

Resurrection Matters (Part 2) – 1 Cor 15:29-34

Thank you; What a privilege to worship together, and what a foretaste of glory divine
And I want to continue, by turning in our Bibles to 1 Cor 15:29-34; (p.961)
This is Part 2 of a message and text we looked at last week in our ongoing study of 1
Corinthians – trying to learn from the issues Paul addresses in *that* church . . .
So as to avoid them in ours

And having just established that *in Christ* we'll *all be made alive*, Paul says in v29 . . .
*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? [30] Why are we in
danger every hour? [31] 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."* (Review)

Paul's first point here by way of review, is . . .

Don't be swayed – your resurrection is real (v29-32)

In light of those who say otherwise, don't be swayed; B/c first of all . . .

• People are desperate to ensure it (v29)

That's the whole baptism of the dead thing

That b/c some people take such *desperate* measures, to ensure a favorable resurrection
for their loved ones, we can be certain that it's real

It's not for *us* to do, and it doesn't prove the point in and of itself, but it's one more
reason to stand firm and be confident; Second . . .

• People risk their lives to proclaim it (v30)

People like Paul and countless others over the centuries; The second reason we can be
sure of our resurrection; Third . . .

• People give their lives to declare it (v31-32a)

As in surrender their lives, and expend their lives – every single day

Something to which every single *one* of us is called

Even if it means enduring significant opposition along the way; And last . . .

• People discipline their lives to preach it (v32b)

Don't be swayed – your resurrection is real; That was last week from v29-32 (Summary)

- Then, in v33-34, Paul cuts right to the core of what that means for our lives; Saying . . .
*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.*

IOW if you doubt the resurrection is true, if you rationalize it away – it's not b/c the *proof*
is lacking or the *logic* flawed . . .

It's b/c you're corrupted by bad company, or clouded by sinful living

The first part of which, Paul addresses by basically saying . . .

Don't be deceived – your friends matter (v33)

When it comes to resurrection matters, your friends matter

Who you hang out with, who you spend time with, who you associate with – affects
you; There's no getting around it

Hang out with good people, who have good morals and a godly mindset – and you'll be
influenced positively

Hang out with bad people, with bad morals and a worldly mindset – and you'll be
influenced negatively; It's self-evident; And the only people who think otherwise . . .

Are those in the *midst* of a bad relationship or friendship

But it's pretty hard to argue with the Apostle Paul, under the influence of the Holy Spirit,
who says very clearly – *Bad company ruins good morals*. Ruins them
It's not only self-evident, there's no getting around it; Your friends . . .

• They will influence your thinking and your living

For instance, sit at a bar with someone, listening to their sexual innuendos and crude jokes
– and it won't be long before you're thinking the same way

And then talking that way, and drinking that way, and living that way – just like your
bar buddy

Or if you make people who are gripped by materialism and the pursuit of self-interests,
your primary friends – it won't be long before you too are . . .

Gripped by materialism and the pursuit of self-interests

And the same is true of radio and TV personalities; They're not friends or company in the
traditional sense of the word, but they're certainly influential

And the message they convey could influence your thinking and living just as much or
more, than the person sitting next to you

Your friends, up close or far away – will influence your thinking *and* your living

• B/c how you think, determines to a large degree, how you live

I love this plaque and poem in that respect, from our home; It says . . .

Watch your thoughts, they become words; Watch your words, they become actions;

Watch your actions, they become habits; Watch your habits, they become character

How you think determines how you live

On the other hand, how you *live* determines to a large degree how you think; B/c it's
human nature to rationalize our own actions; We tend to justify our ways

So messed up living, leads to messed up thinking; And messed up thinking leads to
messed up living; It's a vicious cycle . . .

And your friends carry a great deal of weight in determining how it goes

- That's one of the reasons that as parents, you should be praying for godly friends for
your kids, from the day they're born
That they would *choose* godly friends; And be intentional about it

And if they don't; Or they're being adversely influenced in some way – you should *sever*
the relationship, or take them *out* of the situation; That's right; You're the parent
And you should tell your kids ahead of time that you'll do so; That you love them so
much, you'll do whatever it takes to protect their thinking *and* their living

Hopefully teaching them to do the same for themselves

And make themselves accountable to *others* – who can help them, and keep them from rationalizing; Even as adults; We all need it; B/c bad company *ruins* good morals
And we don't even know it's happening sometimes

- Now, having said that, Paul's statement in v33 is not meant to be a standalone proverb
Rather, it's a commentary on the relationship between our belief in the resurrection, and our friendships; The point being . . .
That if you hang out with people who don't believe in the resurrection – chances are, you won't either; Chances are, you too will be deceived; IOW . . .

- **They will influence your beliefs and your godliness**

Not just your general thinking and living; But more specifically – your convictions and holiness; Which is evidently what was going on in Corinth
Those who didn't believe in a personal, bodily resurrection from the dead – for either Jesus *or* themselves, were adversely influencing and deceiving those who did
Causing some of them to change their tune, and compromise their devotion

Which means, once again, your friends matter; And if they don't believe in the resurrection, they *really* matter
B/c they *will* influence you – it's just a matter of the extent

- But that doesn't mean you should stay away fr people who believe differently than you
Or that you shouldn't *associate* with those indulging in sin
Quite the contrary; Jesus was a friend of sinners, and we need to be as well

But you shouldn't be *with* them when they're sinning – b/c that's not avoiding all appearances of evil, and living above reproach
And if they're beginning to influence you *adversely* – i.e. your beliefs are starting to deviate from the Scriptures, or your godliness is starting to slide . . .
Once again, you need to part ways; You need to sever the relationship

And if you *work* with that person, and *can't* get away from them – it may mean you need to have a conversation; Telling them you don't want to hear what they think any more
Or draw some firm boundaries of interaction – “It's work only, and even then, only when necessary;”
Or, worst case scenario, you may need to find another job
If your beliefs are starting to deviate, or your godliness is starting to wane – do whatever it takes to hold the line

- And you know who the *least* objective person is when it comes to determining that? *You*
You're the least objective and most impaired, when it comes to seeing or acknowledging the decay in your beliefs or godliness
Why? B/c you're in the *middle* of the fray, and may not see the forest for the trees
So many people are deceived about the truth of their lives, or rationalize it away, b/c of the company they keep

Which highlights the need for 4 very important things:

1. *Godly* friends – every one of us needs godly *people* in our primary circle of friends
2. Weekly fellowship – like in a Small Group or Bible Study or Student Min's

3. Corporate worship – to keep our heart centered on the Lord, and our perspective right
4. Daily devotions – reading the Word and praying on our own (**Summary**)
Those 4 things are critical to ensure that you're not adversely influenced in your beliefs and godliness; Your thinking and living; Don't be deceived – your friends matter

And then second . . .

Don't be fooled – your sin is a problem (v34)

Once again, if you're starting to doubt the resurrection, or rationalize it away – it's not b/c the *proof* is lacking or the *logic* flawed . . .
Most likely, it's b/c you're corrupted by bad company, or tainted by sinful living
Which makes your sin a problem; Especially so, b/c . . .

- **It clouds your thoughts, dulls your senses, and hurts your witness**

The first two of which are implied by Paul's admonition, to *wake up from your drunken stupor*; A metaphor he uses to essentially say that . . .
Just like a drunk is clouded in his thinking by the lingering effects of alcohol – so too, is a person in sin; They often can't think straight, and don't even know it
B/c sin clouds their thoughts – whether they're in the *middle* of indulging, or *intend* to the next chance they get

And *ongoing* sin, whether it's something you *continue* to do, or something you've done but haven't confessed – ongoing sin clouds your thinking so much as to make it dark
As to make your thoughts deceitful, debased, or even wicked

Like those who are sleeping with their boyfriend or girlfriend; If they think about it at all, they don't think *right*; And they certainly don't have a *biblical* perspective
Rationale gives way to rationalization very quickly, and it doesn't take more than 5 seconds to *see* it if you're talking to them
To see their clouded thinking; To see what they *can't*

- B/c sin also *dulls* your senses; It clouds your thoughts and dulls your senses
That is, your ability to see the things of God, and discern his work in the world
Or your ability to feel the Spirit, and respond with confidence
Or your capacity to sympathize and empathize with those around you
That's one of the reasons so many people could care less about those around them
Just like a drunk could care less about those around *them*; Sin dulls your senses

Making you unstable as you weave your way down the sidewalk of life . . .
Unreliable in your responsibilities; And even confused in your decisions
So many people, believers included, are confused about what they should be doing in life, or how to respond to certain situations . . .
B/c their senses are so dulled by the effects of sin

- And as if that's not enough – sin hurts your *witness*, your testimony for Christ
Which is especially important, b/c as Paul says in v34 – *some have no knowledge of God*
In which case you hurt *them*

Instead of your conduct pointing them heavenward, instead of influencing them for Christ, instead of steering them in the *right* direction – you steer them wrongly
You enable them to continue in their *own* sin – you're doing it, why can't they?

That's what they think; More wrong thinking, due to *your* wrong living
And you confine them to their ignorance of God, b/c they don't see him in you

But worst of all, you profane the Name; You disrespect him
In your sin, you not only fail to make Jesus look *good* – you make him look *bad*
Sin hurts your witness in every way

- And it's shameful; Or as Paul says it – *I say this to your shame*
Which we know less and less of in church-world these days
We've so overplayed the mercy card when it comes to our sin, and the love card – you know, "God loves me no matter what" . . .
We've so overplayed that, we feel little to no shame anymore for our sin

That shouldn't be; Yes, God loves you, but that doesn't mean he's happy with you when you sin; He's not; That's why he disciplines you, and refines you, and corrects you
Sometimes using shame to get your attention, and bring you to a place of repentance

So don't be fooled – your sin is a problem
Clouding your thoughts, dulling your senses, and hurting your witness

- **The solution to which, is to wake up, stop it, and do what's right**
About 2 weeks ago I was reading an article for pastors about how to preach
And the guy made a statement that made me feel a bit uneasy
But I couldn't quite put my finger on it until a few days later when I started preparing for this message

He said something like – "Don't ever tell people about their sin, or to stop sinning when they come to church, b/c they already feel bad enough about it as it is"
"They don't need you to make it worse"
And while I resonated with it for those who have already repented, it didn't sit right for those who haven't

But I couldn't pinpoint why until I re-read the words of Paul in v34, where he says . . .
Wake up from your drunken stupor, as is right, and do not go on sinning . . . I say this to your shame.
There it was; The Apostle Paul himself telling the church in Corinth about their sin, shaming them for continuing in it, and telling them to stop
Just the opposite of the Joe-shmoe who wrote the article

- Which means the solution to your sin is not to coddle you and tell you it's okay
It's to shout in your ear and bang on pans, like you do when you're trying to get someone out of bed in a hurry; Wake up! Get out of your sinful stupor!
That's the solution

It's not to pat you on the back and say – "Oh, that's okay; We all sin; It's no big deal"
No! Just the opposite; When you're painfully aware of blatant sin in someone who professes Christ – the first words out of your mouth should be, "stop it"
Especially if they admit it; With a big stop sign to go along with it
This should be your response to other brothers and sisters in Christ, who are sinning and saying it's not that bad

You're cheating on your taxes? Stop! You're indulging with your girlfriend? Stop!
You're gossiping about your neighbor? Stop!
You're hoping for the worst in someone? Stop!
You're looking at pornography? Stop! You're jumping to conclusions? Stop!

Stop sinning; That's what Paul says – *do not go on sinning*
Stop rationalizing it; Stop minimizing it; And stop doing it
It may not be easy, but it is simple; And as a follower of Jesus Christ – you have the power, the power of the Holy Spirit within you, to do it

- So wake up, stop it, and replace it with what's right; Do what's right
If you tend to indulge in sin with certain people, or at certain times and certain places – don't go there, stay away from them . . .
And make sure you're doing something else during that time – something good

Or if you tend toward depression and despair in certain situations, avoid them
And if you can't, prepare for them ahead of time; Make sure someone is with you; Have someone call you; Read your Bible; Ask people to pray for you

Take whatever steps of inconvenience are necessary – in order to stop sinning, and do what's right (**Summary**)
B/c in your clouded thinking and dulled senses, you don't even know how big of a problem your sin is, let alone how much it hurts your witness, and affects your beliefs

Don't be fooled, and don't be deceived; Your sin is a problem, and your friends matter

Pray – Lord, help us, convict us, fuel us, and forgive us; We need you, love you, and want to glorify you in our lives, and friendships, and beliefs
So use our gifts now to that end, both here and around the world