



Message **Transcript**

The Resurrection Life

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All right. All right. Well, happy Father's day today to all the fathers. So great to be able to worship with you. Will you do me a favor?

Would you welcome our Broomfield campus, who's worshipping along with us today? Happy Father's day. So great to have you. And as we go before the Lord, let's just prepare our hearts, too. As we've been worshipping him, let's prepare our hearts and ready ourselves to receive his living and active word.

This morning. Let's pray. Lord Jesus, we give you praise, glory, and honor for who you are. Lord, thank you so much for this wonderful day. Thank you for all that you did in the lives of all the children and adults who helped with high five this last week.

Lord, we praise you for every single child that you bring to us and pray that you would do a work in and through them. And, Lord, today, as we open your living and active word, we're asking you one thing. Speak, Lord. Speak. Lord, we're ready to hear what you have to say to us.

Lord, we confess any known sin that we have, any distractions that are there so that we can clearly hear what you would have to say to us so that your will can be accomplished in and through our lives. So, Lord, as you speak, we are telling you right now, we're ready not only to receive what you have, but to put into practice what you show us. And all God's people who agreed and were ready to receive his word and do what he says, agreed by very loudly saying, amen. Amen. I want to encourage you.

Open your bibles this morning to first corinthians, chapter 15. One corinthians, chapter 15. We're gonna begin in verse 20. If you do not have a copy of the scriptures about every other chair has a copy underneath it. So feel free to take that and follow along.

And what we're gonna be talking about this morning is the resurrection life. It's the so what? Because last week we talked about the fact that Jesus has risen from the dead. As a matter of fact, what we said was it was so important. Paul ended last week's session by telling us seven things that are tragic if indeed Jesus did not rise from the dead.

Number one, he's still dead. Our faith is useless. Preaching is useless. And he ends the whole section by saying this, if only for this life, we are to believe in Jesus. We are to be pitied more than any other people.

In other words, he says, if your faith in God is only for this life, you are to be pitied more than anybody else. Why? Because the resurrection life promises us not only life presently, but life for all eternity. And so Paul's making the case that Jesus indeed rose from the dead. And like I told you last week, it is one of the most historically viable, provable facts.

If you set out to disprove the resurrection, you'll be among hundreds of thousands who have tried. All have failed. Many who have tried have come to know Jesus personally because of the overwhelming evidence. I'm here to tell you Jesus Christ is alive and he has gotten up out of the dead, and he is with us here today. Amen.

And that's really, really good news. And so what Paul is going to begin to explain

is the so what of this resurrection life? And as we look in this section today, I want to highlight three things that the resurrection of Jesus Christ provides for us individually and as a church. So with your Bible open, follow along with me. As Paul says this, in verse 20 of one corinthians 15, he says this.

But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who are asleep. For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam, all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. And the first thing Paul wants to point out is that the resurrection of Jesus Christ provides us with the certainty of a new life. The fact that Jesus Christ got up out of the dead provides us with the certainty of a new life.

Notice what he says. But now Christ has been raised from the dead. That's the perfect tense. It means it happened in the past, but it has present ramifications for what it means now. It means, yeah, Jesus rose from the dead nearly 2000 years ago, but his resurrection from the dead still has implications for us today.

And not only did Jesus rise, but we in him can have a new life. It says, Christ has

been risen from the dead. Notice what he says. The firstfruits of those who are asleep now, firstfruits are really a representative sample. If you study in the book of Leviticus, specifically Leviticus, chapter 23 and verse ten, you'll see that when people harvested in the Old Testament, the first thing they did was they brought first fruits.

It means they brought a representative sample to the priests before the rest of the harvest came in. It was a way of acknowledging, my first goes to the Lord and all the rest belongs to him. It would be the same today as when we tithe our income. It's not just saying God, you get 10%. We're bringing our first fruits to the Lord saying, God, my first and best belongs to you, and by the way, all the rest is yours as well.

When Jesus Christ rose from the dead, he was presented as the firstfruits to his father, saying, I'm the first one ever to rise from the dead. And the harvest that is coming of all who will believe in me are coming after Jesus was the first fruit. I mean, if you study world history, you will only find one person who has conquered death who is still alive. There's only one. There are no others that have ever done that.

There are many who will come in the end times claiming that I am the Christ and

will deceive many. But here's what you can be assured of. Anybody else in the history of the world who has ever claimed to be Christ or claimed to be God has died and is still dead. Jesus Christ said, I am going to die. He spoke plainly about it.

He did die, but he also said he would rise. And three days later he did it just exactly as what he said he would do. He is alive as he has ever been. And through his first fruits of being raised from the dead, for all those who would believe in him, they too will never have to experience death because of who Jesus Christ is. Now, we live in a day and age where we don't talk much about death and we don't talk much about life until it impacts us personally.

Until we go through a time where somebody that we love is suffering and on the verge of death or dies, until we go through a tragedy where somebody that we know dies, and all of a sudden it alerts us to our own mortality, because the fact is, every single one of us will die. That's why Paul said, if your faith is only for this life, you're to be pitied more than anybody else. Why? Because you will die. That the resurrection of the dead was not Jesus rising just so you'd have a good life here.

Jesus rose from the dead so you could experience eternal life with him forever and forever. Amen. And this first fruits idea is what we see throughout the scripture and other passages. If you flip with me to ephesians, chapter one, ephesians, chapter one, and verses 13 and 14, he talks a little bit about what first fruits looks like. Using a slightly different language.

He says in him, in Christ, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in other words, when you heard the gospel preached, here's what happened. Having also believed, it means you believed in this. You were sealed in him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge, make note of that word pledge. I'll tell you what it means in a second of our inheritance with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of his glory. A pledge is a down payment that is made that certifies.

The rest is on the way. When you confess Jesus Christ as Lord, when you believe in Jesus Christ as your personal lord and savior, the Holy Spirit seals you with the promise or a pledge saying, I've made a payment for you and it's all going to be paid for. It's forthcoming. So what I've started is going to happen. It's the same wording that's used in two corinthians, chapter five and verse five, just a little bit

shorter passage.

It says, now, he who prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave to us the spirit as a pledge or as a down payment. It's the first fruits. And when we experience Christ and the Holy Spirit dwells in us and lives inside of us, that is the down payment of everything good that is coming. It means Jesus is going to make do on what he says he's going to do. Now, how can we trust him?

Because 100% of the things Jesus said he was going to do, he's always done. I mean, you study the life of Christ. He gave his word. His word always comes true. So when Jesus says, when you believe in me, I will give you the Holy Spirit as a down payment, as the firstfruits of my coming, he gives us the Holy Spirit.

He promises, he delivers, which is also a down payment of the future glory that we're all going to experience. And notice what he says in this verse, 21, the second verse we read today, for since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. Dead. Okay, now, I love the gospel because what God does is he redeems the things that are broken so he can bring redemption to the world. He

always does that.

How did sin enter the world? Men. Do you know how sin entered the world?

Through one. What?

Through one man, Adam. That's what romans 5:12 teaches. Sin entered the world through one man, Adam. So sin came through a man. And because man was broken, what did God do?

God became a man. The word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. What was broken in humanity, God became so that that which was broken, God could redeem. What did man do to sin? Do you remember what he did?

He ate fruit off. What do you remember what he ate off of? He ate off a tree. You remember that? I mean, it was just a tree.

We see a tree in Genesis that was broken. That man was told, don't eat off that tree. So what does this man do in the New Testament? This God becomes a man, and where does he go? His ultimate purpose is a tree, to die on a cross.

Man ate off a tree. So Jesus is like, I'll redeem that by dying on one, right? And then notice this. What is the result of man's sin from eating off a tree? It's death.

So what does man do? Jesus the God man comes and gets nailed to a tree as a man and rises from what? The dead. He dies so that we can be made alive. Let me tell you something.

Jesus always uses the broken things in the world to redeem the world. Now listen to me. This is really important, because when we talk about the resurrection life, so often we talk about it as future. And it is a future event where our soul will be reconnected with an eternal body, either for immortality with Jesus and eternal bliss, or immortality in hell in eternal torment. That's what the resurrected life is.

When you die, your soul immediately departs to one place or the other. It will be joined. We'll talk about the resurrection here in a minute and over the next two weeks, but your body will rejoin your soul either to be with Christ or not. So it's a future event. But let me tell you something.

Salvation is always talked about in the Bible as a past tense event, past tense event, a present tense event, and a future tense event. I mean, that's why in romans eight it says for those God foreknew, he also called, those he called, he also justified. Those he justified, he also glorified. I mean, God stands out of space and time. And when God chooses who's going to be his, it's all in one moment for God, even though for us it's progressive for God's like, I know I'm going to save Jeff.

I know I'm going to save Jeff. And it's as good as done that one day I'm going to be presented faultless before the father with exceedingly great joy from the Son, perfect in every way, that's as good as done. Right now. I don't experience that yet, but in God's mindset, that's as good as done, because I've already believed in Christ. And when we believe in Christ, yes, it's a past tense event.

Yes, there's someday our resurrected life will be with him. But what does the resurrection life mean for us now? It means this, that you have the resurrection life and power of God through the Holy Spirit living on the inside of your life and so you can experience the fullness of God right now. Here's what the enemy will tell you. You can't.

Your life's not gonna work like that. Look at you. Look at the way you screwed that up. Look at the way you screwed that up. Since becoming a Christian, God can't use someone like you.

You've been a drug dealer. Hey. You've been an alcoholic. Hey. You've been sexually immoral.

Hey. You've been mean to people. Hey, you're prideful. God can't use someone like you. That's what the enemy says.

Here's what God does. God takes the most broken things in your life, and if you're willing to submit them to the lordship of Christ, that's the ministry he chooses to use. He only uses broken people. Do you know why? He has no other choices.

He has no other choices. He can't look for perfect people. And the problem with religion is we take our pain. We take the areas of our pain and we push them to the side and say, God, I don't want to deal with that. And, yeah, that was my sin and my pain.

God wants us to embrace that and say, yeah, this was the pain in my life, God, I confess that it was painful. Either was acted upon me or I chose to do something wrong. I confess that to you. Heal me, God, and then use that pain in my life to help heal others. Right?

That's the resurrection life. It's God taking the broken things in you, redeeming them, so that the world can notice a difference. Why? It says in verse 22, for as in Adam, all die, so also in Christ, all will be made alive. In Adam, all die.

What does it mean to be an Adam? It means that you were conceived. It means that you have a human nature. It means that you have a sinful DNA. From the time you were conceived, you caught the virus.

From the time you came out of the womb, you demonstrated you caught it. Right? Every single one of us has sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. There is no one good. No, not one.

There is none who seeks after God. There is no one who does that. We all go our own way, and we demonstrate that from the time we come out of the womb in our own unique ways. Right? We live for us.

That's what the Bible points out. And all of us are, quote unquote, in Adam, in the realm of humanity. There's not one person that stands here and says, well, I'm not as bad as somebody else. No, we're all sinners, every single one of us. But in Christ, all will be made alive.

It doesn't mean that God saves everybody. It means that those that God has saved are in a new realm and they are no longer what they used to be. They used to be in Adam, but now you are in Christ. It's called a great exchange. It's a divine exchange.

I take all my sins, sin that I've ever sinned or that I ever will sin, and I place that at the foot of Jesus, and I receive in that moment all of his righteousness. Amen. I mean, that's the great exchange. I mean, when I think about that, I think about it like this. I take the dead life that I had and I exchange it at the cross for the eternal life of God's one and only son.

I take all the shame I have for my sin, and I exchange it at the cross for the confidence that I have in Jesus Christ. I take the guilt from all of my sin, and I exchange it for the peace that I can have with God presently. I take all of the discouragement that I felt in my life, and I exchange it in a moment for the joy that comes through Jesus Christ. I take all the despair that I see in the world, and I exchange it for the hope found only in Jesus Christ. I take all my selfishness where I

live for me, and I exchange it all for the service and glory to the Lord Jesus Christ.

There's this exchange that takes place, and I want to tell you something. It's not totally progressive. It's immediate. When I give my life to Christ, there may be behaviors that haven't caught up yet with my personal identity. But I want to tell you the moment I trusted Christ.

I am completely righteous in Christ. I am totally forgiven in Christ. I am 100% healed in Christ. I am a new creation in Christ. Now, it may take a while for my behaviors to catch up with that thought, but at the moment, I trust in myself, savior, I am all those things.

And here's what the devil whispers. No, you're not. Look in the mirror. Look at how you treated your spouse this week. Look at how you treated your kids this week.

Look at how selfish you are with your money. Look at how selfish you are with

your time. Here's what I would say. Don't look at any of that stuff. Look to the savior and what he says about you.

Because if you're his. He loves you with an unconditional love. And you are already all the things the Bible says that you are, even if your behaviors haven't caught up with him yet. That's called the resurrection life. And if you'll begin to live like God sees you, everything in your life will begin to change.

See, it's not just enough to believe, yeah, I'm going to heaven because I believe Jesus rose from the dead. Yes, you can. It's just believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, you will be saved. But I'm here to tell you, there's so much more to the life. You can experience the fullness of God presently until you meet him.

Because. Because he loves you so much. There is no other religion in the world that can make the claim that their God has come and redeemed humanity and risen from the dead. There is only one authority of rising from the dead. It is the Lord Jesus Christ.

He promised by believing in him, he would send his holy spirit who's in you. There's no other religion that makes that claim. The Bible makes the claim, and I believe the claim that when you trust Jesus, the Holy Spirit comes into your life. Which means if you believe in Jesus, you don't go looking for God. He's already in you.

You experience him and you allow him by being filled by him to use your life for incredible things. Right? You don't need to go looking for God. You have the resurrection power of the living God already on the inside. It's called new life.

And I'm just here to tell you, you can experience the fullness of all God has for you right now, in this moment, today. Today you grow in your understanding of who you already are. Amen. You already have everything you need for life and godliness. And it's certainty of a new life.

It's not just certainty of a new life that's coming. It's a guarantee. We've looked at scriptures that are a promise of the down payment. I mean, you can look forward to the fact that if you die this week or you live another 50 to 75 years, hey, you can be in

the presence of Jesus. That's a great thing.

But I'm here to tell you, you can experience the fullness of who he is right now, today, in this place. Amen. That's good news. That's the resurrection life, and you have it in Christ. It's certainty of a new life.

It means this. Let me just say one more thing. Some of you are here today. You're struggling with certain sins. And you've struggled with them from the time you became a believer.

And you hear this lie in your head that says you're always going to struggle with that. That's just the way you are. You swear. You're going to swear until you meet Jesus. But don't worry, he forgives you.

And one day he'll take that away or you're sexually immoral. But don't worry, one day when you die, God will take that away. Or you have anger issues, but don't worry,

one day when you die, God will take that away. I'm here to tell you with the Holy Spirit on the inside. If you'll submit to him, he can take all that away.

See, the christian life is not just difficult. Let me tell you what the christian life is. It is impossible to live. I mean, I've tried living it out, can't do it. Even today when I try to live it out in my flesh and say, I'm going to try to read better, I'm going to try to pray more, I can't do it.

The only way I can live out the resurrection life of Christ is to submit myself to Christ and tell the Holy Spirit, you've got to make all the changes. You've got to do all the work. And it's not me doing it. It's Christ in me, the hope of glory doing it. And there's great joy and peace in that where I'm submitted to God, explaining to him, I can't make this happen, but God, I know you can, and it's true for everybody.

Listen to me, church. Listen to me. Because some of you, especially those of you believe there's certain good kind of Christians and certain, okay, kind of Christians and certain bad kind of Christians. No, there's only Christians and non Christians, and there's Christians who are filled with the spirit, who live it out. And there's Christians

who are Christians who aren't filled with the spirit, who can't.

And then there are non Christians. That's all there is. If you're a believer, you can live life to the full the same way any believer you read about in church history has every single one. And it has nothing to do with how good you are. It has to do with your ownership of the fact that you have an identity in Christ and a certainty of a new life in him.

Amen. Let me tell you a second thing. The resurrection of Christ provides us with. It provides us with the hope that Jesus Christ is Lord of all. The hope that Jesus Christ is Lord of all not only certainty that we can live this new life, but hope, hope that this life is coming.

Notice what he says in verse 23. But each in his own order will be made alive. Christ the firstfruits which we've already talked about. After that, those who are in Christ at his coming, when Jesus Christ comes back, we read in first Thessalonians 4:16, the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are alive will be caught up in the air to be with the Lord forever and ever.

Amen. When Jesus comes back, regardless of your timing, understanding of when that's going to happen, and I'm not going to get into that today, but regardless of what that is, here's what I'm here to tell you. Jesus Christ is coming back fully, bodily, physically, in all of his glory. When he does, those of us who know him will be resurrected for life with him forever and ever. Amen.

And that what Christ rose from the dead, that same life, that's going to be our resurrected life in him. Amen. It says. Then comes the end, when he hands the kingdom to the God and father, when he has abolished all rule and all authority and all power. For he must reign until he has put his enemies under his feet.

Amen. Let me tell you what the scripture points out. When Jesus Christ comes back, you will not need to ask your neighbor, has he come? Is he here? You will see with your own eyes him ruling and reigning on planet earth.

And while there are different understandings of this, and some believe, hey, it all

happens in a moment, others, like me, will say, no, there's going to be a millennial reign for a thousand years where he's going to demolish all, all of his enemies. However you understand that, let me be crystal clear on this. When Jesus comes back for his own to judge the living and the dead, he will rule and reign. He will have all authority. He will have all power.

There will be none that will match his. Amen. And then he says this, for he must reign until he has put all enemies under his feet. There won't be any other contenders. I mean, there won't be like, there's Jesus, who's the Lord, and then there's this guy over here who's not quite the Lord, but he's kind of like him.

No, there'll be Jesus and nobody else. It's a monarchy. Jesus will be king. He's ruling and reigning now, but you're going to see him fully, bodily and physically rule and reign as the scriptures teach, the last enemy that will be abolished is what? It's death.

Is that not good news or what? I mean, the older I am and the longer I live and the more I see people that I know that are going to their grave, the more I get excited about these verses. My sister, her father in law right now in Chicago, he's only 67

years old. Two months ago, was doing fantastic. Just got put on hospice this week.

We're talking weeks, maybe days, until he goes to meet the Lord. He knows the Lord. He loves the Lord, right? But I can tell you I'm not ready for him to go. I can tell you his family and his grandkids aren't ready for him to go.

But he's going to go and he's ready to meet the Lord. And it's good news for me to know that as a living believer in Christ, I don't worry about death. I worry about sometimes how I'm going to die, but I don't worry about death itself. Once you're dead, immediately you're translated in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. It's the goal of your faith.

It's going to be a great day, right? And that's what he's saying. When Jesus comes back, there won't be any more death. There's no more funerals, there's no more wondering, are they going to get sick? Are they going to get healed?

Are they not? They're healed. They're completely healed. Death is no more.
Jesus will destroy death.

Verse 27 says this, for he, it's talking about the father, for he has put all things in subjection under his feet. But when he says all things are in subjection, it is evident that he is accepted who put all things in subjection to him. In other words, Jesus is going to rule and reign. It's obvious. He's saying that God the Father is not going to be put in subjection.

God the Father, Father is the glorious one, that Jesus, while everything's under his feet, God the father is not underneath him. Which is why it says verse 28. When all things are subjected to him, then the son himself will also be subjected to the one who subjected all things to him. So that God may be all in all. When Jesus comes back and he establishes his rule, his reign, his authority and his kingdom, and he's the ruling reigning king of the universe, he will hand the kingdom over to his dad and he will stay in the position as second person of the trinity as submitted son to the Father for all eternity, just as he always has been.

Why? So that God will be all in all that, the Father, son and the spirit, forever and ever, will be glorified by those who know him. Guys, there's hope. There's hope now. We grieve in this world when people die, but not as those who don't have hope.

We grieve as those who have hope. And the hope is coming for all who know the Lord Jesus Christ, you will see them again. For all who have trusted the Lord Jesus Christ, you will spend eternity with them. And mark my words, while we live in a world today where we would see that, you know what people are saying? It's going to get bad.

It's going to get worse. There's great hope. I mean, 20 years ago, if you would have pressed me, I would have said, hey, if we can get the right political leaders or put the right people in office, it's going to change everything. That ship sailed for me a long time ago. Right?

I mean, I used to believe if we could just do better education and just get people, you know, understanding how the world works and have a better worldview, that everything would be good. That ship sailed a long time ago. For me, here's what I

believe about our world. I believe there's hope for our world to the extent that the Lord Jesus Christ redeems people's hearts. The only hope for the Lord is the Lord Jesus Christ.

And more so than that is, even if you think this, the world, is what it's all about, here's what Jesus would say to you. What does it profit you? What does it profit you? I mean, what benefit is it if you gain the entire world and yet forfeit your soul? In other words, you have the best bank account, you have the best spouse, you have the greatest kids.

You're a philanthroper, everybody loves you. Great relationships. You get to do what you want to do when you want to do it. God gives you 120 years, and you never get sick one time. During those times when you die, if you don't know Jesus, what benefit is that?

Now, most of you know I wasn't a math major, okay? But I know enough about math to know that our time, even if we're given 120 years in light of eternity, is very small. The Bible would call it a vapor. That's as long as you're here, which means this.

The one thing you better get right on this side of heaven is to make Jesus Christ your personal lord and savior.

There's no greater thing, decision, commitment that you can ever do than to confess Jesus Christ as your personal lord and savior and trust him. Why? Because I'm looking at a bunch of dead people walking? You don't feel like it? You will when you get older, like me.

But some of you don't feel like it. But you will. Right? And if that's secure, it changes everything about the present. Knowing that you're gonna stand in front of the Lord Jesus Christ gives you hope in a world that won't provide it.

And I don't care what news source you look at, and I don't care what you see, what you're gonna realize is that the world is not necessarily getting better. Oh, there's glimpses of it. There's things that are better today than there were 20 years ago. There will always be ups and downs and all that stuff, but progressively, as a world, it's not like more people are being redeemed and living for God, that's not the norm. But I'm here to tell you, Jesus, the reason he said he was the Christ is because he

was.

One of my favorite scriptures in all of the New Testament is found in the gospel of Mark, chapter 14. When Jesus is standing before the high priest. And as he's standing before the high priest, they are questioning Jesus before he gets crucified. And they're asking him this question, are you the Christian? Are you the messiah?

In other words, do you really think you're the one that's going to rule the entire world? Do you know what Jesus answer is? And Jesus said to him, listen to this. I am. You heard those words before.

I mean, remember back in the Old Testament where Moses was getting sent to Egypt? And he was like, who should I tell them sent me when I get there. If they don't believe, tell them I am who I am. Sent you. When Jesus was saying, and Jesus even his earthly ministry, he said this before Abraham was, I am.

The I am means I have always been, and I will always be. Here's what Jesus

was saying to the high priest. Are you the Christ? He's saying this, I've always been, and I will always be, long before you were born, before Moses was born, before Abraham was born, I am. There was never a time I didn't exist.

Then he goes on to say this as if that wasn't offensive enough, and you shall see the son of man sitting at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven. In other words, the next time you see me, you will see me in all my glory and power, and coming on the clouds was a sign of judgment. In other words, here's what Jesus said to the high priest of that day. Because a lot of people said, well, Jesus never claimed to be God. Here's what he was saying.

I've always been God. I'm the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. I'm the one that sent Moses, by the way. I'm the one that created you. And, oh, by the way, the next time you see me, you will see me in all my glory and power, and I will not only be coming to judge you, but all the nations of the world.

Yes, I am the Christ. That was his answer at that point in time. That's when he said, enough, and tore his robes and the crucifixion story began. So I started beating

him and punching him and spitting at him and mocking him. Why?

Because he claimed that he was God. Did he authenticate the fact he was? Oh, yeah. Because even though he was beaten to death on a cross, and even though he died and even though he was put in a grave three days later, his father got him out of the grave. He's as alive as he's ever been.

He's still God. He's still with us. He's ruling and reigning from high. And guess what? His word in Mark 14:62 is true.

He's coming to judge both the living and the dead. And he's coming soon, as I often say to a city near you, I don't know when it is, but you will know when it is, and you will see him in all of his glory. Amen. Right. There's hope in that.

If you know Jesus, there's great hope in that. Which means the resurrection of Jesus places Jesus over all because he's the only authority on life and death. He's the

only one. Nobody can speak authoritatively on life and death because nobody's ever conquered death. Only Jesus Christ rose from the dead and is still alive.

He's the only one. Right? He's it. That's why when Jesus went to raise Lazarus from the dead, you remember when Martha came out and was like, hey, if you would have been here, my brother would still be alive. And everybody's weeping.

Here's what Jesus tells Martha. He said to her in John 11:25, I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live even if he dies. And everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. What's he saying?

I'm the resurrection and the life. I'm the one who gives life. Jesus said, I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the father except through me. You know how he ended that little statement in John eleven there?

He said to Martha, do you believe this? See, it's one thing to hear stories about Jesus rising from the dead. It's another thing to come once at Easter and hear, oh, he

rose from the dead. I've heard that story. It's another thing to answer this question.

Do you believe this? Do you believe this? When was the time in your life where the resurrected power of Christ came into your life? When was the time in your life where Jesus became the Lord of all in your life? When was the time in your life where you confessed you were a sinner and you were dead apart from Christ and trusted the Lord in your life?

Do you believe this? Because it's one thing to say, well, I believe facts about it and it's another thing to say, I believe it. You know, I walk up on this platform pretty much every Sunday by God's grace. I don't walk up here and test it out. I'm like, I don't wonder if it's going to hold me up.

I know it's going to hold me up by faith. I believe it by faith. I watched him construct the thing. I know what's underneath here. I don't worry about it.

I don't think about it. I believe by faith. And while many of you would say, well, I believe it would hold me up too, none of you are demonstrating faith in this stage right now. It's not enough to believe that Jesus rose from the dead. It's when you place your faith and trust in him and in him alone.

When did that happen for you? If it hasn't, make today your day. Make today your time. Confess him right where you're sitting as personal Lord and savior. Invite him to be the Lord of your life.

Because if he's really the resurrected God man, which the Bible points out, which I believe with all my heart, it means it places Jesus over every religion, over every philosophy, over any theology. Jesus Christ is Lord over all that. I mean, it just ruins everything, right? And it gives us great hope. When I was a student at Dallas seminary, one of the things that we had to do for one of my classes was go to a non christian assembly and take notes on what they did.

And so we decided to go to a mosque, go to a muslim service. And so we called the guy before we came and said, hey, here's why we're coming. Is that okay with

you? Would we be interrupting anything? They were like, no.

Come on. It was one of the most seeker friendly muslim churches I'd ever been in. The only thing I had to do different, I had to take off my shoes when I got there. And then they kind of lined us up in rows and we were just kind of watching. And I was standing there with my hands at my side or like this, and a bunch of people were going down on their knees and bowing forward.

And I'm like, not doing that. I'm not participating in that type of worship. I'm only going to worship Jesus. So I'm praying for everybody. At the end of the service, I remember asking the guy that was leading, and I'm sorry that I don't know exactly what his title was, but I remember asking him questions.

They brought me a bunch of literature about Islam and was telling me about Muhammad and was telling me about Allah. And I'm like, yeah, yeah, yeah, I can read all that. But answer me this question. When you die, what's gonna happen to you? You know?

His answer was, well, that's just up to Allah. And I'm like, well, how do you know what Allah is gonna tell you when you die? He goes, well, nobody knows. It's just something that we're hoping for. And I said, well, what if you spend your whole life serving Allah and you die and you realize there's no such thing as Allah, or he doesn't like you?

He's like, well, that's just a risk we have to take. I said, well, that's why I'm a Christian. I said, because Jesus Christ rose from the dead and he's still alive. And my hope is not based on a, I hope I meet him someday. My hope is based on the fact he already lives in me and I know him.

Amen. There's a difference. My hope is not a false hope. That man, when I die, I really hope Jesus is real. My hope is real because he did rise from the dead.

And the more I live with him, the more I realize that he's alive, because he speaks to me through his word, word. And I see him active in our world. And as I said many times, I'm not afraid to die. I'm looking forward to the day that I meet Jesus

Christ face to face. That is the goal of my faith, and it should be the goal of all of ours.

Amen. There's hope because Jesus Christ rose from the dead. And finally this, the resurrection of Christ, provides us with the, finally, the motivation to persevere in your faith. Provides you with the motivation to persevere in your faith. Notice what he says.

He's been talking about all things being subjected to him, and he says this in verse 29, which I will just tell you before I read it, is probably the most difficult verse in the New Testament to understand or translate. There are about 200 interpretations. Most of them are silly and inane. I'll try to break it down for you and what I think this means, but again, I'm walking gingerly on this because we don't have enough information from the Corinthians to know exactly what Paul was saying. Here's what he says.

Otherwise, what will those do who are baptized for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why then are they baptized for them? Say what? Right. Let me tell you what this verse doesn't mean.

First, what this doesn't mean, and what Paul is not trying to point out is that you can be baptized for people who have died, and that changes their soul. It would go against all biblical teaching. Hebrews 9:27 says this, for it's appointed unto man to die once, and after that, face judgment. When you die, your soul will immediately go to heaven or hell. That fast.

I mean, in a nanosecond, you'll just be translated one of those two places, and once you're there, there's a chasm. You will never, ever cross. That right. Moreover, the Bible says you must personally place your faith and trust in Jesus Christ, even in this life. I can't make anybody else become a Christian.

I can't vouch for my wife, for my kids, for any one of you. I can't make anybody be a Christian. So Paul is certainly not teaching the Corinthians, hey, when people have gone on, just get baptized for them, and then that'll translate them from purgatory or where they're at into heaven. There's just no such thing. When you die, you are in one place or the other, and that's where you're going to spend your eternity, either with Christ or apart from Christ.

That's what the Bible points out. So what does all this talk about? Like, what is Paul talking about? About being baptized for the dead? Here's a couple options.

One could be this. We know the Corinthian church was pretty messed up, that they were engaged in all sorts of practices that weren't God honoring. It's possible that even in the Corinthian church, for those who said, we don't believe in the resurrection of the dead because of fear in their hearts and knowing that there was indeed a resurrection from the dead, were some of the people who were Christians who had lost loved ones who weren't Christians, were getting baptized for them. And Paul is not encouraging the practice. But what he's saying is, if you don't believe in the resurrection, then why are some of you as Christians being baptized?

For those who have gone on, that's a possibility of what he's saying. Another possibility of what he's saying is to be a Christian. In the first century, there was so much persecution that to line up for the waters of baptism and to be baptized meant that you were probably going to be martyred sometimes. Very likely. And just again, one other word on baptism.

Baptism doesn't save. It just doesn't save. The Bible teaches that it's an outward sign of something God's already done on the inside. Right? If we believe baptism saved, we'd just go dunk people or sprinkle them all week long.

We just send you out with a water bottle and say, go do this. So that's not what Paul's saying. But it could be that Paul's asking this question, otherwise, why? What will those do who are baptized for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why then are they baptized?

He could be asking them. He goes, does the martyrdom of those baptized saints stop others from being baptized? No. In other words, he's saying, why keep insisting on baptism if people are getting killed? In other words, he's saying, why is it that we're still lining up the ranks of baptism if those who are in Christ, once they get baptized, are being martyred?

I mean, it'd be like sending military people to a losing cause, knowing you're going to lose all your soldiers and lose the world. Why would you do that? That could be a definition of what was going on. I mean, this is what Paul was saying. He was saying it was hard.

And we don't get this because we'll quote the scripture in Romans that says, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus was lord and believe in your heart God raised him from the dead, you'll be saved. That's scripture. I believe it with my whole heart. But we don't usually have the context for it. Usually what we're telling people to do is in a public assembly, confess Jesus as Lord.

Hey, confess Jesus, Lord. Believe in your heart that he was raised from the dead. Think about the context. In the first century, if a group of roman soldiers were coming down the path and they were saying, hail Caesar, and you didn't say, hail Caesar, you could lose your head. And in that context, Paul was writing and said, but if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, even in the context of that, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, even though you'll probably be beheaded, you will be saved.

That's what he was saying. And Paul's talking to the corinthian people about the importance of. Importance of persevering in their faith for the lordship of Jesus Christ. It's the motivation to continue. If there's no such thing as the resurrection for the dead, why would you want to continue being a Christian?

Because it's really hard. Did you know the Bible says this? It says anyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. Do you know it's a promise. If you're here today and you say, well, my christian life's pretty easy, I mean, I never get persecuted here.

Might be a suggestion. Maybe there's different areas in your life where you could go more public. Maybe there's different attitudes that you could have that go more public. I don't know of anybody anywhere, at any time in the history of the church that's lived fully for the Lord Jesus Christ that hasn't endured some sort of persecution. It's just normative.

It's not something you're looking for like, I want to be a martyr. I want to know

none of that. That's prideful and selfish. I'm just talking about, I want to honor the Lord Jesus Christ in everything, and I'm going to speak publicly about him and I'm going to talk about the need for him, and I'm going to let other people know that he's the only way. You live that way with everybody you come into contact with, you will be persecuted.

It's a promise from God's word, right? And Paul is saying the motivation for what we do is that we believe Jesus has risen from the dead and that our time here is short. I mean, Paul was in prison. What was he saying? Rejoice in the Lord always.

I'll say it again, rejoice. Paul was trying to debate. For me to live as Christ, to die is gain. I don't know which one I should choose, because it'd be better to depart and be with Jesus, because that would be far better. But to remain on in the body is what I need to do.

Because you need me to continue to teach and serve you. It's a tough decision, but I think I'm going to remain on in the body. And Paul wasn't suicidal. Paul just knew this. It was difficult.

That's why the very next line he says, why are we also in danger? Every hour, go to two corinthians eleven and read Paul's resume. He was hated by people inside the church, people outside the church. In cities, there were riots. He was beaten, he was stoned and left for dead.

I mean, he was imprisoned. He was falsely accused of things. I mean, that was his whole life. And Paul's saying, why in the world would I do this if I didn't believe that Jesus Christ was resurrected from the dead? Let me put it more in 21st century English.

There is no way in the world I would be your pastor if I didn't believe Jesus Christ Rose from the dead. I met some guys at seminary that were like, well, my granddaddy was a pastor. My daddy was a pastor. It's a good job. And my response to them was always, if I wasn't called, there's no way in the world I would do this.

I would do something else completely if Jesus didn't rise from the dead. It's hard

to do ministry. It's hard to do ministry. If you don't believe me, sign up and serve somewhere for a while. Join a small group of people, get involved in our church, and all of a sudden you'll say, well, it's not as nice as it was when we just came on Sundays and listened to you speak.

We have to deal with this group of things called people. Right? That's what Paul was saying. Why would I do this? I'm in danger.

Every hour he says, I affirm, brethren, by the boasting in you which I have in Christ Jesus, I die daily. What's he dying to? He's dying to himself. I die to all my rights. I die to all the things I would want to do.

I die to all the things that I would have done had I not met Jesus. I give them up for the glory of Christ Jesus. If from human motives, he says, I fought wild beasts at Ephesus, what does it profit me now? I tend to take the Bible more literal. Some scholars say he literally fought wild beasts at Ephesus.

Some would say, no, he's metaphorically speaking about the. The riots and all those things. Either way, whatever it was, and I tend to take it more literal, it wasn't good. And what Paul was saying, why would I endure such hardships and trials if Jesus Christ isn't presently the Lord? And if I wasn't going to be redeemed, if there's no resurrection, why would we even meet as a church?

What good things do I have to offer you? The only thing I have to offer you is the resurrected Jesus Christ that wants to come in your heart, redeem your life, and do everything great for you. He says, if the dead are not raised, let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die. And he quotes a couple passages out of Isaiah. In other words, here's what Paul's saying.

Paul's saying, if Jesus Christ isn't Lord, I'm living for me. I'm just going to spend my life serving me. Let me tell you something as a pastor, this may sound unspiritual to you. If I discovered today Jesus Christ was not the Lord of the universe and that he wasn't alive, I would quit my job immediately, and I would only live for me. I would live the most selfish, self indulgent life I ever could until I met Jesus.

Or I would just hope to die. Cause what difference would it make anyway? I mean, that sounds unspiritual, but if it sounds unspiritual, it's probably cause you don't know the resurrected Christ. The only reason that I do what I do is because I believe with my whole heart. Jesus Christ is the king of kings, is the Lord of lords, is alive, is coming back, and we will all give an account for each one of our lives.

That's what Paul's saying. Why would I go through prison? All Paul had to do was say, I denounce Jesus. Great. No more beatings.

Hey, Paul, live a good life. You can be on the circuit, just teaching people good things and how to live a good life. You don't have to endure any more pain or any more suffering. We won't behead you. You can get out of the prison cell.

He's like, why would I do that? Jesus Christ is Lord. And even if I have to die for this, it's so worth it, because I'm living for an eternity with him. Amen. It's Christ who lives in me.

Then he says this, and he gives us a couple exhortations. He says, do not be deceived. Bad company corrupts good morals. He says this, if you're really gonna live for Jesus, just pay attention to this. You as a Christian are called to evangelize the world, which means you're gonna see people that have bad morals, which means you're called to witness to people that have bad morals.

But be aware, bad morals corrupt good character. It means if your closest circle of influence are people that aren't living for Jesus, they will have more influence on you than you'll have influence on them. Okay? The guys I hang out with on a regular basis, you know who they are. They love their wives and they love being dads to their kids.

Now, I see guys or hang out with guys or in Bible study with guys, they may not love their wife very much. They're not my circle of influence. The guys I hang out with, I want to hang out with guys that love their wives because I love my wife. I want to hang out with guys that love their kids and are trying to be a champion for them because that's what I want to do for my kids. Right?

I don't want to hang out with the filth of the world as my inner circle. And, oh, by the way, you can't do it. My first three years in college is a testimony. You can't do it. You cannot live out the life that God requires if your closest associates don't believe what you believe.

Kids, listen to me. I'm just saying. Listen to me. You can't hang out with all your partying friends and say, well, I'm the one Christian in there that's living for Jesus. You can't do it.

You need to hang out with people that are living for Jesus and then be peer pressure to them as to what the resurrected life of Christ looks like in you. You can't hang out with people in the business world that cheat, steal and lie and say, well, that's who I do business with, but I'm living for Jesus. On Sunday, they'll have more influence on you than you will on them. You can't hang out with immoral people. That's what Paul is saying.

He goes, if the resurrected life of Christ is in you hang out with people who are experiencing the resurrected power of Christ in their life because bad company

corrupts good morals. And then he says this, become sober minded as you ought and stop sinning. For some have no knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame. Now, clearly there's people in the world that have no knowledge of God.

And perhaps he was rebuking them or encouraging them to go out to evangelize. But I think because he's writing this letter to the church, what he's telling the church is, hey, be sober minded and stop sinning. In other words, what he's saying to the church is, yeah, it's not a big deal. I'm forgiven anyway. He's like, stop it.

Live for Christ. And he says this. Some of you, for some who, some who are in the church have no knowledge of God in other words, you know how easy it is to come to our church every single week and think because there's a pastor that opens up the Bible or because there's a worship team that leads us in song or because we champion who Jesus Christ is, that just by being here that you understand who he is and you don't. Individually, you must make a response. Individually, you must tell Jesus whether you're a young boy or girl or an older man or woman at some point in your life.

Jesus, I realize I'm mortal. I need your immortality in me. I need the new life in

me. I can't live out what you require, but I want to follow after you. When does that happen for you?

And see, we're going to close today with a song, one of my favorite songs we do as a church called Glorious Day, which is really a testimonial song about the goodness of God in our lives for who he is, that we run out of the grave. And in the same way Jesus Christ got up out of the grave, God can take all your deadness and run it out of you, too. It means if you're here today and you're like, God could never love somebody like me, I'm here to tell you just the opposite. He already loves you. He can't stop thinking about you, and he's looking for you to commit your life to him.

And some of you need to hear this, Christians, you need to hear this. I knew he loved me when I accepted him and I felt that. But I've really kind of failed him since I was trusting him or I got this bad behavior. And here's what he would say. No, no.

You still belong to me and you're still mine. And I can still redeem all those parts in your life that aren't. But you got to give your life to me afresh again. Give me your heart and life. So I want to close today just by praying with you that you can give your

life to the Lord or if you've already given your life to the Lord, that you could renew it all over again and allow the holy spirit to fill.

Fill you up afresh and know that the resurrected life of Christ wants to dwell in and through you. Amen. Would you stand with me as we pray? Lord Jesus, we love you, we praise you, we glorify you, we honor you, Lord. There are some here today on both campuses who would say, I don't have that moment.

And if that's you, here's how you can pray right now. Lord Jesus, I know that I'm a sinner, but I believe that you died on the cross for me and that you rose from the dead. Right now, I confess you as my personal lord and savior. Come into my life and take over. Lord, for some of us, we're here today and we say we believe all that, but we haven't been living that.

And so we pray like this. Lord Jesus, have your way with me and let me experience a new and a fresh your holy spirit living in. In and through me. Let me experience your love and grace. And, Lord, we give you all the praise, all the glory, and all the honor as we celebrate you right now with all our hearts.

In Jesus name, amen.