

But Christ Has Been Raised!

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[0:00] The sermon text for today is 1st Corinthians! Chapter 15, verse 20. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.

But each in his own order. Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming, those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father, after destroying every rule and every 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. For God has put all things in subjection under his feet.

But when it says, all things are put in subjection, it is plain that he is accepted who put all things in subjection under him.

When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all.

[1:41] 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 own behalf?

Why are we in danger every hour? I protest, brothers, by my pride in you, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die every day.

What do I gain if, humanly speaking, I fought with beasts in Ephesus? If the dead are not raised, let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.

Do not be deceived. Bad company ruins good morals. 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. This is the word of the Lord. Thank you, God.

[2:50] Heavenly Father, one more time we come in complete dependence upon you. God, I have felt my own weakness and shortcomings the last few days, and God, I recognize it.

I have nothing useful to say to this body if it's not from you. God, I have no wisdom of my own. We need your wisdom, and God, we need your supernatural power to be able to understand, to comprehend the mysteries that are contained in this glorious text.

Spirit, would you come and illuminate our hearts? Would you awaken our minds to understand the deep things of God? And Paul told us in chapter 2 that we have the Holy Spirit in us, that we might understand those things.

And so we're asking you to come and show us right now and change us, Lord. This passage is meant to change us, to yield a response for the sake of Christ and the gospel and the glory of God in this world.

And so I pray, Lord, that you would do that. Fill us with your hope. Fill us with joy. Fill us with power. For your glory we pray, in Christ's name. Amen. Oh, good morning, Shoreline.

[4:01] My name's Mike, one of the pastors here, and it's just so good to see all your faces this morning. You know, last week, Rob Buttermore opened up our service reading a list of 18 significant tragedies that had occurred in the week prior in our nation, in our world.

One of those, of course, was the assassination of Charlie Kirk, which has sent massive shockwaves throughout the United States and beyond. And it leads us to wonder things like, is this going to become the norm in our country?

I don't know if you've found yourself thinking things like that. Are we too in danger of losing our lives when we speak up for the truth, when we boldly share the gospel and our faith?

And I want to ask, what if it does become the norm? What if it does? What if we are in danger for sharing the gospel?

You know, as we contemplate questions like these, it's helpful for us to remember, saints, that for most of church history, it has been a normal occurrence for Christians to be persecuted for their faith.

[5:21] And as you can find in far less covered news stories from places like Voice of the Martyrs and from Randy Matthews, you know, our missionary that we support, this is the norm for millions of Christians right now, all around the globe.

Now, of course, simply knowing that information doesn't offer us any consolation, does it? And, you know, even if our future doesn't entail persecution for our faith, we don't know what's to come in this country, even still, we face a myriad of other problems like natural disasters, like acute and chronic health issues, like relational conflict, like car accidents, like various forms of oppression, and the list goes on and on.

You know, Rob said last week in his opening reflection, when we look out and see brokenness, we must find an anchor in the storm.

We must find a refuge that is not a feel-good cliché that gets us by. What we need, he said, is an uncrushable hope, an indomitable savior, and an undefeated hero.

And what I'm here to declare to you this morning from this passage is that, church, we have an uncrushable hope, we have an indomitable savior, and we have an undefeated hero in the crucified and risen Lord Jesus Christ.

[6:46] We're nearing the end of our series here, walking through Paul's letter to the Corinthians, considering the church's call to display Christ in everything.

And for five weeks, we are in what I dare say is one of Scripture's high points. 1 Corinthians chapter 15. And so this servant up here is far incapable to open up these mysteries, which is why we depend on the Lord and what he would speak to us today.

And today we're in the middle portion, the third of five sermons, verses 20 to 34. So please turn there in your Bibles if you haven't already. We have Bibles on the back table for anyone that needs one. They should be bookmarked already to today's passage, and you're welcome to keep one of those.

The title of today's sermon, really creative, but Christ has been raised. Taken straight out of verse 20. Now there's a ton going on in these 15 verses.

This could be 10 sermons or more maybe. If I were John Piper or Martin Lloyd-Jones, and maybe I would be doing that. But we're going to take all 15 of these verses to get the higher, the bigger picture today.

[8:00] And what I think that bigger picture is, is that the resurrection of Christ, if you go to the next, if you hit next, Kevin, the resurrection of Christ ensures our future hope and empowers present mission.

Okay, those two things. The resurrection of Christ ensures our future hope and empowers our present mission. And so the first thing we see here is that the resurrection of Christ ensures our future hope.

That's the first half of this text. So in verses 1 through 11, if you were here a couple weeks ago, Paul, among other things, he declares the historical reality of the resurrection of Christ.

And then in the verses that followed last week, verses 12 through 19, Paul let us down this thought experiment. Some of the Corinthians, we learned, were disbelieving in the future resurrection of the dead.

And so Paul asserted this vital inseparable link between the resurrection of Christ that had already happened and the future resurrection of the dead. Those are connected.

[9:03] But then Paul went on in his thought experiment to show us the dire grave implications if Christ has not been raised. And the grim conclusion that Paul said was, if Christ hasn't been raised, then we are of all people most to be pitied.

But in this morning's passage today, Paul leads us out of that hypothetical nightmare by proclaiming in verse 20, look at your Bibles, but in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.

Here's the first sub-point today. Christ is risen, we shall rise. Christ is risen, we shall rise. The hypothetical nightmare of verses 12 through 19 is not our reality because Christ is risen.

So what then is our reality? Well, first, it's the opposite of what he said in verses 12 through 19. And this is sort of how I concluded last week's sermon, but to reiterate, you know, he said, if Christ has not been raised, gospel preaching is in vain.

But Christ has been raised. So the gospel is the true saving message of God's grace to sinners through Christ. If Christ has not been raised, our faith is worthless, Paul said, but Christ has been raised.

[10:20] And so that means, church, that our faith is the means of our salvation. It's effective. If Christ has not been raised, then we're still in our sins, Paul had said.

But Christ has been raised, so we are no longer in our sins. We have a standing in grace. The dead in Christ are even now with the Lord. They're awaiting resurrected bodies.

And so you need not pity us. That's the corollary to verses 12 through 19. Remember, Paul's main goal in those verses was to establish that vital connection, resurrection of Christ, future resurrection of the dead.

And so this becomes, that becomes Paul's main focus in the rest of the chapter. And so he says here in verse 20 that Christ is the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.

The first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. And I mentioned this last week, but I have to repeat it because I'm really excited to go to Homburg Orchard this coming Saturday. That it's like that first McCown apple, I'm not getting paid by Homburg, but those McCown apples are just so good.

[11:25] Juicy and crunchy, the perfect apple. It's like that very first McCown apple that's ready to be picked. It's an indicator of the harvest that's going to come, that I get to reap right now, you know, in this coming week.

Now, a more common similar term that we see in the New Testament is that of Christ being the firstborn. Paul says in Colossians 1.18, awesome passage, and he is the head of the body, the church, he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead that in everything he might be preeminent. He's the firstfruits, the firstborn, those are similar terms. But if we go back on that harvest kind of language, I was reminding this week of what Jesus said in John chapter 12, verse 24.

Jesus said, truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone. But if it dies, it bears much fruit.

And so we just pause to remember that in order for Jesus to become the firstfruits, he first had to die. And then he rose again that he might bear much fruit.

[12:36] And so he has become, in atoning for our sins and rising from the grave and conquering death, he has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep, the firstborn from the dead.

And you know, this is new creation language. New creation language. And that's why he says next in verse 21, for as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. As in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. So Paul clearly is comparing Christ to Adam.

And he's going to do this again in next week's passage. And he expounds on this comparison in Romans 5, verses 12 through 21. Now these two short verses here, they are drawing us into the overarching redemptive narrative of history.

This is creation, fall, redemption, restoration. That is the arc of history. history. Adam was the firstborn of God's original creation. He was made in the image of God in his likeness, but then marred by sin.

[13:48] And because of that sin, Paul says, by a man, by Adam, came death. Because sin entered the world, so too did death. And that death, Paul says in Romans 5, 12, spread to all men because all sinned.

And that's the witness of the book of Genesis. Read Genesis and see how quickly death corrupts the world. Like Adam, we too sin.

Right? We break God's righteous law and Scripture teaches that therefore we deserve to be punished for that sin. The just, the righteous punishment for sinning against the God of infinite holiness, of infinite worth, of perfect righteousness, the punishment for that is death. But you know, the deeper problem isn't just that we're like Adam. We are like Adam. We sin like Adam. But the problem is actually worse. Paul says that we're in Adam. We're in him. We are born in sin. We are born with a sin nature. And I don't have to convince this church because we have enough small children that are here to validate that claim for us.

[14:59] The message of Scripture is clear. We have a sin nature and we sin. And so we are accountable to the Lord for every evil thought, every evil attitude and word and deed.

We are in a desperately hopeless condition. And we need a Savior. And thanks be to God, His grace abounds all the more.

1 John 4, 14, the Father has sent His Son to be the Savior of the world. That's a really good verse to memorize. The Father has sent His Son to be the Savior of the world. And He was that Savior. He is that Savior through His death on the cross for our sins and from and through His resurrection from the grave. And so I want to proclaim to you that by faith in His name, by faith in the name of Jesus Christ, we can be delivered from the domain of darkness and transferred to the kingdom of His beloved Son and whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

That's Colossians 1, 13, and 14. And saints, this means that though death has come through Adam, the resurrection of the dead has come through Jesus Christ.

[16:05] We're just saying that Jesus Christ is the true and better Adam come to save the hell-bound man. He is the firstborn of a new creation, a new humanity that though in Adam dies in Christ shall be made alive.

But each in his own order, Paul says, look at verse 23. But each in his own order, Christ, the firstfruits, then at His coming, those who belong to Christ.

The resurrection of the dead, to state the obvious, is not yet here. But it's going to happen at His coming. When Jesus Christ returns, we don't know when that will be.

A lot of people try to figure it out. Jesus says, you're not going to know. I don't even know. The Father knows. But we know that it will surely come to pass. And in that day, we too, who are in Christ, shall rise.

Christ is risen, church, and therefore, we shall rise. And the resurrection of Christ ensures this future hope. hope. And this hope, friends, it's for all those who have placed their faith in Christ as there in the only Lord and Savior.

[17:19] And so if that's not you this morning, I want you to hear the explicit call that is going out to you. Paul puts it simply in Romans 6.23 when he says that for the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

to which you might ask, how then do I receive this free gift? And Paul answers that in Romans 10.9. If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

You will be saved. If you have any questions about that, I would love nothing more than to talk to you after the service or anyone that you've seen up here today. This salvation means that you are forgiven of your sins.

You are given the righteousness of Christ. You are adopted, welcomed into the family of God. You are indwelt with the Holy Spirit who Paul says in Romans 8 is actually another kind of first fruits. The Spirit in us is a first fruit. His presence is an indication of the future harvest to come, which is our resurrection from the dead. Christ is risen.

[18:31] We shall rise. And here's the next point. Christ is risen. He shall reign. And we see this in verses 24 through 28. Christ is risen. He shall reign.

Then comes the end, verse 24, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every 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, for God has put all things in subjection under His feet. Oh, Lord, help us to understand these mysteries.

You know, Paul's doing a few different things here that I want us to see. The first thing that Paul is doing, he's continuing to demonstrate the humanity of Christ, that Christ is the true Adam. You can put that on the screen, Kev. Christ is the true Adam. In verse 27, Paul is quoting from Psalm 8, verse 6. That psalm was written by King David.

[19:34] David is praising the Lord for the place that God has given to mankind in His creation. So, starting in verse 5 of Psalm 8, David says, Yet you made Him, that is mankind, a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned Him with glory and honor.

You have given Him dominion over the works of your hands. You have put all things under His feet. Now, by Paul quoting this verse and applying it to Christ, he is in no way saying that Jesus is inferior to angels.

Read Hebrews 1. Talks all about that. He's not saying that. Instead, he's pointing to the fact of the incarnation of Christ. Christ has taken on human flesh to become like all of us, to become like one of us.

And then Christ showed us what it looks like to live a truly human life. One commentator puts it really well. Adam, or humankind, failed in fulfilling this role.

And only in Christ do we see true humanness as the one who rules and restores creation. Christ bears the true image of God, humanity as God willed it to be.

[20:45] As ruler on behalf of God, Christ establishes His authority as Lord over every authority and power. And that leads us to the second thing that Paul is doing. He's not just showing the humanity of Christ, but also His authority and how Christ will reign victorious.

Christ will reign victorious. You know, saints, that right now Jesus reigns from on high with absolute authority. This isn't just some human authority like the president, like a dictator.

No. This is a superhuman divine authority. There's a similar, Paul uses a similar phrase in Ephesians chapter 1 when he says that God raised Christ from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and above every name that is named not only in this age but also in the one to come.

Christ reigns right now over every power. And what Paul is saying here, is that in the end he will destroy every rule and authority and power that has set itself up against him.

And I think Paul particularly, especially, has spiritual powers in mind. We remember what he says in Ephesians 6.12 that we do not wrestle against flesh and blood but against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

[22:16] Those forces are the unseen forces behind all of the pain, the evil, the misery that we see and Christ reigns over those spiritual powers now and in the end will destroy them as the ultimate victor.

Christ will reign victorious. Christ. And as Paul here is connecting the humanity of Christ with this divine authority of Christ, he's doing yet one more thing here and that is that he is declaring that Christ is the promised Messiah.

In verse 25, Paul is alluding to Psalm 110, verse 1.

David writes, the Lord, all caps, that's Yahweh, says to my Lord, that's in lowercase, the Lord says to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.

Psalm 110 is a royal psalm. It's having to do with the royal line of King David and it is clearly pointing to beyond any mere human king. It is pointing to a future Messiah who will indeed come from the line of David but who will wield this kind of divine authority.

[23:34] The Lord, Yahweh, will put all enemies under the feet of his appointed Lord. This psalm pointing forward to a future Messiah, we know today that it finds its fulfillment in Jesus Christ.

Jesus is the King. He is the Messiah from the royal line of David who reigns, as that psalm says, with a mighty scepter, who shatters the powers arrayed against him, even death, the last enemy to be destroyed.

You know, if you want further encouragement along these lines, I encourage you this week, read Revelation 20-22, which pictures that future destruction of Satan and death itself and the final judgment and the glory of the new heavens and the new earth.

I promise you will not be wasting your time to read those three chapters of the Bible. But this, church, this is the direction that all of history is irrevocably marching towards. Christ's ultimate victory over every evil power, including death.

He shall reign. Now, before we move past these verses, there's one more thing that I want us to see, and that is this, that God, in the end, remains supreme.

[24:52] Verse 24, Paul says that this kingdom, in which every power is made subject to Christ, will then be handed back over to God the Father.

And Paul feels the need to clarify something if you look at verse 27. But when it says, all things are put in subjection, it is plain that he is accepted who put all things in subjection under him.

When all things are subjected to him, then the Son of Man himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all.

That's a tongue twister. What Paul is seeking to do here is avoid a misunderstanding about the all things that are subjected to Christ. The all things does not include the one who put those things under the feet of Christ, i.e.

God the Father. The Father will not be subjected to Christ, but in fact Christ will subject himself to the Father, and in the end it will be plain to the entire universe that God is all in all.

[26:02] Now what does this mean? I think it's a mystery we can't fully comprehend, but I think there are some clues in scripture. One is that earlier in this book, chapter 8, verse 6, Paul said that, yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist.

Everything is for the glory of God, the majesty of God, to make much of God. You know, here, pictured in the end when Christ returns and hands the kingdom to the Father, will be the answer to the great prayer of the saints.

In Psalm 57, verse 5, be exalted, O God, above the heavens, let your glory be over all the earth.

Here in the end will be the fulfillment of this great prophecy in Habakkuk 2, verse 14, for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

That is the destiny of all of history, the glory of God. God, he remains supreme. Now, this passage does raise a natural question.

Is Paul saying that Christ is inferior then to the Father? Now, without going into detail here, the answer is an emphatic no.

[27:19] No. The Trinity is a complex reality that just continues to blow our minds. God is the three in one. Father, Son, Holy Spirit, they are the same in substance, equal in power and glory, yet each of them have distinct and harmonious roles.

And, you know, this leads us maybe to some confusion, yes, but to utter awe and amazement and to reverence and worship of our great and glorious God.

I would refer you back for more on the Trinity and Christ and the Father. I would refer you back to chapter 11 where we covered the headship principle and I would also recommend, if you want to go a little deeper, the book, *Delighting in the Trinity* by Michael Reeves.

Awesome book. Back to the point of this passage here. In the end, when all things are subjected to Christ and the kingdom is handed over to the Father, His glory, His majesty will be on brilliant display for the cosmos to behold.

He will reign and He will remain eternally supreme. And so church, okay, what does this mean for us? We've just been given a 30,000 foot view of history.

[28:33] Christ has been raised. When He returns, we will be raised and every evil power, including death, will be defeated and God will remain supreme. The resurrection of Christ ensures our future hope and this means a lot of things, but one thing it definitely means, church, is that today, right now, we can trust God.

We can trust Him with an abiding trust, with an ever-deepening trust, because we know the direction of history. We know that in the end, we win because Christ wins and we're united to Him. Church, even if the increasing hostility that we've seen towards Christians continues to rise, even if it does, we don't need to fear. We know the end of the story.

We can trust that God is working, Romans 8, 28, all things for our good and for His glory. We know that. We don't need to fear. Even in the midst of health crises and relational conflict, the loss of loved ones, or any of life's uncertainties, we have an uncrushable hope in what's to come. And we can trust God. He's leading us towards that uncrushable hope. And you know, not only do we have every reason to trust God in the pain, but also in our pleasure.

[30:01] You know, so often we take the good pleasures of life, family, friends, material possessions, job success, sex, et cetera, and we begin to trust in them.

Right? These pleasures have done nothing and are doing nothing to ensure our future hope, to raise us up to newness of life in Christ, in resurrected bodies.

But God has, by sending Christ to die on the cross for our sins and to rise again. So church, whether in our pain, whether in pleasure, let us see how God and only God is worthy of our ultimate and our endless trust.

trust, not only because of the cross, but also because in him our future hope is certain, it's ensured. Okay, here's the second thing.

The resurrection of Christ empowers our present mission. Empowers our present mission. Or, what I have in parentheses below that, Christ is risen, let's live like it.

[31:06] Christ is risen, let's live like it. Now these final verses here, 29 to 34, are in two parts. First, Paul sort of returns to his, if Christ has not been raised, thought experiment for a minute, but from a more practical and less theological standpoint.

And you might call these experiential arguments for the resurrection. So that's the first half. And then the last two verses, Paul gives the Corinthians some closing exhortation. So first we have these three experiential arguments for the resurrection of the dead.

So look there back in your Bibles, verse 29. The first one is this, if the dead are not raised, why are people baptized for them? And we thought we were past all the contentious passages in this book. So look in your Bibles, otherwise, Paul says, in other words, if Christ has not been raised, if there is no resurrection of the dead, 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? All right, time fails us here. Literally dozens, dozens of explanations have been offered for what this verse means.

[32:23] And I first want to affirm one thing this passage cannot mean based on what the rest of the New Testament has to say. This passage cannot mean that someone can be saved based on the faith or actions of another.

Scripture is abundantly clear. My salvation requires my personal faith in Christ. It does not mean that. But I do want to offer just a few, quick, three of the leading views on what this practice actually was.

The first is that the most straightforward reading of the passage here is that some in Corinth were being baptized in the belief that their baptism had some effect on those who had died.

That's the first sort of viewpoint here. The second is that believers were seeking baptism in order to be united with those who had loved ones of theirs that had previously died.

So that's another one. And really a lot of this hinges on that word, the ESV translated, on behalf of, could just be for. A lot of things hinge on that. Okay, the third view that I want to mention is that believers were coming to Christ and being baptized because they had been won over by the faith of those who had died before.

[33:34] Okay, so I just wanted to show you those three views so that you see that there are multiple plausible interpretations here, but whatever the practice actually was, this is more important, okay, this is more important, whatever the practice actually was, Paul is not necessarily condoning it, and more importantly, what is Paul's point here?

Paul's point is that this practice would be absolutely meaningless if the dead in Christ were not going to be raised. Okay, he's saying, why are people even carrying out this practice if the dead are not raised?

Of course the dead are raised. Okay, the second thing we see here, if the dead are not raised, why do we risk everything for the gospel? Look at verse 30.

Paul says, why are we in danger every hour? I protest, brothers, by my pride in you, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord. I die every day. What do I gain if, humanly speaking, I fought with beasts at Ephesus?

Okay, verse 31 there is another very challenging verse for interpreters, as you can probably gather by the very clunky-sounding sentence, but Paul's point comes through pretty clear regardless. Paul, Apollos, the other apostles are risking life and limb for the sake of Christ and the advancement of the gospel.

[34:53] Why on earth would they do that if there's no future resurrection? And what do they gain by giving up all of the comforts of this life if there's not going to be a resurrection of the dead?

Now, just a couple quick notes here. It's unlikely that Paul actually fought with beasts at Ephesus. He's probably speaking metaphorically to describe both the spiritual warfare that was going on there.

You can read about that in Acts. And also the fierce opposition that he faced. Now, the other confusing thing here, when Paul says, by my pride in you, he's actually using an oath formula, like by Zeus.

Or maybe someone today would say, you know, on my mother's grave. He's essentially swearing by what is most dear to him, namely his pride in the Corinthian believers, all that God has done in and through them to change them and establish them as a church.

So really, he's just, he's adding weight to his words. And so he's emphasizing the utter folly of his labors for Christ, his suffering for the gospel if Christ has not been raised.

[35:56] But, because Christ has been raised, this wholehearted devotion to Christ and the gospel is worth it. It's worth it. If the dead are not raised, why do we risk everything for the gospel?

If the dead are not raised, thirdly, let's just live it up. That's Paul's conclusion here. Paul says, if the dead are not raised, let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.

He's quoting from Isaiah chapter 22. This is the words of the Israelites. After being warned of the coming invasion of Assyria because of their sin and rebellion, they respond with this mantra instead of humbly repenting before the Lord.

This is the mantra of the world, is it not? This is like carpe diem, seize the day. Or, as Ben mentioned a few weeks ago, you know, YOLO, you only live once, which is really outdated and it's dating both of us.

I still think you're cool, Ben. These are mantras that the world has, right? And Paul is saying, hey Corinthians, if the dead are not raised, let's just let loose and do whatever we want, right?

[37:03] Let's go ahead and eat and drink and sleep around and indulge ourselves in every way, like at those temple parties that he was talking about earlier in the book. So Paul here, with a bit more sarcasm this time than earlier in the chapter, he wants the Corinthians to see the fallacy of their thinking.

Look, they know, they know the gospel does not lead to that conclusion, but that's where their disbelief in the future resurrection actually leads them. He's following their logic out to the end. And Paul turns finally from there to three concluding exhortations. Verse 33, he says, Do not be deceived. Bad company ruins good morals. Wake up from your drunken stupor as is right and do not go on sinning.

Can you tell Paul's a little amped up here? The Corinthians, once again, as we see, were being led astray by the pagan culture around them, right?

That the culture around them believed that in the end, the body would be destroyed, only the spirit would endure. And so because of that, what you did in the body, the physical body, just, it didn't matter.

[38:13] You could do whatever you want. It was irrelevant. It led them to be able to indulge in all kinds of sinful behaviors with no consequences. So they thought. And we actually saw this, if you remember, back in chapter 6, when Paul was addressing sexual immorality.

Paul had said, The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord and the Lord for the body. And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. You see, he was paving the way for this discussion in chapter 15, hinting towards the resurrection. And in light of that resurrection, Christ has been raised. The dead in Christ shall be raised. Don't be deceived, Paul is saying. That's his first exhortation. Don't be deceived. Realize that you've been led astray by culture. You've adopted the errant beliefs of the secular culture. And therefore, you're in danger of losing the gospel. Don't be deceived, Paul is saying. Sober up. It's his second exhortation. Sober up. You've been intoxicated by this false thinking. [39:19] And what you need is to breathe the fresh air of the true gospel of Jesus Christ. You need to come to your senses. Stop. Don't be deceived. Sober up.

And then stop sinning, Paul says. God cares what you do with your bodies. He made them. He's indwelling them.

He's going to raise them up at the coming of Christ. So he's saying, live in your bodies as the holy saints that you already are in Christ. And Paul ends with this final zinger here.

For some have no knowledge of God. I say this to your shame. Corinthians, you're acting just like those who don't know God. But Paul wants the Corinthians to rightly feel shame.

They should feel ashamed. But not to humiliate them. He wants to lead them into repentance and to return to the Lord and what is true. And so brothers and sisters, this is why we need to constantly be ingesting God's word and the gospel over and over and over again every single day and constantly pursuing the Lord.

[40:30] The more we come to know God, the more we come to know his word in which God has revealed himself, the more resistant we're going to be to the deceptive philosophies of this world.

But here's the application I want to drive home here as we drive this thing to a conclusion. And that is how the resurrection of Christ empowers our present mission. And when I say mission here, I don't just mean missions and evangelism, though I certainly mean that, but I mean it in a broader sense.

Our calling to know Christ and make him known. That is our calling in this world. To know Christ and to make him known. To live out and to spread the gospel.

Our future hope in the resurrection, it empowers that calling. So we see here in these verses that Paul was motivated, empowered to live a life of radical self-denial and of radical self-giving love because of the future resurrection.

And that's exactly what he's been calling the Corinthians to this entire book. Right? This is what he's been exhorting in every one of their issues that they have had. A cruciform, a cross-shaped life of self-denial and self-giving love.

[41:47] And that is in their individual lives, in their corporate life together. He wants them to display Christ and the gospel to the world. So I want to do a little, a sprint through this letter demonstrating what I mean by that principle.

From chapters 1 through 4. Why should we set aside a prideful one-upmanship and this competitive jockeying for power and influence?

Why should we do that for the sake of love and unity in the body? Why? What motivation do we have? Well, because Christ is risen. Right? Our future hope in the resurrection, the ultimate defeat of every evil power, the eternal reign of Christ, that motivates us and empowers us today to prioritize the unity of the body at cost to self.

This is our eternal spiritual family. Obviously not just those in this room. We want to fight for the unity of this body because we know our future.

Do you see how that works? I'm going to move a little bit quicker and give you less of the connection points. In chapter 2, chapter 1 and 2, why would we preach a message that's utter folly to the world?

[43:02] Why? Because Christ is risen. Right? Because Christ is risen. We know that the message is true. We know that it's powerful. That's why we would preach a message that we know the world scoffs at and mocks and is even hostile towards.

Chapter 5, why should we root out impurity from our midst? Why should we practice church discipline? Why should we strive for holiness? Because Christ is risen.

That's why. He's coming again. And we want to be prepared for his second coming. We prepare the way by living lives of godliness and holiness. We want to present ourselves mature in Christ.

Christ is risen. That's why we should root out impurity. Chapter 6, why should we be willing to suffer wrong from our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ? Why should we not seek vengeance but entrust that to the Lord?

Because Christ is risen. Why should we give ourselves, chapter 7, a way in self-giving love to our spouses? Why? Because Christ is risen. Why should we be content in the life circumstances in which God has placed us?

[44:10] Because he's risen. He's coming again. Why should we lay down our rights? This is chapters 8 and 9. For the sake of others. Why should we become all things to all men that they might be saved?

Because Jesus Christ is risen and they need that gospel for their salvation. Chapter 10, why should we flee from idolatrous cultural scenes?

Why should we uphold the headship principle of chapter 11? It's not very popular. Why should we participate in corporate worship with an outward and upward focus rather than inward? Why should we use our spiritual gifts to serve and to build up the body of Christ rather than promote self?

Because Jesus Christ is risen. In short, why should we deny ourselves? Why should we pursue love and unity and holiness? Why should we give up earthly comforts and success for the cause of Christ in this world?

Why should we do that? Because Jesus Christ is risen and we too will rise with him to everlasting life. Church, the resurrection of Christ ensures our future hope and that empowers us for present mission.

[45:24] And I think that that is captured powerfully here and as I close from the hymn, A Mighty Fortress by Martin Luther. This is verses 3 and 4 of A Mighty Fortress.

And though this world with devils filled should threaten to undo us, we will not fear for God has willed his truth to triumph through us.

The prince of darkness grim, we tremble not for him. His rage we can endure for lo, his doom is sure. One little word shall fell him.

That word above all earthly powers, no thanks to them abideth. The spirit and the gifts are ours through him who with us sideth.

Let goods and kindred go, this mortal life also. The body they may kill. God's truth abideth still. His kingdom is forever.

[46:20] Heavenly Father, God, change us with the reality of the resurrection of Christ from the grave and the reality of our future resurrection from the dead.

God, we know that you are marching all of history towards that grand finale when you subject every evil power to yourself. when you make all things right.

Your supreme and righteous and just and peaceful reign in the end will be our reality. God, fill us with hope.

God, empower us with this by your spirit to live out our calling in Christ, to know him more, and to make him known in the culture of our church and to the world.

God, we need this. We need this big picture, Lord. We get so lost and confused in the moments of life. Lord, when we are confronted with pain or we're allured towards the pleasures of this world, we need to see the big picture of what you're doing, what you have done, and what you are doing.

[47:32] So God, fill us with this hope and power us for mission in this world. For your glory we pray and for the salvation of the lost. Christ, in Jesus' mighty name we pray. Amen.

So we now get to partake of the