

The Lord Needs Followers to Abound in His Work  
(1 Corinthians 15:58)

Introduction:

1. This morning we showed from the Scriptures that the Lord has needs.
2. This evening we are basing our lesson on this verse -- we learn from it that "the Lord needs followers to abound in His work."
3. After examining it in its context, we will examine what it teaches us to do.

Discussion:

- I. LET US FIRST CONSIDER THIS VERSE IN ITS CONTEXT
  - A. The main subject addressed in 1 Corinthians 15 is "the resurrection."
    1. Notice that vs.58 begins with the word "*therefore*."
      - a. Vs.58 is a concluding statement based on information presented earlier.
      - b. All the information covered earlier leads up to this concluding statement.
    2. The reason why Paul wrote this information is revealed in vs.12 -- there were some who said that there is no resurrection.
  - B. According to vs.13-19, if there is no resurrection, we are in a hopeless condition.
    1. Christ was not raised, our preaching is vain, our faith is vain, those who have obeyed the Gospel are still in their sins, and we have no hope concerning our loved ones who died in the Lord.
    2. In this hopeless condition, would there be any good reason for "abounding in the Lord's work?"
    3. As vs.32 says, if there is no resurrection, "*let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die.*"
  - C. Thankfully,:
    1. Christ was raised from the dead
    2. Christ serves as our guarantee that we will be resurrected
    3. Christ will enable us to enjoy a great victory when He returns.
  - D. Looking forward to the resurrection should motivate us to do what vs.58 teaches us to do.
- II. LET US EXAMINE WHAT THIS VERSE TEACHES US TO DO
  - A. Before we do so, notice that this verse is addressed to "*my beloved brethren*."
    1. Whatever this passage teaches, it applies to all Christians.
    2. On the basis that the resurrection will occur, what are all Christians instructed to do?
  - B. First, all Christians are to "persevere."
    1. We are to "*be steadfast*" [to be firmly fixed, settled].
    2. We are to be "*unmovable*" [persistent, not to be moved from our place by external forces].
    3. Perseverance is also emphasized in Hebrews 10:23.
    4. In addition to "persevering," . . .
  - C. All Christians are to "do the Lord's work."
    1. "*The work of the Lord*" is the work that the Lord has instructed us to do in His Word.
    2. We are to "*abound*" [excel, overflow] in the Lord's work.
    3. We are to abound in the Lord's work "*always*" [at all times].
    4. In other words we are to imitate Christ (John 9:4).
    5. We should be encouraged to do the Lord's work when we know that our "*labor is not in vain in the Lord*" (see Galatians 6:9).

Conclusion:

1. The resurrection will occur when Jesus returns.
2. While we look forward to this great event,:
  - a. let us persevere
  - b. let us always abound in the Lord's work.