THIS IS MOST IMPORTANT---JESUS LIVES!

April 16, 2017 1 Cor. 15:3-8

Dear Friends in Christ: HE IS RISEN!!

 Isn’t this a wonderful day? The weather is great. The church looks very Resurrectionist. Can you smell the breakfast? The lilies, banners, the music.

 But you are not here just for all of this. I hope you are not here as a once a year obligation. I would hope that you are here to hear what is of the utmost importance for you future.

 Do you intend to live forever on this earth? No? Me neither. Where are you going? Are you sure? You can be you know. If you cannot say with confidence, I know where I am going when I close my eyes in death-----listen closely.

 If you think being here each Sunday isn’t important to your future, pay close attention.

 We all live under a cloud of death. We go to too many funerals. We preplan our own funerals. We see out bodies age, get sick, need operations, have accidents and we remember our younger years.

 But----there is no going back. We can’t turn the clock back and be young again. Or, can we?

 Paul is passing on what is of first importance. More important than anything else you will ever hear.

 Do you enjoy baseball, football, basket ball, golf? This is more important.

 Do you live for parties, hunting, fishing, farming, working, reading or something else? This is much more important.

 Do you regard religion as something you have to do, feeling pressure to conform? Do you see the real value of what we call the Christian Church?

 Let’s be clear what we all are facing. We face not only physical death, but what Scripture calls the second death. This is the death of separation from God and His grace for all eternity. The living death we all deserve because of our original sin. That which we were born with.

 Unless you and I get rid of the sin we were born with, heaven cannot be our home.

 And so, what if, there were no Jesus? What if there is no resurrection? Paul asks this question just a few verses after our text, saying in 1 Cor. 15:13: “IF there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raise. And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins.”

 If we are still in our sins, then the debt for sin has yet to be paid. That debt is our own life. It is forfeit. The wages of sin is death. Living death in the fires of hell.

 This is why the life, suffering, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ is of first importance. Without all He has done, there is no hope for anyone on earth.

 Easter Sunday and every Sunday is the assurance from God that our sins have been paid for in full thru the death of His Son Jesus Christ.

 John 3:16 is a summary of God’s love letter to us on the earth. “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

 And not that question again. Can we turn the clock back? Be young again? Most definitely!!!!! Listen to the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:51: “Listen, I tell you a mystery. We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed; in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound; the dead in Christ will be raised imperishable, and we will all be changed.”

 We will be immortal, living in true joy for all eternity with our great God. He is Risen! He is Risen Indeed!