No Resurrection, No Hope

What are the hopeless consequences of denying the resurrection? If Jesus has not been raised—

**1. We are still in our *sins*** (v. 17)

A. *Conscience* testifies to the reality of sin

Romans 2:12-16

B. *Reason* testifies to the futility of religion

Hebrews 10:1-4

**2. There is no *life* after death** (v. 18)

A. *Near-death* experiences are ambiguous

B. *Reincarnation* is a weary delusion

Hebrews 9:27-28

C. *Bodiless* existence is incomplete

Revelation 6:9-11

**3. Concern for the dead is *misplaced*** (v. 29)

(See note on the back of the outline.)

**4. Suffering for Christ is *folly*** (vv. 30-32)

**5. We should just live for the *moment*** (v.32)

The ancient Epicureans were atheists. They taught that the best life we could hope for was to—

A. Pursue *pleasure*

B. Avoid *pain*

**Concluding Application**—The resurrection enables us to live with

A. *Courageous hope*

B. *Confident purpose***For Personal Reflection or Family Discussion**

1. What was the most important or helpful thing you heard in the sermon?

2. What questions did the sermon raise in your mind?

 What was the most convicting part of the message?

3. *Baptism for the dead* (v. 29) is mentioned nowhere else in Scripture, and there is no explanation of the Corinthian’s practice outside the Bible. None of the many proposed explanations is fully satisfying. Here are a few of them.

* New believers were being added to the church through baptism to replace believers who had died.
* Living believers were being baptized on behalf of people who had believed in Christ, but who had died before their baptism could take place.
* People were being baptized for ancestors who had died before hearing the gospel in order for them to be saved.

The third option is contrary to the Scriptural teaching that after death there is no second chance to escape judgment (Hebrews 9:27). If this had been the Corinthian belief, it is likely that Paul would have condemned it. The second option was relatively harmless, so it would not have required a rebuke, since that would have diverted Paul from his main point.

Why is it not a good idea to build a major doctrine or church practice out of an isolated, obscure verse (as the Mormons have done with this verse)?

4. Some church members at Corinth were unconverted, and their false teaching was having a bad influence on the church. This was a shameful thing because the church should have removed them from membership or not allowed them to join in the first place (vv. 33-34). When is a false teaching serious enough to require that the teacher be removed from membership?

5. What attitude might danger and despair foster, apart from a vibrant trust in the Lord (Isaiah 22:12-14; Ecclesiastes 8:14-15)?