

**Preaching Christ....
...by the power of the Holy Spirit
...and the authority of the Word of God**

Date: 26 September 2021
Services: Across the diocese
Series: **God's church** - 1 Corinthians
Title: **Let nothing move you**
Passage: 1 Corinthians 15:35-58
Outline:

1. **It is true**
2. **Therefore**
 - a. **stand firm, let nothing move you**
 - b. **give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord**
 - c. **your labour in the Lord is not in vain**

Throughout my first 18 months here, I hope and pray that **something** of what I consider important about Christianity has become clear...

Namely – that Jesus' **life, death and resurrection** is absolutely and fundamentally **true** – **not made up!**

And that I'm on about **relationship** not **religion** and

...relationship based on what Jesus has **DONE** for us

...not religion which based on what **we DO** for **God!**

And I hope that I've shown from God's word that **relationship** with **Jesus** cannot possibly be something **added** on to an already busy life –

cannot be a **compartment** of life,

some vague **interest** on the **side**,

a **tonic** to assist the **rest of life**... //

but that it can **only** be **central**...

Like the earth **revolving** around the **sun** – Christianity is about a relationship with Jesus around which the rest of life **circles** and by which everything **else** in **life** is **impacted**... //

Well might **Christopher Hutchins** say 'religion **poisons** everything'... //

I say – that **relationship** with **Jesus** – **sweetens** everything, **informs** everything, **influences** everything, **challenges** everything...**changes** everything... //

...because if **Christianity** is **true**... – it is of **infinite** importance. ///

Now we come this morning to the second half of 1 Cor 15 and you may be a little **dissatisfied** as I'm not going to delve so much into the **detail** of that passage... but spend a little **more** time than I would **normally** on **just one verse** – the **last** verse – v58 – as I tease out the **implications** of the entire **resurrection chapter**.

**Preaching Christ....
...by the power of the Holy Spirit
...and the authority of the Word of God**

If you would love an exposition of more of the **detail** of the passage – than I **commend** and will **send a link** to the **Rev'd Adam Lowe's sermon on this passage...** very **helpful indeed!**

But here is where I want to start....

as a recap and reinforcement...

...it is vital that we wrestle with the reality that the **physical resurrection** of Jesus is **entirely TRUE...**

1. It's true...

In 1 Corinthians 15, Paul has been arguing that the **resurrection** is **true**.

It's **true** that Christ **died** for sins,

true that he was **buried**,

true that he was **raised** on the **third day**,

true that he **appeared** to **many people** – most of whom are still alive 30 years later and you can go and **ask them!** //

So if you want to argue that **dead** people don't **rise** – as some were doing – then before you buy in to **that** argument – think through the **implications....**

Because if **dead** people **don't rise...**

- **Christ** didn't rise, and if **Christ** didn't rise:
- ...our **preaching** is **useless** – because it's based **entirely** on Jesus' resurrection – v14
- Your **faith** is **useless** (v14) – **futile** in fact... (v17)...it's founded **entirely** on Jesus' resurrection
- You're inferring we are **lying** about God – because we keep saying God raised Jesus from the dead //
- You're still in **sin** – because sin (if Jesus has not been raised) has **not been dealt with** and therefore you **cannot stand** in God's **presence...**; AND what's more
- All Christians are a **complete joke** – in fact - no not just a **laughing stock** – but **pathetic....** to be **pitied** above all **others** (v19) ////

How **clear** is **God** in his **Word** – arguing that the resurrection of Jesus is an **established fact** that has in fact **changed everything...**

Friends – we need to grasp the reality that if **Christianity is false, it is of no importance...**

it's a **lie**,

a **deception**;

a **trap**,

**Preaching Christ....
...by the power of the Holy Spirit
...and the authority of the Word of God**

a **waste** of **time**,

a **delusion**.

Why give any **money**, any **time**, any **energy**... if it's **false**?

Why would you spend any time giving it a **moment's thought**; why live for a **lie**? why live a **deception**? ////

BUT (V20) CHRIST HAS INDEED BEEN RAISED FROM THE DEAD!

Go ask those who **saw** him, **touched** him, **ate with him**, **heard** him **speak**.

It's **true**, **dependable**. //

And that's changed **EVERYTHING**... as God points out in the rest of the **chapter**:

- **death** through **Adam**, **life** through **Christ** v22
- the **end** will **come** and Christ will **reign** v25
- death **itself** will one day **die** v26
- we will all have amazing and wonderful new **resurrection bodies**... **glorious, powerful, spiritual** – **bearing** the likeness of **Jesus** – vv 35-49
- and if still **alive** when Jesus **returns** – we will be transformed **dramatically** and **wonderfully**... death will be swallowed up in **victory**... - the **victory** of the **Lord Jesus Christ**...! ////

Friends - it's **gloriously** and **wonderfully TRUE**.

Christ **died** for **sins**.

Was **buried**.

Was **raised**.

And **appeared**....

And will one day **return** to **reign forever**! //

Christianity, if true, is of infinite importance.

If false – it is of NO importance! ///

Let us now explore then, the inspiration of just the last **verse** of the chapter... and three very **clear implications** –

There are **two exhortations** and one beautiful **promise**:

2. Therefore... stand firm, let nothing move you.

**Preaching Christ....
...by the power of the Holy Spirit
...and the authority of the Word of God**

Having been convinced that Jesus' resurrection is **true** / and seeing its significance both **now** and for **eternity**... God says: **stand firm, let nothing move you.**

if **false** – it is **sinking sand**

If **true** – than it is the **firm** and solid **foundation** for your entire life...

So stand firm!

Become **obsessive compulsive** about it.

Don't **swerve**,

Don't be **distracted**,

don't be **put off**...

don't wander off,

drift away,

go to **sleep**!

Don't let

- **Ridiculing family** move you
- **Worldly friends** move you
- **Mocking work colleagues** move you
- **doubting school or uni friends** move you
- **distracted children** move you
- **an unbelieving spouse** move you
- **non-Christian boyfriend or girlfriend** move you
- very important **work commitments** move you
- That **promotion opportunity** move you
- That bumper crop from your land move you
- your **sex drive** move you
- Your **drinking habits** move you
- **Materialism, hedonism, partyism, selfism** move you.

Let **nothing move you** from your **conviction**

**Preaching Christ....
...by the power of the Holy Spirit
...and the authority of the Word of God**

Let **nothing** deter you from your **commitment** to Jesus

Let nothing **shift** you from centring your **whole life** around Jesus. /

Everything else in life takes its cue, knows its place in relation to your relationship with Jesus! //

Friends, I want Christians right across the **diocese** to be immovable...

I want you to **never** stop serving the **Lord** and **living** for **him**...

I want you to **press on** to **know him** and **love him more** and **more**.

The greatest **joy** a **pastor** or **shepherd** or **bishop** could have is to see that their people, the sheep they care for, are **pressing on** to **follow** and serve the **Great Shepherd**, the **Good Shepherd** who laid down their **life** for **them**... //

Because it IS absolutely and wonderfully and clearly true....!!

Stand firm

Let nothing move you!

That brings us to the second implication

3. Therefore... give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord

Hold **nothing back**.

Remember - the one thing Christianity cannot possibly be is **moderately** important.

It cannot be only important on **Sunday and Wednesday** night.

It cannot be **only important** when you are with other **Christians**, and only **moderately important** the rest of the **time**.

It cannot be **moderately important** at home **behind closed doors**.

It cannot be **moderately** important when you are out on the **tractor**

It cannot be **moderately important** when you are doing surgery,

Or when you're in a **business meeting**,

it cannot be **moderately** important when you're **lecturing** or being **lectured**,

it cannot be **moderately** important when you're on **holidays**,

it cannot be **moderately** important when you are raising the children, or disciplining them,

it cannot be moderately important at the **movies**

or on the **internet**

**Preaching Christ....
...by the power of the Holy Spirit
...and the authority of the Word of God**

or down the **beach**

or at the **pub**.

It can **NEVER** be merely of **moderate importance!** //

No - it's of **ultimate** significance. **ALL the time**.

So give yourselves **fully** to the **work of the Lord**.

Or as God says in Colossians 3 – *whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it **all** in the name of the Lord Jesus... whatever you do, work at it with **all** your heart as working for the Lord not for people.*

Give yourself fully to the work of the Lord –

- the **honour** of the Lord
- the **glory** of the Lord
- give yourself fully to the **promotion** of the **gospel**
- at **home, property, school, uni, work, club, sporting field...**

give your **heart**, your **life**, your very **self**.. to live **godly, holy, Christ-like lives... every moment, every day...** in **every way...** //

One expression – will be to give yourself to the life of your local congregation... of which **you** are a **vital member**.

Your church **needs** you.

If **your** church is to **grow** and **develop**, if we are to reach your **town**, impact your **town and surrounds...** it will take **YOU**. //

If I may be so bold – sometimes I think many of us have lived as if Christianity **were** only **moderately** important...

only mattered a **little** bit...

where church is **optional**,

where **servicing** in some capacity or another is something – well something for **others**, something you did **years ago**, something not on the agenda...

now as we try in the coming weeks to recover from lockdown and get back on track... it's time to **band together**, grow united in **focus** and **purpose**, to **reconnect**, to **play your part**, to **step up....** //

don't lose **heart** or **hope** /// keep your eyes fixed on **Jesus**. //

SO **give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord**. ////

And the final '**therefore**' is a **promise** – an **assurance**...

**Preaching Christ....
...by the power of the Holy Spirit
...and the authority of the Word of God**

Give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, knowing that...

4. Therefore... your labour in the Lord is not in vain!

There are **lots** of things in life which are in vain... we might say – are a **complete** waste of **time**....

- **washing the car**, the endless round of **cleaning house**, sometimes our **work** feels like a **waste of time**, or **weeding** or **mowing**... or picking **nits** out of **hair**...
- but **nothing** you do in the Lord's name – nothing you do for **him** could be considered a **waste of time**...nothing **IS** a waste of time.
- Nothing you do in the life and ministry of your **church** will be wasted..
- Nothing you do at home **working** for the honour of God's name; nothing at your business or related to how you run your property, or at **school**, uni, work, sport... when you do it for the **glory** of God... can **ever** be a waste of **time**. //
- It will have **eternal value**...
- Scripture teacher who made endless scones... Scripture class invited home – scones and talk.... At least three from that group of 15-16 year olds, gave their life to Jesus and ended up in full time Christian ministry...
- Your labour in the Lord will **never** be a waste of time...
- and one day in **eternity** – all will be **revealed** and you'll see how the Lord has taken and used what **you** have done for in someone's life for his **eternal glory!** //

I'm nearly done... but cannot finish this morning without speaking to those who have yet to **give** your life to the Lord Jesus who are watching today.

This is not a **judgment** call on my part – some of you have **told** me you are not Christian.

Why **haven't** you yet, turned your **whole life around** and come into **relationship with Jesus?** //

It's a **huge move** – I **get** that....

We have great trouble admitting we're **wrong**...

great difficulty is saying **sorry** –

....and **both** of those will be necessary if you're going to begin a relationship with **Jesus**... ///

But if all of this is **true** – you're going to find yourself in a very **tragic** and **difficult** position if you've **refused** Jesus' kind offer of **forgiveness**.... ///
Because then one day you still stand before him **UNforgiven**...

But if **were** you to come and take up his kind and generous offer of **forgiveness**... your **slate** would be **wiped clean**, the record of your rebellion **destroyed**,... and you will be **wonderfully welcomed into eternal life**... //

oh yes – it **will** cost you your **independence**, your **self-sufficiency**, may cost you your **pride**....

**Preaching Christ....
...by the power of the Holy Spirit
...and the authority of the Word of God**

But Jesus is calling you today '**follow me**'.

Today is the day of **salvation** for you. Come and say 'Lord, I'm so sorry – please forgive me... I trust your love... I know now Jesus died for me' ... ///

It's true – Jesus did rise from the dead...

So

Therefore - stand firm... let nothing move you... always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord because you know that your labour in the Lord is not in vain.