

The Resurrection in First Corinthians 15

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[0 : 01] The other reason I asked Lori to stop is, and it bears so much repeating, Lori, I'm going to ask you to read again verses 1 through 4.

Okay. Now I would remind you, brothers of the gospel, I preach to you which you receive, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved.

If you hold fast to the word I preach to you, unless you believe in vain. So, it's important. You know, he's letting them know. It's important. And then, in the last statement there, verse 11, he's making, he's repeating for them again, and this isn't just my version of the gospel.

This is what we all preach. This is the gospel. And, of course, they're saying, oh, yes, yes, this is important. Yes, yeah. And as he goes through it, they hear it. And both in the ancient world in general and in the biblical world in particular, this was a common approach.

You start off your presentation with something that the audience is going to agree with. They don't know where you're taking them. They think it's familiar ground.

[1 : 25] They think they understand it. They think they're in agreement with it. And then, all of a sudden, bam. Yeah, this is what I believe. But I didn't realize this. A classic example is King David.

When Nathan the prophet comes to him and says, let me tell you a story about a horrible man. And David says, yes, he's a horrible man.

And Nathan then says, it's you. So, for some of the Corinthians, he's springing this trap. Not because he hates them. But he wants to make an impression on them.

He wants them to see the stark reality of the mistake that they are holding on to. Now, everybody's in agreement, right, with what we've read so far in Corinth, Paul, us.

But we're going to keep reading and look for what the mistake in belief and practice was. Lori, do you want to continue reading? Sure. That's great.

[2 : 30] Thank you. Now, if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised.

And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised.

For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.

If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.

[3 : 38] But each in his own order, Christ the firstfruits, then in 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.

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? Why are we in danger every hour?
[4 : 40] 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?

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. Thank you very much. What was the theological problem, mistake, heresy, if it rises to that level, that some of the Corinthians were guilty of, in trouble with?

They don't eat in the resurrection again. All right. Thank you. I think we'll probably agree on that. Now, are there any other things or any more specific things that you think you see here in addition to that?

[5 : 57] They don't believe in the resurrection of the dead. Yes. Any sub-points that you detect in their doctrinal error?

That Jesus didn't rise from the dead? That Jesus didn't rise from the dead. Gee. That's part of the gospel, isn't it?

Uh, yeah. Yeah. And you might wonder, how is it that a group of people who are part of the church at Corinth, they see themselves as part of the church.

You know, this letter is addressed to the church at Corinth, to believers. How is it that you have Corinthian Christians who don't believe that Jesus was raised from the dead?

That, well, there's a real tension there. Is that really what he's saying, though? Because he seems to be, I've always had to struggle with this practice. Because 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?

[7 : 13] And then he goes on to draw the linkage. If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. Personally, I think that's a huge leap in logic. And so, yes, I can see where, I don't know that he's saying, forgive me for being contrarian, but.

Let me tell you a secret. I told Bob to say this ahead of clock. No, no, I didn't. I didn't. But he is pointing out a problem I've had with this passage.

This and a few other things, you know, I just couldn't wrap my head around it and see it as self-consistent. You know, what am I missing? So, Bob, this is wonderful.

Thank you. You're welcome. Please continue if you weren't done. So, you know, I think in their minds, they believed that Christ was raised from the dead. But they didn't believe, apparently, in the resurrection of the bodily resurrection of the others.

He is drawing the connection between the two, which I think is logically weak. And then, so they didn't not believe in the resurrection of Christ.

[8 : 19] In their minds, they believed in the resurrection of Christ and did not believe in the resurrection of anyone else. Well said. Yes.

Bob may not be too smart, but he's at least as smart as I am. Because we are like this on that in the past, you know. So, hey, so we conclude.

Paul isn't always the best theologian. But that's all right. We'll overlook it. The Holy Spirit inspired him. Oh, no.

No. Let's move on. He might be a good theologian and a bad logician. Could be. If we can make a distinction. The inspiring Holy Spirit.

Couldn't he have corrected that? Don't we think that the Holy Spirit, you know, corrected other errors? Couldn't he have done this? Now, let me tell you my own answer to that conundrum at this point in my life.

[9 : 29] There are many things about the Bible I don't understand. And there are times when I've heard other people say, and I've thought to myself, Paul's logic doesn't hold together here.

So what do I conclude? Maybe I don't know the whole story. You know, maybe I don't understand quite what he's saying. Maybe part of it's because I don't understand the historical context.

And maybe if I did, you know, then it would be clear to me. Maybe. But in any case, when, as Romans 12 tells us all to have, when I have sober judgment about my own abilities in logic or theology or Bible interpretation, I realize I have a lot to be humble about.

You know, I don't see everything clearly now. Literally or figuratively. And so I should not assume I do.

Now, who knows? Maybe God inspired the way, the Bible, in a way where, you know, not every argument holds together according to human logic.

[10:47] Maybe because there's something wrong with human logic. I don't know. But I am going to try, as a habit, to be humble and say, well, I don't get this, but that doesn't mean it's wrong.

Or that, you know, maybe someday I'll say, aha! Now, maybe this will be one of those occasions where you'll say, aha!

Because I think this is such a powerful story, I'm going to share it even though it's a general point, not a specific point to this text. Some of you have heard of Trinity Evangelical Divinity.

Trinity School. Kenneth Concer used to be one of the top officials of that. And so, one day, he got a call that a woman, a good friend of his, had been involved in a car accident and she was killed instantly.

And he was grieving when he got another phone call saying that that woman had not been riding in a car, but had been riding in a bus and that there was an accident and that she was injured and she was taken to the hospital.

[12:07] And he thought, what would you think if you got two reports like that? Well, what I would think is one of them is wrong.

Now, as it turns out, in a kind of black humor way, dark humor way, the woman had had a very bad day. She had been riding in a bus.

The bus had an accident. Many people were injured. Ambulances came, but there wasn't enough room in the ambulances. So, passerbys were taking injured people to the hospital.

And unfortunately for this woman, the driver taking her to the hospital got in a car accident and she was killed instantly. Now, and Kenneth Concer's point was this.

There are many things about historical accounts in the Bible or other places where we just can't harmonize them and we tend to conclude one of them is wrong.

[13:10] That may not be the case. And in fact, lawyers say, hey, you know, if you hear two stories that hang together on every point, it's been contrived.

Because almost always in human experience, eyewitnesses don't agree on everything. and sometimes they can both be right that once you really know the details.

So, there's this possibility. But tell me, here we are, we're struggling with the theology. What did these people believe? What's the application for them? And here's one of my points.

that we would become more confident that we don't have to know everything about the historical, linguistic, you know, social context in order to have God speak to you through the Bible.

What's the application for first the Corinthians? What were they supposed to do? Believe in the resurrection. They were supposed to believe in the resurrection. Both resurrections. Both resurrections.

[14:26] And what else? They were supposed to believe something and then what were they supposed to do? This comes near the end of the passage. To act. To act.

And take action. Take action. What action? To obey. To obey. To obey what? Okay, they were to obey Paul saying this is the truth, believe it.

But then, on a day-to-day basis, what were they supposed to do? Not go on sinning? Not go on sinning. And, in particular, living for pleasure, it would seem.

What's the quote? Hey, if there's no resurrection, let's eat and drink because tomorrow we die. Might as well, you know, this is all the life there is. Let's enjoy it.

And, if you're, for whatever reason, tempted in that direction, you know, we should apply this to our lives too.

[15:30] And so now we can go home. After, by the way, there's a mistake here. There is not supposed to be an eight here. But, once we've heard that we're not to live for pleasure anymore, you know, if that's really God's word to us, it's probably because we have been living for pleasure rather than God's kingdom in some area of our life.

And so, we need to say, I don't want to give this up, Lord, but, I will. And again, that's often where we end, like I did, you know, with, yes, learn more about leadership in the church, man.

Yes, I will. But no, I didn't. So, number six, how and when. Don't let your obedience slip away due to forgetfulness or distraction.

It's important. All right, now, unless Pastor Matt or somebody else feels that I am really getting heretical here, what I want to do is spell out for you what I think the more complete problem in the Corinthian church might have been.

And then, we have time to read through the passage again and see how it does or doesn't match more consistently the text. And if we get through all that, then, we might say, ah, you know what? [17:09] There may be even a tighter application for us today. And we may see some things in our own lives that are pretty similar to the problems that the Corinthians had.

So, let's talk about what do we mean by the resurrection? So, four options about the afterlife. One, no afterlife for either body or spirit.

Typical materialistic view today, atheistic worldview. Even some religious people have that worldview. Number two, afterlife for the spirit but not the body.

Number three, afterlife for spirit together with the body. That's the biblical position. Number four, afterlife for the body but not the spirit.

Now, I haven't watched enough zombie movies to know for sure but is that kind of, you know, yeah, they don't seem to have much spirit or soul at that point, but their body lives on.

[18:06] Well, number four is not a common theological position taken, especially in the evangelical church. So, so I don't think we have to worry about that one.

Now, again, I'd assumed like Elizabeth, like what I understood Elizabeth to say. They were rejecting the resurrection, kind of like a position one.

But, some things about the passage just didn't hang together consistently that way in my mind. So, here's an attempt at giving some historical background that may help us.

one, most pagans in the first century Roman world believed in an afterlife. It was a rare exception that they didn't believe in an afterlife. But the kind they believed in was an afterlife for the soul, not for the body.

So, that is most likely part of the belief of this group. You know, your spirit will live on, the body stays in the grave, decays, is gone.

[19:16] End of that, the body story. Now, so that's one of the two things. Oh, and the two applications, I think this is generally agreed on.

A lot of pagans in the first century made these two applications. So, we're not going to have a body later that we'll be able to enjoy things like food, sex, okay, some of us just think of those things, or other pleasures that come from the body.

So, you better get it now. And secondly, seeing as you're not going to have a body later on, what you do with your body now really doesn't have an impact on the soul.

The body's temporary, the soul is eternal, the eternal immutable soul really doesn't get changed much by what you do in the body, so it won't make any difference in the afterlife.

So, do as you please. Now, let me go on a little bit, and this is the back side, for whatever reason it says number one. Oh yeah, that's right, that's the first thing we're trying to figure out.

[20:21] What problem or sin did the Corinthians have? Well, this is what I think. The afterlife involved a continuation of our spirit, but not our body.

There was no resurrection of the body. This could slip into the position that what was done in the body in this life was of little or no consequence for the afterlife.

number two, our relationship with one's God didn't depend so much on morality, but on loyalty. Kind of like some political leaders.

Once they get in power, they want their staff or whatever not to tell them that what they're doing is morally wrong. They want them to say, okay, you tell me to do it, I'll do it.

Even if I take one for the team, it's politics. It's politics. It's power. After all, what were the Roman gods like morally?

[21:21] They were an immoral bunch. So they don't care about morality, and in my relationship with them, they don't care about my morality. They just want me to sacrifice lots of sacrifices, be loyal to them, and whatever influence they may have in the afterlife, as long as I'm loyal to them, hopefully that will be good.

I'm not sure what they can do for me then, but right now, I want them to do a lot of things for me. I'm going to pray, Apollo, heal me of my sickness, you know, Mercury, please make me a faster runner so I can win at the Olympics, you know, give me a better job.

God help me help me now. The afterlife was very vague for most of them, and again, how their God was going to help them then, I don't know, but I'll sacrifice to you now, you solve my problems now. So, going on, where it says, these two points combined, as I'm repeating myself here, to result in a position that bodily sins, like sexual immorality, gluttony, and, what's the last one? Drunkenness. Okay, drugs, I forgot drugs, had no consequences on the next life. Further, since the effectiveness of one's God to really make a difference in the next life, after all, once you cross the Styx River, is that right?

[22 : 58] Is there a Styx River? Who is the God of the underworld? Hades. Hades, maybe. And he's going to trump things there. So, I'm not sure what my God can do for me in the next life, but, maybe something, I hope so.

But, the focus tends to be what your God could do for you here and now. Last point. Now, what if a person hears about Jesus?

Wow. He's a God of some kind, who healed the sick big time, who could calm the storm, who could take five loaves and two fishes and feed 5,000 men plus women and children.

Hey, that's the kind of God I want. Sign me up. Baptize me for Jesus. We're going to get together, share stories about how Jesus has changed our life here and now.

Almost sounds like a health and wealth gospel church. church. And in fact, I think there's a close relationship between the worst health and wealth gospel people and these guys in Corinth.

[24 : 17] people. Because their focus wasn't on living a holy life, living for the kingdom of God. It was on what Jesus wants to do for you now.

Jesus is your genie. You know, you're loyal to him. You offer prayers. You praise him. He feels happy with you. Gives you lots of goodies now.

But of course, Jesus is just one of many gods. So all the shortcomings that all the other gods have, Jesus has those too.

But boy, he heals the sick. He feeds the hungry. He protects those who are in the midst of the storm. Sign me up. So my guess is that there were some people in Corinth who had a very pagan understanding of the divineness of Jesus.

And were treating him just like they would treat, you know, a typical Roman god. With the focus being on this life.

[25 : 31] Of course, my soul is going to live on. But I will still cross the Styx River and I'll still have to deal with Hades. But for right now, I'm going to put my trust in Jesus.

And part of that is being baptized. And so when we're baptized, we can trust Jesus to fix my earthly, bodily problems here and now.

Now, let's read 1 Corinthians 15, 1-34 again. With that, re- what do you call this?

With that scenario, re- creation. Reorientation. Yeah, that kind of view of what the doctrinal problem in Corinth may have been.

And if you want to, you can ask whoever will read for us to stop. And when I get to a point where I want to stop and make a point, I'll feel free to do that too, so whoever is reading, don't take offense at our interruptions.

[26 : 37] Who would be willing to read, or at least start reading? 1 Corinthians 15, 1-34. Lydia, thank you. Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures.

Okay, okay, okay, yes, Jesus was raised from the dead, and the importance of that is, of course, that it gives some real, I mean, in addition to all the miracles, and the feeding of the hungry, and the stilling of the storm, man, he even raised people from the dead, and he even raised himself from the dead, I don't know for how long, you know, the people got raised from the dead temporarily, but hey, I'll take that, I'll take a temporary get out of death free card for a little while, if he chooses to raise me from the dead, and, but of course, the afterlife is spiritual.

And that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve, then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, but some have fallen asleep, then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me, for I am

the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church for God.

But by the grace of God, I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in them. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. Whether then it was I or they, so he preached, and so you believed.

[28 : 26] Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? Well, why would they want to say that anyway? Well, because all their life in their pagan culture, the belief of everybody around them, and their belief was, right, our body dies, end of the body, but our spirit is going to live on somehow, somewhere.

Now of course, Jesus was resurrected, but that was special, but of course, you know, not only do we believe that there's no bodily resurrection of the dead, because everybody else believes it, but come on, it's impossible.

We're pretty good scientists here in Rome, you know, we know what happens to a body, there's no way that that's going to be put back together, well, maybe one time, but we don't believe in the resurrection because it's ridiculous, it's totally untenable, and if you have one exception to the rule, okay, fine, but, you know, for us, no, no resurrection of the body.

But, wait a second, if we really believe a resurrection is impossible, but if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised, and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain, and your faith isn't.

Wait a second, come on, come on, you know, we have this one time resurrection, and plus we're, you know, like everybody else, we're going to live on afterwards, but, the whole presentation of the gospel was based, as far as apologetics goes, on Jesus being raised from the dead.

[30 : 13] Physically, the tomb was empty, it wasn't just that his spirit went around appearing to people, you know, and the dead body was still rotting in the tomb. No, the body wasn't there, it was a physical resurrection.

resurrection, he had a body that ate food. Okay, okay, Jesus was resurrected from the dead, now I totally forgot why I'm saying this, what did you just read?

Then our preaching is in vain, because if the resurrection is really impossible, our story is rubbish, and the whole gospel collapses like a house of cards once you pull the resurrection out.

we are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise, if it is true that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised, and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile, and you are still in your sins.

Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied. Now, for the most part, I am suggesting that that is what people did with the Roman gods.

[31 : 32] The ones that they were loyal to, the benefits they were hoping to get, were primarily here and now in this life. And if you think Jesus is in the same category, and you are praying for him to help you in this life now, whatever those people who believed in Christ before, who have now died, that is the end of it.

You know, they are not going to get any more benefit from Jesus now. It is over. Get what you can now. Now, at this point you may say, Matt is getting a little shaky in his logic here, you are probably right.

But, maybe it is a little helpful. Please continue. But as in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.

For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order.

Christ's the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. Now let me just interrupt and say, look, Paul is saying, hey, for your theology, don't go back to Roman paganism.

[32 : 46] Most of it is false. There may be some true aspects to it, like there is in almost any belief system, but most of it is false. If you want to know about the afterlife, go back to the scriptures.

and so Adam you know that was the problem and the problem was physical death and Jesus solves it with physical resurrection get your theology right 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 okay now let's stop right there I want you to as Lydia reads this next section think could it be that Paul inspired by the Holy Spirit is giving a counter doctrine to the mistaken doctrine that Jesus was just like one of many gods in the Roman pantheon 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 to put all things in subjection under him when all things are subjected to him then the son himself will also be subjected to him but put all things in subjection under him that God may be all in all no Jesus is not just another Roman type God he is the son of God everybody every God every authority is going to be subjected to him you've been thinking about him and in a big some of you know of the book your God is too small well their God was really too small their picture of Jesus otherwise what do people mean by being baptized on behalf of the dead if the dead are not raised at all why are people baptized on their behalf I have no idea because I really don't know what they're talking about so I admit it let's just move on I mean they knew what he was talking about and I believe they got the logic very clearly and we can speculate but I think for the most part it's speculation why am I 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 if the dead are not raised let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die so here was Paul the apostle he was living his present life with a total focus on the life to come on Jesus' return the resurrection and what would happen then he was not focusing on the pleasures of this life now he would say God gives us all these good things for our enjoyment you know he doesn't have anything against physical pleasure but we're in the midst of a spiritual war you know our focus should not be on having a jolly time right now on the battlefield but the Corinthians were living like health and wealth gospel people while Paul the person they were supposedly following was out fighting wild beasts in Ephesus whatever that means

I tend to think it means something literal even though there's no other account of it in the New Testament or any place else but I think he ended up in some really bad place where it looked like he was going to die but by God's grace he didn't but he was willing to die and let it all in there because he was living today with the return of Christ and the resurrection in the mind while the Corinthians were living today praying to Jesus you know to give them what they wanted and had no concern about looking at to the return of Christ and what that would mean do not be deceived bad company ruins good morals who are you hanging out with who are you listening to you know if you're hanging out every day with people who say oh you can't believe what the Bible says you know it's full of fairy tales if you hear that over and over and over again without the fullness of the Holy Spirit and the help of the church and other people

[37 : 27] God provides it has an impact on most of us so who are you hanging out with who are you listening to where are you getting your theology from 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 if I'm right in part they thought of Jesus like a typical Roman God they had no knowledge of God they hadn't gotten their theology right and they were having a good time I think at the worship services and they were praying for God to give them what they wanted they were fairly happy but they were very wrong headed and some really bad they were doing you know they were getting into some really bad things or staying in some really bad things you know Corinth being the Las Vegas or Bangkok of the day and they just didn't get it at all something so here we are to deal with the most important thing of this

Bible study in the last two minutes so I'll just share this when I spoke last time about the resurrection my focus was typically on when bad things happen we need to look at them through the lens of the resurrection and its implications today I might say when things are going well with us when life is great we need to look at that through the lens of the resurrection and see what it has to do what it has to tell us I grew up I think in a very Bible based Christ centered evangelical church but sinner that I was and am I came out of that with this practical theology I'm going to live for Jesus things are going to be great for me I was a pastor for 20 years I'm going to be a pastor and have a wonderful successful ministry

Jesus is going to help me do that instead of seeing Jesus as Lord and me working for his kingdom I gave lip service to that but what I really wanted was Jesus to work for my kingdom I wanted him to help me be successful have lots of good food and drink have a great married life and so as you might guess those were a lot of the focuses of my prayer life I want to have a good time here now

because I wasn't living today with my focus on the day of Christ's return have any of you heard of or seen the classic movie the bridge over the river quai how many have seen it the old guys okay let me quickly tell you the story because I find it powerful world war ii a british unit of some size has been captured by the japanese and they're being held in a japanese preserve war camp now they have a an effective head officer senior officer he's a good leader he's a tough guy he's not going to be pushed around but the japanese try and squash him unsuccessfully and he takes what they dish out and is victorious in a moral sense of the word and he survives too and he just has the ultimate admiration of all the men and the japanese enemies you know are put to shame by his great ability now you know that's often what i want for my life i want as a christian not as a british person but as a christian to be successful to be victorious and i want all those non-believers out there to see how wonderful christ and christianity is yes i live for that so he wins but then he makes a critical mistake he says i'm going to keep showing you that the british way is the right way to do things you want us to build a bridge for your army across the river i'll show you the british can do it better than anybody else and so he leads his men in this wonderful effort to build a bridge for their enemies so they can kill more british people instead of focusing on the fact that the people he's doing this work for are at war with his kingdom he says i've carved out my own kingdom here i have their respect i am you know going to have a wonderful time here i'm going to be victorious by helping the enemy but he doesn't realize that so they build this beautiful bridge and and he is just he's totally lost it as far as perspective he doesn't have his vision on that day the end of the war when the british will be successful he's looking at the here and now boy when they see how great the british can build a bridge they will think i'm wonderful and they'll think we're wonderful he wasn't living today with the right day in mind he was living today with today in mind he wasn't living today with the end of the war in mind and all that that involved at the end of the movie it's like the veil gets lifted from his eyes and all of a sudden he sees that his priorities had been upside down that's happened to me and i'll just give you one quick example you know i started teaching 15 years ago and after a while i said wow public education in the united states is really messed up maybe god will use to help straighten out at least some of the public education problems now why would i want to do that i put a lot of time and effort into it but look the united states in spite of its christian cultural heritage which is wonderful and maybe the most christian cultural christian country rivaling israel maybe for a while as a nation who had people in it who loved god of course that didn't last very long with israel for a month of time and it hasn't lasted long in the united states either why do i want to save u.s.

public education and as a first step i'll just start there first i'll save you know u.s. educational system and then it will save western society i'll be teacher of the year i'll get all kinds of praise from people who hate jesus um you know the united states is following the trajectory of every other great nation in the history of the world i think because they're moving away from god because they're moving away from moral principles uh do i really think god wants me to stop that or even slow it down at my better moments you know just like god said to the israelites in exile in babylon work for the well being of your city i don't think he meant you know the babylonian government he meant the people of the city work you know help them love them don't love the babylonian you know country which was horrible and sinful and despicable no work for the well being of the people who god loves and who you should love and just this past week you know i the tiniest tiniest baby step i got a chance to express my point of view about what was wrong with new haven public education to a group of teachers in the school oh yes finally we're going to make some progress and you know the presentation went all right i said okay what do i do next to politicize this little step you know how do we convince more people of the error of their ways so that they'll you know so there'll be a better school system for the students in new haven okay i want to do that but you know what god is not going to use me to save western society but by his grace i may have an impact on some of those teachers who listen to me maybe my focus should not be okay how do we gang together instead of a political caucus you know in our school but to go and use this opportunity to follow up with them to listen to them to build a relationship with them you know to share christ with them as i have the opportunity so maybe god is speaking to you about this issue and i'll express it once again in two ways maybe you live your life day to day and you're focusing on the things of this life and your prayer life may reflect that you know what do you pray for don't do that be like paul live today while focused on that day second way to express it are you really living today for the kingdom of god or have you has your focus got shifted so you're really asking god to help you build your kingdom and maybe it has a good purpose you know i want to help the students my students in new heathen but

what am i putting first my kingdom or am i really listening to the lord so that i'm doing what he wants me to for his kingdom now if god convicts you yes this is a problem that you have i hope you'll say lord help be redeemed but don't let it end there today sometime today pray lord
[49 : 17] specifically what do you want me to do to change this and when am i going to put it into action and as pastor nick was saying maybe you'll say to somebody hey god spoke to me about this today will you pray for me and check up with me about that let's pray lord right now i am full of your joy because i have a little view of who you are and what you're doing in the world and that by your grace you've made me part of it when you return lord i will be one of your many many children who will rule with you we will be effective in establishing and running your kingdom but lord i ask for myself and each of us that while the war is raging we don't try and build a business or a kingdom that we'll just have fun with here while the war is raging help me lord day by day to live today with your return and the resurrection in clear focus that i may continue to be full of your joy and that i may be effective in jesus name amen just in case just in case just in case