



A MESSAGE OF HUMILITY AND
HOPE FROM THE LIFE OF PAUL

THE *CHIEF* OF SINNERS

BAND OF BROTHERS / SPRING 2026

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SPRING SERIES 2026 – WEEK 12

Resurrection Life

*I won't bow to idols, I'll stand strong and worship You
And if it puts me in the fire, I'll rejoice 'cause You're there too
I won't be formed by feelings, I'll hold fast to what is true
If the cross brings transformation I'll be crucified with You
'Cause death is just a doorway into resurrection life
If I join You in Your sufferings, then I'll join You when You rise
And when You return in glory with all the angels and the saints
My heart will still be singing, my song will be the same*

Publishing: © Capitol Cmg Paragon, Be Essential Songs, Bethel Music Publishing, Writers Roof Publishing, Cory Asbury Publishing
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- **What became of Paul?**

- Paul had hope...
...in the resurrection of Jesus
- And his own future resurrection
- So, he was unafraid of death

*I will continue to be bold for Christ, as I have been in the past. And I trust that my life will bring honor to Christ, **whether I live or die**. For to me, living means living for Christ, and dying is even better. But if I live, I can do more fruitful work for Christ. So I really don't know which is better. – Philippians 1:20-21 NLT*

*Yes, we are fully confident, and **we would rather be away from these earthly bodies**, for then we will be at home with the Lord. So whether we are here in this body or **away from this body**, our goal is to please him. – 2 Corinthians 5:8-9 NLT*

*For I swear, dear brothers and sisters, that **I face death daily**. This is as certain as my pride in what Christ Jesus our Lord has done in you. And what value was there in fighting wild beasts — those people of Ephesus — if there will be no resurrection from the dead? – 1 Corinthians 15:31 NLT*

- Paul had spent 2 years in Ephesus – Acts 19

- He preached boldly in the synagogue
 - ...held daily discussions...
 - ...performed “unusual” miracles...
 - ...saw many come to Christ...
 - ...who turned from idolatry and sorcery

A number of them who had been practicing sorcery brought their incantation books and burned them at a public bonfire. The value of the books was several million dollars. So the message about the Lord spread widely and had a powerful effect. – Acts 19:19-20 NLT

*About that time, **serious trouble** developed in Ephesus concerning the Way. It began with Demetrius, a silversmith who had a large business manufacturing silver shrines of the Greek goddess Artemis. – Acts 19:23-24 NLT*

*“It is with respect to **the resurrection of the dead** that I am on trial before you this day.” – Acts 24:21 ESV*

*“I stand here on trial because of **my hope in the promise** made by God to our fathers, to which our twelve tribes **hope** to attain, as they earnestly worship night and day. And for this **hope** I am accused by Jews, O king [Agrippa]! Why is it thought incredible by any of you that **God raises the dead?**” – Acts 26:6-7 ESV*

- Demetrius’ business had suffered
- So he stirred up trouble
 - Soon the whole city was filled with confusion. Everyone rushed to the amphitheater, dragging along Gaius and Aristarchus, who were Paul’s traveling companions from Macedonia. Paul wanted to go in, too, but the believers wouldn’t let him. – Acts 19:29-30 NLT*

- **Death is inevitable and unavoidable**

- Paul knew he wasn’t immune to death
 -and he DID die
- Luke doesn’t record it
 - ...but Paul anticipated it
- Eusebius wrote about it
 - He was from Caesarea
 - He lived from 260-340 A.D.
 - Considered “the father of church history”

“When the government of Nero was now firmly established, he began to plunge into unholy pursuits, and armed himself even against the religion of the God of the universe. To describe the greatness of his depravity does not lie within the plan of the present work...he [Nero] was the first of the emperors who showed himself an enemy of the divine religion. The Roman Tertullian is likewise a witness of this. He writes as

follows: 'Examine your records. There you will find that Nero was the first that persecuted this doctrine.'

"...announcing himself as the first among God's chief enemies, he was led on to the slaughter of the apostles. It is, therefore, recorded that Paul was beheaded in Rome itself, and that Peter likewise was crucified under Nero. This account of Peter and Paul is substantiated by the fact that their names are preserved in the cemeteries of that place even to the present day." – Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* (2.25.3-4)

- Clement of Rome provides further insight
 - o He was a 1ST-Century bishop of Rome
 - o Catholics consider him the first pope
 - o Died in 100 A.D.

"But not to dwell upon ancient examples, let us come to the most recent spiritual heroes. Let us take the noble examples furnished in our own generation. Through envy and jealousy the greatest and most righteous pillars [of the church] have been persecuted and put to death...Let us set before our eyes the illustrious apostles. Peter, through unrighteous envy, endured not one or two, but numerous labours; and when he had at length suffered martyrdom, departed to the place of glory due to him.

"Owing to envy, Paul also obtained the reward of patient endurance, after being seven times thrown into captivity, compelled to flee, and stoned. After preaching both in the east and west, he gained the illustrious reputation due to his faith, having taught righteousness to the whole world...and come to the extreme limit of the west, and suffered martyrdom under the prefects. Thus was he removed from the world, and went into the holy place, having proved himself a striking example of patience."
– Clement, *Letter to the Corinthians*

*Don't be afraid of suffering for the Lord. Work at telling others the Good News, and fully carry out the ministry God has given you. As for me, my life has already been poured out as an offering to God. **The time of my death is near.** – 2 Timothy 4:5-6 NLT*

For to me, to live is Christ [He is my source of joy, my reason to live] and to die is gain [for I will be with Him in eternity]. – Philippians 1:21 Amplified Bible

- Paul didn't have a **death wish**
...he had the **hope of eternal life**
- Death wasn't **the end**
...it was just **the beginning**

*I have been sent to proclaim faith to those God has chosen and to teach them to know the truth that shows them how to live godly lives. **This truth gives them confidence that they have eternal life**, which God — who does not lie — promised them before the world began. – Titus 1:1-2 NLT*

Now may the God of peace **make you holy in every way**, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ comes again. **God will make this happen**, for he who calls you is faithful. – 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 NLT

- **The reality of resurrection life**

- Paul knew he wasn't **immune** to death
- But he wasn't **immobilized** by it either

The Lord is for me, so I will have no fear.

What can mere people do to me? – Genesis 12:3 ESV

*Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which **you received**, in which **you stand**, and by which **you are being saved**, if **you hold fast** to the word I preached to you—unless **you believed in vain**.*

*For I delivered to you as **of first importance** what I also received:* – 1 Corinthians 15:1-3
ESV

- Christ died
- He was buried
- He was raised
- He appeared

For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. – 1 Corinthians 15:16-19 ESV

- **Go for the gusto!**

- Life is short, life it up!
- Get it while you can!

“Grab it while you can – grab every scrap of happiness while you can.” – Noël Coward

So I recommend having fun, because there is nothing better for people in this world than to eat, drink, and enjoy life. That way they will experience some happiness along with all the hard work God gives them under the sun. – Ecclesiastes 8:15 NLT

- Paul picks up on this theme
*If the dead are not raised, “**Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.**”* – 1 Corinthians 15:32 ESV

*But in fact **Christ has been raised from the dead**, the **firstfruits** of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order:*

Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. – 1 Corinthians 15:20-23 ESV

firstfruits – *aparchē* – ἀπαρχή

The first portion of the harvest which was presented to God as a thank offering for all that was to come

The Passover

- Celebrated on the 14th day of the first month
- Jesus died on Friday
 - The day the Passover lamb was slain
- The Jews offered a sacrifice of the firstfruits
 - On Sunday, the day after Sabbath
 - The day Jesus resurrected
- 50 days later, a 2nd firstfruit offering was made

ADAM

by a man...came death
in Adam all die

JESUS

by a man...came also the resurrection
in Christ...shall all be made alive

BUT EACH ACCORDING TO HIS OWN ORDER

coming – *parousia* – παρουσία

- return, advent, appearing

- Christ was the first to be resurrected...
...but there will be many more to come
- His resurrection guarantees ours

*And now, dear brothers and sisters, we want you to know what will happen to the believers who have died so you will not grieve like people who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and was raised to life again, we also believe that when Jesus returns, God will bring back with him the believers who have died. We tell you this directly from the Lord. We who are still living when the Lord returns will not meet him ahead of those who have died. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God. First, the believers who have died will rise from their graves. Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be **caught up** in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever. So encourage each other with these words. – 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 NLT*

Caught up – *harpazō*

- snatched away, carry off, seize
- *rapiemur* (Latin Vulgate)
- From the verb *rapio* (rapture)

- **Then comes the end**

Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. For “God has put all things in subjection under his feet.” But when it says, “all things are put in subjection,” it is plain that he is excepted who put all things in subjection under him. When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all. – 1 Corinthians 15:24-28 ESV

God’s timeline

- The church age (“The times of the Gentiles”) – Luke 21:24
- The Rapture (Christ returns for His bride) – 1 Thess 4
- The Tribulation – Matt 24
- The Second Coming – Matt 24
- The Millennial Kingdom – Rev 20
- Great White Throne Judgment – Rev 20
- The Eternal State – Rev 21-22

Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written:

*“Death is swallowed up in victory.”
“O death, where is your victory?
O death, where is your sting?”*

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain. – 1 Corinthians 15:51-58 ESV

- **Discussion Questions:**

How should a better understanding of the end help us live more victoriously as we wait?

Why do we tend to live as if we are still “in Adam” instead of “in Christ?” What’s the difference?

What are some ways we can be more “steadfast, immovable, and abounding in the Lord?”