

### Combatting Bad Resurrection Theology | 1 Corinthians 15:30-34

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- Verse 29 –
  - Here we have one of the most problematic passages of all the Bible.
  - Does Paul mean that:
    - Christians were being baptized for the dead? If so, this implies some kind of merit in the act of baptism (i.e.: baptismal regeneration). Further, there is nothing in historical record to show this practice until much, much later in Christian history (an incidental argument, since historical record is not needed to confirm Scripture).
    - Pagan people were being baptized for the dead? The purpose of bringing the pagans into the argument would be mysterious.
    - There is an "immersion for the dead" in martyrdom? This would connect with v. 30, but doesn't fully satisfy the grammar of the text.
    - People are being baptized because of the testimony of now-dead believers? This only marginally works grammatically and doesn't fit the argument of proof of the resurrection.
    - People are being baptized to associate themselves with all believers, even the dead ones? This is a stretch grammatically and not what one would easily read from the text.
  - It is interesting to note that Paul speaks of **they...which are baptized for the dead**, not including himself. In the end, it seems to me that:
    - We are not able to be fully persuaded of the exact context of the baptism for the dead.
    - The argument is in-tact: baptism for the dead would be useless if there was no resurrection, and the resurrection is what is in view in this passage.
    - There is no instruction for baptism for the dead in this nor any passage.
  - It is possible that the last phrase displays the entire scenario as without merit even without the resurrection. Is Paul saying, "some of you are baptized for the dead, which would be meaningless if the dead are not raised. But why are you baptized for the dead?"
- Verse 30 - If there is no resurrection, then there is no need to die for a lie.
- Verse 31 –
  - This contains Greek that is somewhat difficult,
    - The "persons" are difficult: "the boasting of *you*" or "our boasting" or "your boasting?"
    - My literal translation would be, "I daily die (indeed) by our boasting which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord."
  - Thus, Paul says he daily puts his life on the line by boasting in Christ Jesus.
- Verse 32 –
  - Again arguing that without the resurrection our faith is empty, Paul asks if there would have been any advantage to him fighting **with beasts at Ephesus**.
    - While this could be a metaphorical reference to his struggles with other people in Ephesus (see Acts 19:23-41), that struggle was not one that would likely end in death. More likely, he had a literal battle before the lions in Ephesus.
    - In 2 Timothy 4:17 he speaks of being **delivered out of the mouth of the lion** with no further insight.
  - Note: this is a good example of the need to *question the assumptions* on cross reference resources. The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge (which I recommend) makes reference to 2 Peter 2:12 and Jude 10 as a cross-reference to **beasts**.
  - Paul closes by giving a "this life only" worldview, which is **eat and drink; for to morrow we die**.

- Verses 33-34 –
  - Paul appears to depart from directly talking of the resurrection to talk about **evil communications** (interactions) with those who hold the atheistic **tomorrow we die** philosophy.
  - This is indirectly related to the resurrection, however, because if there is a resurrection, then *tomorrow's death* is only a passing matter, in which the dying pass through to the judgment.
  - Because **some have not the knowledge of God** they live with the **eat and drink** philosophy, and **this is to your shame**. Notice how this speaks to the question, "what about those who have never heard?"

### Details of the Future Resurrection | 1 Corinthians 15:35-49

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- Verse 35 –
  - As he often does, Paul speaks to the objection of the skeptics. Often the dishonest skeptic will ask an agenda-driven question which is not meant for information, but to stump the opponent (and therefore prove to himself and others that the opponent has no valid argument).
  - It is the fallacy of believing that if you don't have *all* the answers, you therefore have *none* of the answers.
  - Note: avoid the hesitancy to take a position on matters in which all the answers are not yet known.
- Verses 36-38 – To answer the inconsistency of the objection, Paul uses an illustration from nature.
  - The **fool** certainly believes that you can plant a seed and reap a crop. He therefore has a *faith* that there will be a resurrection of that seed.
  - If he has this faith, why not expand this into the human body? It is materially possible that something that dies (a seed) is resurrected into something that lives (a harvest).
  - Therefore, one would be *foolish* to disregard resurrection altogether, for they are ignoring clear evidence that resurrection is not materially impossible or they are simply allowing their assumptions to dictate their conclusions (a dangerous matter indeed).
- Verses 39-41 –
  - Having addressed the skeptics question about the potential of resurrection, now Paul addresses his question about the type of resurrection body.
  - Previously using a natural illustration, Paul continues with another, noting that living beings have various forms, and **celestial bodies** have different types of **glory**.
  - In the following verses, he will note that the resurrection of the body has differences from the physical body. Therefore, if you make presumptions about the resurrection body based on the five senses, then you will make incorrect conclusions.