

Baptised For The Dead

1 Corinthians 15:29 [King James] *“Else what shall they do which are **baptized for the dead**, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?”*

Greek word translated “for” is the preposition “gar” and can be translated “on behalf of” or “because of.”

To understand what Paul is expressing in this scripture we need to apply two fundamental laws of scriptural study.

1. Always include the context of the particular verse or statement and the general subject being examined.
2. We need to consider if a particular word is being used in a physical or spiritual context.

This is very important in the study of this scripture.

Romans 6:3-11 [NIV] *“Or don’t you know that **all of us who were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin, because anyone who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. **In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.**”***

Paul links our baptism to our death and resurrection to a new life, sin-free and a slave of Jesus Christ instead of a slave of sin.

[See **Romans 6:16-22**]

John 5:24-25 [NIV] *“I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; **he has crossed over from death to life.** I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live.”*

Belief in the saving power of the death of Jesus Christ is shown outwardly by baptism.

As we follow Jesus Christ’s example by symbolically dying by total immersion in water and coming out of this water is symbolic of a resurrection to a new life.

Romans 8:6 [NIV] *“The mind of sinful man is death, but **the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace;**”*

The human who is **not** controlled by the Holy Spirit in their life is dead [spiritually] even though they are still physically alive.

Why is this?

Romans 8:7-8 [NIV] *“the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God’s law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.”*

A mind that is **not** controlled and educated by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit can never obey or please our Creator God.

Romans 8:9-11 [NIV] *“You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ. But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness. And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.”*

Our resurrection to eternal life is dependent on the working of the indwelling Holy Spirit in our human spirit.

1 John 3:14-16 [NIV] *“We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death. Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him. This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.”*

Every other human being that lives, we must look on as our brother or sister, and if we are to love them we are to lay down our lives for them.

John 15:12-14 [NIV] *“My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no-one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command.”*

This is the direct command of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Matthew 28:18-20 [NIV] *“Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”*

This was the final, and hence the most important command of Jesus Christ.

To accomplish this we have to lay down our lives, our time and substance, to preach the gospel message of forgiveness and eternal life through our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Such a dedicated life will give those who are “*spiritually dead*” the opportunity to also “*pass from death to life.*”

With this in mind, now read this passage of scripture we are studying.

1 Corinthians 15:29 [NIV] *“Now if there is no resurrection, what will those do who are baptised for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptised for them?”*

We lay down our lives, by our baptism and a resurrection out of the waters of baptism, to a new life of love for all humans. Our new life is centred around the preaching by example and words the gospel message of the great love our Creator God has for all humanity.

Those who accept Jesus Christ as their Saviour are baptising so that they also lay down their lives to promote the same Good News.

Romans 12:1-2 [NIV] *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is, his good, pleasing and perfect will.”*

Such a life that will then please our Creator God, demands a total change of our mind. A change from a mind that is only self-centred to one that is reaching out to all humanity in a love, that is one of the very fruits of the indwelling Holy Spirit. [**Galatians 5:22**]

1 Corinthians 15:18-20 [NIV] *“Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men. But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.”*

Death is referred to as a sleep, physically or spiritually. [**Romans 13:11** [NIV]; **1 Thessalonians 5:6** [NIV]

Revelation 3:1-3 [NIV] *“To the angel of the church in Sardis write: These are the words of him who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God. Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; obey it, and repent. But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you.”*

The problem with the Sardis Church was they were spiritually dead in spite of a reputation of being active Christians. Jesus Christ had no words of commendation for this church that looked so good on the outside but was spiritually dead inside.

Hebrews 2:14-15 [NIV] *“Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.”*

The power that Satan has over us is through his deceptive ways, causing us to remain spiritually asleep or spiritually dead.

Jesus Christ had to join humans whose life depended on circulation of blood in our fleshly body.

Then Jesus by shedding this blood and rising again from death in a resurrection, to a new eternal life, frees us from the fear of death.

Through this example of Jesus Christ, all humans who look to Him as their Saviour know that death is only the doorway to eternal life.

Just as we awake from physical sleep to a new day, we can awake from physical death [sleep] to a new day that will have no end.

Acts 2:38 [NIV] *“Peter replied, “Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”*

Humans who accept Jesus Christ as their Saviour and are baptised, as an outward show of an inner change of life, will receive within them the power of the Holy Spirit.

This is what Jesus Christ was referring to in the last part of His final command to His disciples.

Matthew 28:19-20 [NIV] *“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”*

Jesus Christ will live His life of preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God in us through the power of the Holy Spirit.

John 14:15-18 [NIV] *“If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you for ever, the Spirit of truth. The world cannot*

accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. **I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.**”

Jesus does warn us that **not** all humans will at this time have their minds open to the wonderful Good News that we bring.

This has always been the reality, as Isaiah was warned many years ago.

Isaiah 6:5-7 [NIV] *“Woe to me!” I cried. “I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen **the King, the LORD Almighty.**” Then one of the seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. With it he touched my mouth and said, “See, this has touched your lips; **your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for.**”*

Isaiah was cleansed of his sins by Jesus Christ, referred to as the *“King, the Lord Almighty.”*

Isaiah 6:8 [NIV] *“Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, **“Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?”** And I said, **“Here am I. Send me!”***

Jesus Christ then gave Isaiah the chance to be His servant and Isaiah accepted the challenge.

Isaiah 6:9-10 [NIV] *“He said, **“Go and tell this people: **“Be ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving.**’** Make the heart of this people calloused; make their ears dull and close their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed.”*

The message was of sins forgiven through Jesus Christ, the same message all Christians should be preaching today. But the vast majority will still be spiritually asleep and **not** receive salvation at that time.

Isaiah 6:11-13 [NIV] *“Then I said, **“For how long, O Lord?”** And he answered: **“Until the cities lie ruined and without inhabitant, until the houses are left deserted and the fields ruined and ravaged, until the LORD has sent everyone far away and the land is utterly forsaken. And though a tenth remains in the land, it will again be laid waste. But as the terebinth and oak leave stumps when they are cut down, so the holy seed will be the stump in the land.”***

Jesus Christ then told Isaiah, and us today, when these people who were spiritually dead would be awakened to receive the chance of salvation.

What is prophesied tells us what would happen just before the return of Jesus Christ and after the day of His second coming.

1 Corinthians 15:19-23 [NIV] *“If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men. But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. For as in Adam all die, **so in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him.**”*

Note the short but very important statements about the resurrection through Jesus Christ.

“All will be made alive” every human being will have their chance to pass from spiritual death into spiritual life. [See **John 5:24** and **1 John 3:14**]

“But each in his own turn” I look on this as a type of *“spiritual family planning,”* those who are first to have a chance of salvation, being used by Jesus Christ to teach those who are resurrected back to physical life later.

Any physical father really enjoys seeing his children working as part of the family business.

God's "business" is the salvation of all the human beings He has created and given life.

Revelation 1:3-6 [NIV] *"Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near. John, To the seven churches in the province of Asia: Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. **To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father, to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.**"*

Priests were the teachers of Jesus Christ's day at His first coming.

Revelation 20:11-13 [NIV] *"Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. **And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done.**"*

Here is described a teaching situation, the books referred to, Greek "biblōs" is the Holy Christian Bible, opened to the minds of those people for the first time, by those who had been called before to preach the Good News found in the books of the Christian Bible.

Here again we have the same example of baptised Christians preaching to the spiritual dead as Paul was referring to in **1 Corinthians 15:29**.

The aim of this website is to bring to the vast majority of people knowledge of the God they do not know and the love He has for them personally.

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