

Saviour:
Saviour Forever
1 Corinthians 15:50-58

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Text Introduction: For the last several weeks, we have walked our way through God's plan of redemption. We have stopped at major points to emphasize that salvation did not begin at the cross. Salvation began at creation. Through periods of rebellion throughout the era of the Old Testament, we continue to see God's intention to redeem people to Himself.

His passionate pursuit of us that calls us to relationship started at creation, and we continue to see it in the fall. We see this continued rebellion throughout the Old Testament as the story of Israel as a nation unfolds. The prophets of the Old Testament begin to point toward the Messiah coming—a Saviour. Most people heard this prophecy of a Saviour as a political savior rather than a spiritual Saviour. They missed that His purpose in coming was to be the One who would come to take away our greatest problem of all—our sin.

In the last three weeks, we have examined the subject of *Saviour* through the birth, life, death, and of course, resurrection of Jesus. So, we think the story is over. No, in many ways the story of His being Saviour is just beginning. He is Saviour forever. Last week, I introduced to you 1 Corinthians 15. I want to continue in that glorious chapter this morning. We will go all the way to the end.

Paul started his exposition by declaring factually the resurrection of Jesus. Then, Paul declared the implications of that resurrection. Ultimately, the implications of the resurrection end up at the place of assuring our own resurrection or eternal life because of the resurrection of Jesus. That leads to Paul's final words regarding the resurrection.

Text: Brothers, I tell you this: Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, and corruption cannot inherit incorruption.⁵¹ Listen! I am telling you a mystery:

We will not all fall asleep,
but we will all be changed,
⁵² in a moment, in the blink of an eye,
at the last trumpet.
For the trumpet will sound,
and the dead will be raised incorruptible,
and we will be changed.
⁵³ For this corruptible must be clothed
with incorruptibility,
and this mortal must be clothed
with immortality.
⁵⁴ When this corruptible is clothed
with incorruptibility,
and this mortal is clothed
with immortality,

then the saying that is written will take place:

Death has been swallowed up in victory.

⁵⁵ Death, where is your victory?

Death, where is your sting?

⁵⁶ Now the sting of death is sin,

and the power of sin is the law.

⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!

⁵⁸ Therefore, my dear brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the Lord's work, knowing that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

Introduction: So Shall We Live

I have shared these verses dozens, actually into the hundreds, of times in the cemetery. For the one who has died knowing the Lord, I often share this passage as my closing remarks at the graveside portion of the funeral. I read these words as a prayer of thanksgiving, but I also read these words as a note of challenge to those who remain. These words answer the question, "So now how shall we live?" In view of the resurrection, how shall we live?

The musical oratorio, *Saviour*, that our choir and orchestra presented concludes with this thought. In fact, the penultimate anthem states it not as a question but a declaration—So shall we live!

This musical piece, *Saviour*, that takes us from creation to resurrection continues past resurrection to "So shall we live!" Listen to the lyrics.

Light of the world with hope fills the sky
For gone is the power of the darkness
The tomb that held the Son of God
Breaks with a cry from heaven "He who was dead is risen!
Up from the grave ascended!
The reign of death is ended!"
So shall we live, for His cross has gone before
Christ has spoken all our freedom
He's broken all our bondage
And opened God's heavens to man,
saints rejoice and lift up your voice
For we bear the wounds of our Saviour
And just as Christ was crucified
We who are buried with Him
Are raised in newness with Him
We share His resurrection
Our blessed liberation
So shall we live, for His cross has gone before
Christ has spoken all our freedom
He's broken all our bondage
And opened God's heavens
He's opened God's heavens to man
So shall we live, and so shall we reign
In glory and power
Now and forever
So shall we live
Blessed is the name of the Lord
So shall we live
Blessed is the name of the Lord

How shall we live in light of the resurrection? Notice in the text these actions that should be a part of the life of every believer in the resurrection. We should be found...

Worshipping

Why worshipping? Consider the glorious results of the resurrection. We encountered six things (vv. 12-19) earlier. He restates three of those reasons here in the crescendo of his praise.

- Death is defeated.
- Sin is defeated.

- Life has meaning.

Incidentally, these are three things that all of us dread the most. My life has no purpose. My sin is too great. Then, finally, we fear death itself. All three are the work of the Devil. All three are defeated at the resurrection. This is why John could declare in 1 John 3:8, “The Son of God was revealed for this purpose: to destroy the works of the Devil.”

Winning

We celebrate our victory through worship, but ultimately we celebrate our victory through continuing to walk in obedience.

Let the song you sing on Sunday be the way you walk through the week.

Earlier in this chapter, Paul revealed 5 principles to help us to win. You will find these 5 principles in verses 31-34.

- Die to self daily.
- Live with eternity in view.
- Choose carefully who influences you.
- Fill your mind with Godly things.
- Flee sin.

You are going to laugh at this, but I mean what I say. I had a devotional, spiritual moment Wednesday morning while making coffee. For some of you coffee lovers, you might consider drinking coffee a spiritual moment, but I’m serious.

I was taking out the coffee filter and scooping grinds into the basket now lined with the filter and it hit me. By that time Wednesday morning, I was fully immersed in the study of this passage, thinking about this particular part of the text, and it hit me. In order for me live a life that represents the resurrection of Jesus, a lot of my life has to pass through the filter. I must filter my thoughts. I must filter my behavior. I must even filter the individuals that I allow to influence my life.

Ed Young Sr., pastor of Second Baptist Church in Houston, calls his tv ministry, “The Winning Walk.” So how now shall we live in light of the resurrection? We shall be found walking victoriously—overcoming sin and overcoming doubt. The resurrection gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Working

Verse 58 gives us that familiar word “therefore.”

So, now, how shall we live? We should be working. Here is the glorious truth. This chapter is devoted to the resurrection. This chapter is devoted to the victory that we have in Christ. Our work on earth is not so that we might receive salvation and eternal life. Our work on earth is to rejoice that we have already received salvation and eternal life. Notice a couple of things about this.

- Settle what you believe.
- Be Strengthened in what you believe.
- Strive ahead don't shrink back.
- Be Assured that nothing for the Lord is in vain.

Stephen Olford was a preacher I became familiar with when I was in Memphis. He died in 2004. He championed expository preaching—the kind of preaching I seek to do taking the sermon directly from the text. He was born in the country of Angola to missionary parents. He rebelled against the teachings of his parents. He attended college in England to study engineering. As the result of his studies, he built and designed a powerful new motorcycle carburetor and took up motorcycle racing. One night while riding home he wrecked and lay in the damp cold for several hours before anyone found him. As a result, he developed acute pneumonia and literally lay in a hospital dying. While in the hospital he received a letter from his father. Now, understand that the letter was written before the accident. His father wrote the letter out of concern for his son's spiritual condition. In the letter, his father wrote, "Only one life, 'twill soon be past. Only what's done for Christ will last." In that lonely hospital room, God touched Stephen's heart. Kneeling beside that hospital bed, Olford prayed a prayer that changed his life. He prayed, "Lord, anytime, anywhere, any cost. Amen."

That's how we live in light of the resurrection of Jesus.