

INTRODUCTION

Jesus Christ is risen from the dead! Last week, it was my delight to conclude with speaking of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as risen from the dead, in fulfillment of the Old Testament ceremony of the firstfruits, and our resurrection from the dead when He comes back. At the time, I did not realize it, but as it turns out, to speak to you today about sending money to the poor saints in our sister congregation, I need to start right at that same place in 1 Corinthians. There, when our Lord's apostle has taught the connection between our Lord's resurrection and our resurrection, he goes on to show us a connection between our hope in the resurrection, and the good things we do until then, such as sharing with the poor. In the same passage, we come across important material upon which we base some of our regular practices in the congregation, including how we obey the fourth commandment.

Consider our Lord Jesus Christ as risen from the dead, and our hope of resurrection in Him, and how that leads us to such good works as sharing with the poor saints.

TEXT

1 Corinthians 15:20-23 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. (21) For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. (22) For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. (23) But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

1 Corinthians 15:50-16:4 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. (51) Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, (52) In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. (53) For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. (54) So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. (55) O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? (56) The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. (57) But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (58) Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord. (16:1) Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. (2) Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings [collections] when I come. (3) And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem. (4) And if it be meet that I go also, they shall go with me.

BODY

Consider our Lord Jesus Christ as risen from the dead, and our hope of resurrection in Him, and how that leads us to such good works as sharing with the poor saints.

- I. Christ Is Risen from the Dead, and We Who Are in Him Shall Rise Also
 - A. What is the good news? that Jesus Christ died for our sins, that He was buried, and that He rose again! And that whoever believes in Him shall rise with Him to everlasting life.
 - B. This applies to all who are counted by God to be in Christ (15:22)
 - 1. in Adam all die
 - a) not meaning all creatures
 - (1) e.g. not the holy angels
 - b) meaning all who are counted or reckoned by God to be in Adam
 - 2. in Christ all shall be made alive
 - a) not meaning all creatures
 - b) not meaning all mankind
 - c) meaning all who are counted or reckoned by God to be in Christ; and that is by faith; those who believe in Christ, God counts as being in Christ

Christ is risen from the dead, and we who are in Him shall rise also

- II. At the Resurrection, Our Bodies Will Be Made Ready for the Kingdom of God
 - A. Our bodies as they are now are not suitable for eternal life in the Kingdom of God (15:50)
 - 1. those who are preserved by the Lord into old age understand this very well
 - a) Bob: "My mind writes checks my body can't cash!"
 - 2. even the young can understand this
 - a) you know what it is like to get sick
 - b) you know what it is like to get hurt
 - B. When the Lord Jesus comes back to raise us from the dead, He will change our bodies (15:51-53)
 - 1. they no longer will be corrupt, but will be incorruptible
 - 2. they no longer will be mortal, subject to death, but will be immortal, never-dying
 - 3. the Lord will do this for us whether we have died or are still alive
 - a) first those who sleep, who are dead
 - b) then those who still are alive
 - C. When the Lord Jesus comes back to raise us from the dead, the full effect of His death for our sins will be realized (15:54-57)
 - 1. death can sting us because of our sin, which is our breaking of God's law
 - 2. but Jesus Christ, who never broke God's law, suffered death for us, in our place; then He rose from the dead
 - 3. in doing all of that, Christ gained for us forgiveness of sins, the righteousness of God, and the right to eternal life
 - 4. so God gives us victory over sin, death, and the grave through our Lord Jesus Christ

Christ is risen from the dead, and we who are in Him shall rise also

At the resurrection, our bodies will be made ready for the Kingdom of God

III. In Sure Hope of the Resurrection, We Labor for the Lord (15:58)

- A. We often are tempted to be moved from our place
 - 1. in the congregation
 - 2. in our families
 - 3. in our work
 - 4. in the society
 - 5. in the faith
- B. We often are tempted to leave off working for the Lord Jesus
 - 1. whether
 - a) just our normal, mundane work; or
 - b) our religious work
 - 2. either
 - a) entirely; or
 - b) partly
- C. Both of those temptations have to do with feeling that staying in our right place and continuing in our work are in vain, are for nothing
- D. The way to resist such temptation is to consider often our Lord's resurrection, and our resurrection to eternal life with Him when He comes
 - 1. it will be worth all effort and sacrifice to be found in our right place, doing the Lord's work, when our Lord Jesus comes back
 - 2. the pains we endure to stay in our right place and keep at our Lord's work are not worth comparing with the glory we will enjoy in the rewards He will bestow on us when He returns
- E. Be reminded today that we live with our physical eyes on our life in this world, but our spiritual eyes on our life to come in glory

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In sure hope of the resurrection, we labor for the Lord

IV. Our Labor for the Lord Includes Giving to Relieve the Poor Saints (16:1-4)

- A. v. 1a If the saints in one place are in acute need, other congregations might collect money for their relief.
 - 1. Jerusalem was about 1,200 miles away from Corinth, on another continent
 - 2. if there is a crisis in one place that is not in another place
 - 3. if there is poverty in one congregation that is not in another congregation
- B. v. 1b-2 The apostle has given all the congregations the same simple method for collecting money.
 - 1. the apostle had given the same instruction to the other congregations
 - a) that was the apostolic method
 - b) that helps us understand Luke's method in selecting what to include in Acts - he gave only one or a few examples of the apostolic practice, but it is to be understood as being what the apostles instituted in all the congregations
 - 2. the simple method
 - a) on the first day of the week
 - b) everyone sets apart some of his money, according to how much the Lord has caused him to prosper that week
 - c) the congregation collects everyone's offering (we know that is what is meant in 16:2a by 16:2b)
 - 3. originally for that particular offering
 - 4. adopted as practice for all the congregation's needs
 - a) bills for the meeting place
 - b) pastor's support
 - c) cooperative efforts such as missions or seminary
 - d) benevolence
- C. v. 3 Members approved by the congregation make sure the money gets to its destination.
 - 1. the congregation approves the deacons in general to take what money or goods we give and use it for the good things that need to be done
 - 2. the congregation approves a treasurer, from the deacons if possible, and an assistant or alternate treasurer, to do the church's actual financial transactions
 - 3. in the case of this special gift of money for the poor saints, the deacon who is the treasurer will count how much has been given especially for this, combine it with the amount to be sent from what the congregation already has given, and see that it gets to the saints in San Angelo for whom it is intended
- D. Note that the apostle treated the first day of the week as special
 - 1. this is part of how we know to do our sabbath-keeping on the first day of the week rather than the seventh day of the week
 - 2. I will only mentioned this briefly here, and hope to expound this more another time

CONCLUSION

Christ is risen from the dead, and we who are in Him shall rise also
At the resurrection, our bodies will be made ready for the Kingdom of God
In sure hope of the resurrection, we labor for the Lord
Our labor for the Lord includes giving to relieve the poor saints

Journey - Prelude "Great Is Thy Faithfulness"

Rita - Trinity 718 "Leaning On the Everlasting Arms" - Alex lead

Angie - sheet - "When I Can Read My Title Clear" - Andrew lead

Rita - Trinity 596 "Jesus Lives, and So Shall I"

Dillon - Call to Worship and Opening Prayer - 1 Chronicles 29:11-13

Stephen - Scripture Reading - Psalm 41

Roel - Congregational Prayer

Benediction - 1 Samuel 2:6-9a