

**Text: 1 Corinthians 15: 54-58**

**Title: Living in the Now before the Not Yet**

### **Sermon Notes**

Paul ends chapter 15 with 3 commands in verse 58. The verse begins with 'Therefore' - so his commands are all in the light of the whole chapter. So let's look back over what we have seen...

The chapter begins with the historical events:

- o Jesus' death, burial, resurrection (v3 onwards)

The rest of the chapter contains the implications of the resurrection. Importantly they are a mixture of:

- o Now and Not Yet

This is important because the Corinthians thought they had everything already - just see chapter 4:8. But Paul is saying you don't have everything yet. Let's go through the headings we have had over the weeks we have been looking at 1Cor 15 and think if they are 'now' or 'not yet'...

- o Sins forgiven - NOW
- o More Resurrections - NOT YET
- o The Kingdom will come - NOT YET
- o Suffering for the Kingdom makes sense - NOW
- o Sinning must stop - NOW
- o We are looking forward to far better bodies - NOT YET

What about death?

- o see verses 54-57 in our passage for today - is victory over death a NOW or NOT YET?
- o It is both! Death has not yet been swallowed up in victory, but Jesus gives us the victory now.
- o So death has been dealt a mortal blow but hasn't yet been finally swallowed up.

So how do we live in the Now before we get to the Not Yet?

3 commands in verse 58:

#### **1. Don't shift from gospel truth**

Paul repeats that they aren't to move - but in what sense? From what?

- o see verse 2 of the chapter
- o the word preached is what they are not to move from

How might we move from the word preached?

- o We might drift - just not doing our Bible times and not getting to church or Home Group

- We might give in because of pressure from others - 'you believe **that?**' 'Christians are so narrow?' etc
- Or we might get a scent for something else we want that drowns out Bible teaching
  - It is what was happening in Corinth
  - They were pursuing Spiritual Experiences but were downplaying edification (i.e. teaching)
  - If anything becomes more important to us than Bible teaching - even if it is something very good like experiencing God or social action - we are in danger.

## 2. Don't shift from gospel work

- See verse 58 again...'Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord...'
- Notice the 'always' and 'fully'?
- This is a call to whole-hearted commitment to working for the Lord
- Many have been good examples of this - you could look up the example of 'Hudson Taylor' who was a missionary to China.
- How do you react to Paul's command?
- Tempting to think - I just don't have time!
- But if it is **always** then that can't mean just adding in the work of the Lord - it must mean doing all we do for the Lord, whether work or family or spare time.
- Looking to see how we can use our gifts to build up the church.
- Will you (re)commit yourself to the work of the Lord?

## 3. Don't shift from Gospel hope

- v58 '...because you know that your labour in the Lord is not in vain.'
- It isn't in vain because of the 'NOT YET'
- Our gospel work can **feel** as if it is in vain - but knowing that Jesus will return we know (see chapter 3) that if we build with the precious metal of the gospel, what we build will last forever.

So as we live NOW before the NOT YET:

Don't shift from:

- gospel truth
- gospel work
- gospel hope