

Here is the first warning issued by Paul in view of his persuasions just stated. The verb "deceived" gives the idea of one being "misled or seduced." Paul warns against allowing oneself this indulgence. The Greek for "communications" may be taken as "conversations," but is better understood to mean "companionships." The demoralizing tendencies of evil companionships is patent. A quote is made from a common piece of poetry which existed at least 3 centuries before Christ. Here it is incorporated as part of the Word of God affirming a principle of truth. How tragically this has been abused in our day! The word "manners" means "morals" and there is evidence that companionships with the world has reduced the morals of many "saints" to shambles! In the light of the resurrection, how careful the children of God ought to be in their contacts with the world! When will we learn?

2. PERFORM your stewardship. v. 34.

The verb "awake" is only used here in the N.T. and occurs in the energetic decisive aorist imperative form. Nothing else will do if the church is to get moving. From the aorist, Paul moves to the present tense. The suggestion is patent that if the Corinthians did not waken from their stupor, they would be plunged into a persistence of sin. Horrors! It is all the more demoralizing in that some have the "non-knowledge" of God. The Greek word here expresses more than a deficiency; it is a positive possession of real evil. This is shame on the Corinthians.

Conclusion It is unthinkable that there is no resurrection. But since there is one, how ought this to affect the child of God in his relationships and manner of being. May we heed the Word and live unto God alone.

BOOK OF FIRST CORINTHIANS
"Behaviour and Resurrection"

1 Cor. 15:29-34

Introduction

1. Paul has already outlined the pattern of God for resurrection (vv. 20-28). There is no reasonable doubt that all will be raised and each in his own order.

2. Having concluded the pattern of the resurrection, the Spirit of God directs Paul to show the utter and intolerable position should there be no resurrection. But this time the emphasis is on the behaviour of the believer. Consider these points:

1. BAPTISM for the dead. v. 29.

The opening word of this verse in the Greek is a term which suggests the thought of "otherwise, since, if a thing be not true." Therefore, if there is no resurrection, the question is raised, then why are some baptized for the dead. Thus this practice becomes a vain practice if there is no resurrection of the dead.

For many this passage remains a puzzle. Indeed, the fact that there are at least 30 different interpretations has led many to the view that it is an inextricable mystery. The Mormon church has seized upon this text and made it the basis for their totally unscriptural doctrine that a person may be baptized in the place of someone else who died without being baptized! The basic problem with that idea is that baptism doesn't add anything to the work of Christ and men are not saved by baptism.

The most helpful explanation for the text is that a military figure is involved. The believers who have died are as soldiers who have fallen in battle. As these persons move on to the Glory with the Lord, others come along and are baptized in their places. They fill up the places of those who have died professing Christ. The ranks of the fallen are being filled up. This fits in with the plural of the word "dead" and the meaning of the preposition "for." Every assembly and group of

believers has witnessed the salvation of sinners in response to the death of a believer. The baptism of these new converts is a thrill for they take up the places of those who have gone on to be with Him. IF there is no resurrection, what is the point to filling up the ranks? To taking one's stand as a baptized believer IF the grave ends it all!?

It is interesting to note that the hope of future blessedness, allying itself with family affections and friendships, was one of the most powerful factors for the spread of the Gospel in the early church. The resurrection of the saints gives validity and worth to the bond between the living and the dead (Rom. 14:9). God give us more baptisms for the dead!

2. SUFFERING For the faith. vv. 30-32.

a. Hourly jeopardy. v. 30. The present tense of the verb points to the continuity of the hazard mentioned here. The verb is only found four times in the N.T. and in each instance points to danger or risk. The argument is clear. If there is no resurrection from the dead, then why should there be suffering hourly for the children of God. Why should one "run hazard" every hour? The bloody death of the saints (v. 29) is explicated by the menaced life of the saints. But all is worth it IF there is resurrection. Paul has already referred to his menaced life (4:9-13).

b. Daily death. v. 31. There is no word for "protest" in the original Greek, but there is a small particle used which indicates an oath of affirmation. It is nowhere else found in the N.T. It is used here to state that Paul feels strongly about this matter of suffering and resurrection. The better render - is this: "that glorifying in you which I have." It's as if he says: "you Corinthians are the fruit of my labor and I glory over you in the Lord Jesus Christ. But just as surely as I glory, let it be known that the fruit among you was

gained at a daily risk to my life, hence I die daily." Only those who have sought to witness unto the saving grace of God amidst fanatic Muslims or Jews or similar antagonistic groups can get the feel of this section. Paul lived in utter danger of his life daily for the sake of the Gospel (cf. 2 Cor. 4:8-12).

c. Infernal fight. v. 32. Most come to this passage and cannot find any historical evidence for the record in the Book of Acts and therefore deny it. However, a figurative sense to the verse appears to be strained. It is true that Paul faced a mob at Ephesus and it may be this incident which is intimated here (cf. Acts 19), but it seems more feasible to accept literally what Paul is writing and find here an historical item which just is not found in Acts (cf. many other items Paul talks about which are not in Acts in 2 Cor. 11). The phrase "What doth it profit me?" is a phrase noting that only a life after death can explain such conduct as outlined here. It is the apogee of what he has detailed beginning with hourly menace and daily death. Paul did not look for money or applause after the manner of men, for it is more than a moral duty which caused him to endure what is stated here. Here is love for souls, love for God, and an intense sacrifice unto the Lord Jesus Christ. Why all of this if the dead rise not? But they do rise, therefore it is worth it all (cf. 2 Cor. 4:16-18).

A quotation from the O.T. concludes Paul's argument here (Isa. 22:13). If there is no resurrection of the dead, then it is better just to enjoy the present and live it up! Sounds just like the Epicureans. It is the cry of many: a short life and a merry one. This is all without a future life and responsibility therewith.

BUT since there is a resurrection coming, Paul urges:

1. WATCH your companionship. v. 33.