

The Purpose of Life

1 Corinthians 15:1 – 8



~ Our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God comes to a critical chapter in first Corinthians in this report; one that answers the first heresy in the church. That heresy just happened to have occurred in the church Paul established; and it was the denial of the bodily resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. In this report, we are going to consider this spiritually and extremely closely; maybe a little too close for some people. The church in Corinth was shamefully carnal, as we have already seen. But, even so, Paul is trying to speak to them maturely and lovingly.

Paul is addressing issues and attempting to answer all the questions the Corinthian church was asking him about; and they are things that are still important to us as a church body today, too. Unfortunately, divisions happen in the church for the most trivial of reasons; but, the bottom line is, division is the result of a complete ignorance of the Word of God. Some of the meanest people in the community sit in the front pew every Sunday morning; but, some of the sweetest and most wonderful people in the world are there, too!

The problem is: the mean people ought not be there! There should be no room made for them until they honestly come to Christ. Well, another problem the church in Corinth had was that the church members were dragging out each other's skeletons from the closets; and that shouldn't have been done, either. They ALL had awful personal history's. Remember, we have already had to deal with marriage and divorce, eating meat, haircuts, dress styles and hat wearing – I think they wore Paul out with their problems, quite frankly.

So, finally, for the last chapter or so, Paul has been able to address spiritual endowments and how they should have worked together with their

spiritual gifts for the wealth of a diverse church body. We saw in our last report how every believer had, and has, a spiritual gift. I can't think of anything more thrilling than allowing the Holy Spirit to exercise His spiritualities through me upon other people. In fact, I want Him to do it all the time. Many people — especially our youth — believe there is no purpose to this life today; how sad and hopeless the world really is. Well, we have a gift that gives us a reason to live. The cause of Christ is a tremendous enterprise. Making Him known to the entire world should be the deepest desire of the heart in every truly born-again believer.

It's an extremely difficult challenge for young people to discover their spiritual gifts and establish them in their lives in our modern society. To make a genuine and sincere commitment to Christ today means almost complete isolation. Even so, nothing outside of God's Personal plan as revealed in the Word of God can ever bring purpose or meaning to our life, my beloved. It's tragic that the world is trying to push the Lord out of their thinking altogether; and replace Him with a false Christ. Secular leaders can only educate young people to search for God any way they dream up. It's pointless. The result is the absurdity of modern religion.

Well, there is no credible educator alive who will agree that the best way to teach children is to leave them alone with no books and no guidance; but have them create their own philosophies. Have we literally lost our minds in this world? The children aren't to blame — the teachers are to blame, friends. Until we begin to get this straightened out, we have no hope in this country as a society — or in the world concerning any semblance of revival or peace.

Several reports ago, we examined how love is a fruit the Holy Spirit produces in our lives; and, in our last report, we spoke of tongues. We need the fruit of love more than the gift of tongues, by the way. Here, we come to the bodily resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ — and our resurrection in a glorified body. See, the Christian life does not end in death. When they throw that flesh of yours in a ditch and cover it up, you will have been *LONG* gone from the body. We aren't interested in a sun-set; only an

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eternal sunrise. In fact, eternity will be lit with the glory of Christ, and we won't even have night and day — no darkness as we know it. That's something else that gives purpose to life.

One day, we're all going to quickly step into eternity. That's where our preparation for true service to God will end; and an eternal assignment will begin. This is where we might want to think about our rewards in Heaven. Unfortunately, people aren't looking for stars in their crowns today because they're too busy trying to be the stars of the world. The resurrection of the Lord Jesus should provide us with a very real, very spiritual and supernatural view of the Heavens to come. We can only know about these things from the Word of God — nowhere else. That's a third thing that brings purpose to this life for believers.

We have totally lost sight of the essentials today while micromanaging the incidentals in our Christian lives. That adds up to one tragedy after another for the lost man *AND* for the Christian in contemporary society. So, this chapter is in the proper place to rightly deal with the Gospel; that is: the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is the absolute most important message for the believer to the world today. Without the resurrection, quite frankly, nothing in the Bible makes any sense whatsoever — including the death of Jesus. Jesus was delivered for our offenses and raised for our justification. In His death, He subtracted my sins; in the resurrection, He gave me a sure righteousness by which I will be permitted to enter Heaven....

¹ Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;

² By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.

³ For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;

4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

~ The resurrection is physical – *NOT* spiritual. The word used for “resurrection” literally means “*the standing up of a corpse.*” That means these bodies of ours are to be raised in a glorified state; and the resurrection in Scripture *ALWAYS* refers to our physical body.

In Corinth, at this time in which we are studying, there were three philosophies of life after death: (1) **Stoicism**: this teaches that the soul merges into deity at death and, therefore, there is the destruction of the personality. Naturally, that makes resurrection a non-entity (2) **Epicurean philosophy**: this is purely materialistic — here and now; there is no existence beyond death and no truth beyond their teaching (3) **Platonism**: this teaches the immortality of the soul. It is very similar to trans-migration; it’s also very prominent in the cults. Ultimately, they are all just one collection in denial of the bodily resurrection.

Remember, when Paul mentioned the resurrection in Athens, they thought he was talking about a new deity altogether. Well, our soul does not die. The moment we cease to exist in this flesh, we begin to exist in another type of embodiment. For the child of God, if we are absent from the body, we are present with the Lord. Those who rejected Christ will go straight from judgment to the place of torment. That’s what the Word of God teaches, friends – don’t blame me....

5 And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve:

6 After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.

7 After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles.

8 And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.

~ This chapter presents four proofs of the resurrection and the prominence of the Gospel as we define "Gospel" in this Spiritual Safari. We're not going into all that theology, though. Paul says there is no Gospel without the resurrection – and we accept that statement as final. Period. Christianity does not rest on a set of ideas or on some creed; but upon facts. The Gospel is a series of facts concerning a particular Person, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Those facts are that Christ died for our sins, was buried, and raised bodily from the dead for our justification. Paul is delivering unto us that which he received directly from the Spirit of God out there in the Arabian Desert.

The Gospel is not the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew chapters five, six and seven. The Gospel is not the Ten Commandments. The Gospel is all about what Jesus did for you and for me – it is *NOT* about what we can do for Him. That should be good news to you. Christ died for our sins! That is a historical fact that no reasonable person rejects. I always like to mention that Jesus was buried. I think it's important — because Jesus didn't disappear. He didn't survive the Roman cross and have the apostles nurse Him back to health. They had custody of the body, and they knew Who they buried and where they buried Him.

Then, Christ was raised from the dead for our justification on the third day according to the Scriptures – and that means Old Testament Scriptures, by the way. Remember, the disciples were scattered, discouraged, and ready to return to fishing for fish when they realized Jesus was back from the dead. People have been attesting to that fact ever since that day. The church cannot be explained apart from the resurrection; it just makes no sense out of that context. Christ appeared to Cephas – Simon Peter – personally because Cephas had denied Him. I think they had a few things to iron out. Christ is a living Savior, Lord and Christ, beloved. Paul saw Jesus, friends — and it is simply not possible to dissuade in answering a man who has seen the Lord Jesus Christ, the Man in the Glory ~

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