04] Because he's alive. He's the living shepherd of his sheep. It's only a living Savior who's able to keep me from falling. If Jesus were still in the tomb, I'd be left to live on my own.

And how long would you last, brother, in the Christian life on your own? How long before you'd be back in the world, back to the old fleshly ways? But he ever lives to keep us from falling.

There's a sweet word in Hebrews 6 that speaks of our hope. And it says, our hope is like an anchor for the soul. Don't we need an anchor in these days?

Something solid, firm, and secure. And the writer to the Hebrews says, that's what we have. We have hope like an anchor. Now, that anchor needs to catch on something firm in order to really be secure, doesn't it?

Where does our hope latch on? Well, he says, we have hope as an anchor for the soul. It enters into the inner sanctuary behind the curtain where Jesus, who went before us, entered in on our behalf.

[33:16] And our hope catches on Jesus, who is there. And why is he there? He's there on our behalf. If we could have the archangel Michael interview him after his resurrection.

Lord Jesus and his ascension. Why have you risen and come back to heaven? He would say, I'm here on behalf of them. I'm here for them. I live for them.

I'm here for all their needs. And that's where our hope lays hold of Christ who is there for us. Sweet word.

Drink it in, Christian brother and sister. He ever lives for me. He's there for me. He is intimately involved in my life every day because he rose from the dead for me.

Fourth, Christ's resurrection means that I have a living hope in the day of death. Death is the destiny of every man. The living should take this to heart.

[34 : 19] Ten out of ten people die. And haven't we been reminded of that this year as a church? And hasn't death and disease come and reminded us that it's appointed unto man once to die.

And that means that one day I'll be the guy in the hospital that the whole church is praying for. And I'll be the guy with the disease that is slowly taking my life away.

And one way or another death will come to me. What then? What do you have in the day of death? Well because Jesus lives I too will live.

I have hope. Hope that this isn't the end. That just as his body rose from the dead I will rise. Indeed when I die my spirit immediately goes into the presence for to depart from the body is to be present with the Lord.

That's just my spirit. This body that will rot in a grave. One day it is coming will rise to newness of life. The mortal putting on immortality.

[35 : 33] The shameful body putting on glory. The weak body putting on power. Never to die again. And it's Christ's resurrection that guarantees my resurrection.

That's the whole argument of 1 Corinthians 15 if you follow it all the way through Paul's logic. And Paul finds this taught in the Old Testament festival of the first fruits.

Taught back in Leviticus 23. Every time every year in the promised land Israel celebrated harvest. It was a festive happy time and they would hold the feast of first fruits at the very beginning of harvest. The very start and then there would be a celebration at the end of it all. It took some time. But there would be the celebration of first fruits. They'd go out in the field and they'd whack off some wheat and just bring in the first fruits and offer it to God and celebrate as a people of the goodness of God keeping us alive, surrounding us with His kindness.

Now that first fruit was not all that there was to be harvested. In fact, it said that there's more where this came from. And so it is with the dead, the grave.

[36 : 58] There's going to be a lot of people who have died when Jesus comes back that will be in their graves. But the first fruits from this field of death was Jesus Christ taken from that field.

He's the first one to be raised to never die. and that's not the only one because His resurrection as the first fruits guarantees that there's more.

But each in his own turn, Christ the first fruits, He first, and then when He comes, all those who belong to Him raised to be with Him forever.

It's interesting as my Bible reading this year, I came to Leviticus 23 and I read that and you know the day that they first went in and took the first fruits out of the field? It was the day after Sabbath, the first day of the week.

And we left a guess on what day the Lord Jesus was taken from the grave, the field of death. All the gospel writers emphasize it was the day after Sabbath, the first day of the week.

[38 : 13] He's risen. And He's risen as the first fruits guaranteeing all those who belong to Him. Oh, what a wonderful thing it is to come to our dying day knowing that Jesus lives.

And what happened at the grave of Jesus 2,000 years ago will happen at my grave. For in a flash and a twinkling of an eye at the last trumpet, death, for the trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised imperishable and we will be changed and then will the saying that is written come true.

Death has been swallowed up in victory. Where, oh death, is your victory? Paul's, he's taunting death. Come on, bring it. Give me your best death. Is that all you can do?

Where is your victory? Oh grave, where is your sting? Where is this trouble with you? The sting of death is sin and the power of sin is the law but thanks be to God he gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ because he's taken away our sin.

Death doesn't have that sting anymore for us. And so the resurrection is all the difference between despair and hope in the day of death. Jesus lives and so shall I.

[39 : 31] Death thy sting is gone forever. He who deigned for me to die lives the bands of death to sever. He shall raise me from the dust. trust. Jesus is my hope and trust.

What is that worth to you in the day of death? But if you don't belong to Christ you ought to be scared to death of death because you're one breath away from eternal, eternal, never ending torment.

Precious Jesus living Christ first fruits from the dead and because Christ is risen. Fifthly, I can face the day of judgment with confidence. You see, I must appear, all must appear before the judgment seat of Christ to receive those things that were done in the body, whether good or bad.

And it's appointed unto man to die once. And then the judgment. And how can I come to that judgment day with confidence? That's a day I want to have Jesus with me.

amazing thing that the Bible teaches just that, that he who's able to keep us from falling is also able to present us faultless before his presence with exceeding joy.

[40 : 45] I mean, this is the day of judgment when all humanity is coming before this throne and there's only two paths after the judgment. The convergence of this stream comes and it divides at the day of judgment into heaven and hell forever.

And there I come before my maker against whom every sin was directed with a personal affront to his holiness. And you're telling me I can come with confidence in that day?

Yes, because Christ will have me and I'll be on his arms and he'll speak to the father for me. Bible says we'll be speechless in that day.

Well, believers won't need to speak. Jesus will speak for us. He'll say, here I am, father, and the children you've given me. These are the ones that I saved.

These are the ones that I spilt my blood and rose again for, father. These are the ones who have believed in me, who have turned from their sin. Father, look on me and pardon him.

[41 : 50] What will that be worth in the day of judgment? But if Jesus is in the grave, I have no one to present me before the throne. Jesus said, if you acknowledge me in this present adulterous generation, I will acknowledge you before my father in heaven.

Then will he own my worthless name before the father's face. face. And in the new Jerusalem, appoint my soul a place.

What a privilege to have Christ with me at the throne of judgment. Thank God for the resurrection. My risen Lord will be there.

He'll be there with me. You'll see me. You'll be there. I'll be there. We'll all be there. And you'll see the difference that the risen Christ makes on the day of atonement, on the day of judgment.

as he presents himself for his people. And lastly, and this is just because our time's up, but we do need to stop. But it does go on and on.

[42 : 59] Why is the resurrection such good news? What difference does it make? Well, it means that my labor in the Lord is not in vain. Now this is the end of the chapter.

This resurrection chapter. Chapter 15. One of the longest chapters in the New Testament. And how does it end? It ends with a therefore. And we're told to ask what it's there for.

And why is this there for? It's a summary. It's a concluding application. Because Christ rose from the dead, we will rise from the dead. Therefore, 1 Corinthians 15, 58, therefore, my dear brothers, you who belong to Christ, you who by faith and repentance are his people, therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm.

Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord. Why? Because you know, you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

How do you know that? Well, you know it because Jesus rose again and you're going to rise again to a whole new world. world where God will reward his people and those who have served him.

[44 : 16] There will be no labor done for the Lord in vain. The resurrection proves it. You know, there's a lot that we do, Christian, in the Christian life. It doesn't make any sense.

It seems like a waste. It seems like folly apart from the resurrection. I mean, we're living for another world, right?

We're living for another kingdom. This isn't. No. This world's passing away and by grace, God has opened our eyes to see it.

So we don't live for this. We're living for another world. We're laying up treasures for that place. But without the resurrection, we're the biggest fools there are. We're living for nothing.

There was a lot about the Apostle Paul that made no sense whatsoever. apart from the resurrection. It's kind of like the farmer in the spring. And think back to the old farmers.

[45 : 14] They'd take the seed sack. You know, that seed could make a lot of bread, feed his family many weeks. What's he doing with it? He's throwing it away by the handfuls.

What a fool. What a fool. Look at him. What a waste. Oh, but he believes in a harvest. That there's coming a day when that seed that falls into the ground will multiply and bring forth fruit, some 30,

some 60, some 100-fold.

Oh, wow. Then the wiser guy is the guy that's throwing more seed in the spring. And you know, that's the way our lives are, Christian. Christian, we're not serving men.

We're not living for this world. We're living for another world, another master, and a new heaven, a new earth, the home of righteousness.

And so there should be a whole lot about our lives that makes no sense whatsoever, except if there is a resurrection. But if there's a resurrection, oh, what winners we are.

[46 : 27] And that's what Paul is wanting to leave the church at Corinth with as he comes to this conclusion of the resurrection. We're not just throwing seed away. We're planting for eternity.

And your work, your labor in the Lord is not in vain. Now, what is that labor? Some of you are raising children in the teaching and discipline of the Lord.

And you're doing it for the Lord. Some of you are teaching a Sunday school class. Some of you are cleaning the church. Some of you are working in the nursery. Some of you are going to school and you're doing it for the Lord.

Some of you are obeying your parents and you're doing it as unto the Lord. Some of you are going to a workplace and nobody else really cares about being on time and giving 100%, but you do because you're not serving man.

You're serving the Lord. And so you do everything with all your heart. It's working for the Lord, not for man.

[47 : 33] Since you know that you will receive, since you know, since you know, since you know that you are, you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

So, so whatever you're doing, be sure you're doing it for the Lord. That's the kind of labor that will never be in vain. There is coming a day of resurrection and you might have been ignored and counted the fool who was throwing his grain away on earth, but there is coming a day of resurrection when you'll be raised and every single word that you spoke for the Lord, every prayer that you prayed for the Lord and his kingdom and his will to be done and for the missionaries and all that you ever did for Christ, even a cup of cold water given in Jesus' name will receive its reward.

And you know that, Paul says. How do you know that? Because Christ is risen and we will rise and rise to enjoy his rewards, not for a day, but forever and ever.

So let nothing move you, brethren. Don't be moved from serving the Lord. Wherever you are, whatever you're doing, do it for the Lord. Do it with all your might because you know, you know that no labor in the Lord is in vain.

Well, if you're here and you're lost, you've seen something of what the resurrection means to us who belong to Christ. But if you're not trusting in Christ and not repenting of your sins, you need to know that your sins against the living God are real.

[49 : 17] He sees them. He sees them all as done against him. And he will punish you one day forever for them. But resurrection day is the announcement that there is a living Savior for sinners.

As we sang, not for righteous people, but for sinful people. He always lives so that he can save completely.

Who? All who come unto God through him. That means you, whoever you are, whatever you've done. If you will come to God through this living Savior, he will save you all the way.

He'll get it all done. He's just that good. His promise is just that true. So come to him. Come to him right now.

You say, oh, but with my sins, yes, bring your sins to Jesus to have him cover them with his blood. You can't get rid of them. Bring them to him.

[50 : 17] He's the one who makes an end of sin. Turn your back on your sins and trust in Christ's promise to save you. Bring your sins because he delights to forgive them.

Bring him your life and he'll give you one better, far better. Hold back nothing from him. And he'll hold back none of his grace, none of himself from you.

He will give himself to you. And you will know what it means to truly live on this resurrection Sunday. What a difference the living Savior will make in your life today and every day of your life and then in the day of your death and in the day of judgment and forever and ever.

Let's pray. Lord, I pray for everyone who is the only way to heaven.

And if he's dead, our hope is dead. But because he lives, we have this living hope. I pray for everyone who is outside of Christ that they would be even now, Father, rushing to get into him, to turn their back with hatred upon their old life and the way they've lived and treated you, and to trust in the Savior, in his death for sin, in his righteousness to cover theirs.

[51 : 52] make it a day of joy and happiness in heaven and in their hearts. And do send us on our way, rejoicing that there before the throne of God above, we have one who ever lives to plead with us, and so he's able to save completely our souls as we've put them into his hands.

We do praise you for the Lord Jesus and pray in his name. Amen. Amen.