Conversion Course Correction
1 Corinthians 15:30-34

I. Intro

- Anecdote
  - Testimony
    - It was back in August of 1995 - when I become a convert to the Christian faith.
      - Up until that point in time - the course of my life was all about the pursuit of personal pleasure.
        - I was a professional artist - creating illustrations for the Austin Chronicle - and I worked as the in-store artist at Tower records on the drag.
          - I was also a performing artist - entertaining crowds - as the frontman for an infamous country/punk band.
            - And while my career as an artist was on course to provide me with the worldly success that I desired…
              - …I knew that the personal pleasures I was pursuing - were empty and unable to satisfy my soul.
  - Correction
    - Thankfully - an old friend of mine who had become a believer - took the time to present me with the proof of Christ's resurrection.
      - And after considering the evidence for the Christian faith - I became a born-again believer…
        - …as I placed my faith in the death - the burial and the resurrection of Christ Jesus.

- It was shortly after my conversion to Christ when I realized that - the course of my life was completely wrong.

- And as I realized that the Lord had another plan - a better plan for my life…

- …I began to correct the course of my life - according to the leading of the Lord.

II. Outline

- Points

- Course

- Now - as we consider how the Lord led me from the mosh pit - to the pulpit…

- ...it's my hope that we might all realize that those who convert to the Christian faith - - ought to experience a course correction.

- And as we study the scriptures before us this morning - we'll begin to see that...

1. …our Christian Conversion corrects our Confession

2. …our Christian Conversion corrects our Convictions

3. …our Christian Conversion corrects our Connections

- With this as our outline - let's open our Bibles to 1st Corinthians chapter 15...

- ...where we find Paul - helping his audience to grasp the course correction of the Christian converts.

III. Confession

- Set up

- Context
  - As we make our way to the 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians - I wanna take a moment to put our text - back into it's context.
    - It's here in this chapter where we find Paul - addressing those who were questioning the physical resurrection of Jesus Christ.
      - After presenting them with the prophetic proof of Jesus' death - burial - - and resurrection…
        - …Paul also appealed to the eyewitnesses who spent time with our resurrected Redeemer - before He ascended into heaven.
          - And now - here in our text today - we find Paul - encouraging the Christians in Corinth to realize that…
            - …those who truly convert to the Christian faith - should begin to live their lives - in the light of Christ's resurrection.
              - And with this as our focus - let's pick up our study of 1st Corinthians chapter 15 - beginning there at verse 30 - where Paul asked…

- Text

1Co 15:30 …why do we stand in jeopardy every hour?
1Co 15:31 I affirm, by the boasting in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.
1Co 15:32 If, in the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantage is it to me? If the dead do not rise, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!"
1Co 15:33 Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits."
1Co 15:34 Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame.

- Why
  - Here in these verses - we find Paul presenting the original recipients of this epistle with a powerful question…

- …and he did this by asking - why do we stand in jeopardy every hour?
  - Paul was effectively asking - why are will willing to suffer the pain of persecution - if the resurrection of Jesus never happened.

    - In other words - Paul was asking - if the crux of the Christian faith is false…

      - …then - why in the world would anyone embrace a confession of faith - that fails to produce everlasting benefits in the afterlife.

        - If the Christian confession of faith brings the pain of persecution without the promise of eternal benefits…

          - …then - why would anyone convert to the Christian faith?

- Danger

  - With this in mind - let's consider how the scholars who created the Amplified Bible rendered verse 30 - they put it like this…

    1Co 15:30 …why are we [running such risks and putting ourselves] in danger [nearly] every hour [if there is no resurrection]?

    - In other words - if Jesus failed to physically rise up from the grave - then…

      - …there is no reason to think that those who trust in Him will also rise up from the dead.

        - And if there's no reason to think that believers will rise up from the dead…

          - …then - why in the world were they willing to suffer the pain of persecution - for eternal rewards that would never be received?

            - And if there is no eternal reward for trusting in Jesus - then - why was Paul risking his life - by confirming his confession.

- Affirm

- Let's consider how he explained it - here in our text today - look with me again - beginning there at verse 30 - where he asked…
  1Co 15:30 …why do we stand in jeopardy every hour?
  1Co 15:31 I affirm, by the boasting in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.

  - Here in these verses - we find Paul - confirming his confession of faith - which was based on his belief in Christ's resurrection.

    - And yes - this is despite the fact that the confession of his conversion was placing his life at risk of persecution.

      - And knowing that his Christian conversion could ultimately result in his martyrdom…

        - …Paul's confession of faith was based on his confidence in Christ's resurrection.

          - And just to be clear - Paul was a man who actually connected with Christ Jesus - after our Savior ascended into heaven.

- Witnesses

  - With this as our focus - let's consider the confession that Paul presented - back in the beginning of this chapter.

    - Let's take another look at 1st Corinthians 15 - look with me beginning there at verse 3 - where Paul declared…

      1Co 15:3 For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,
      1Co 15:4 and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,
      1Co 15:5 and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve.
      1Co 15:6 After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep.
      1Co 15:7 After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles.

1Co 15:8 Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time.
1Co 15:9 For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.
1Co 15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

- Here in these verses - we find Paul - appealing to the eyewitness evidence of those who spent time with Jesus - after His resurrection.
  - This of course included Paul - who saw our Savior - as he made his way to Damascus.
    - And while it's true that he was headed to Damascus - in order to arrest the Christians who were there…
      - …it's also true that Paul found himself - suddenly surrounded by aN incredible light from heaven.
        - That's when he found himself face to face with our risen Redeemer.

- Testimony
  - Let's consider how Paul explained it - in Acts chapter 22 - it's beginning at verse 6 - where he declared…

Act 22:6 "Now it happened, as I journeyed and came near Damascus at about noon, suddenly a great light from heaven shone around me.
Act 22:7 "And I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?'
Act 22:8 "So I answered, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said to me, 'I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting.'

- So - according to Paul - who was known as Saul at that point in time…
  - …Jesus Christ revealed Himself to Paul - as he traveled on the road to Damascus.

- And while we can't say for sure if this was a vision - - or if Paul was spiritually carried away into heaven…

- …what we can say for sure is that - Paul was completely convinced about the resurrection of Jesus.
- It's for this reason that he was quick to confess his faith in Jesus - and yes - even if this resulted in his death.

- Danger

- And listen - Paul wasn't just talking the talk - he was also walking the walk.

- Proof of my point is found in 2nd Corinthians 11 - it's beginning at verse 24 - where he described the jeopardy that he face - by declaring…

2Co 11:24 From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one.
2Co 11:25 Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep;
2Co 11:26 in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;
2Co 11:27 in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness—
2Co 11:28 besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches.

- Without debate - Paul was a man who was willing to endure the trials and the troubles - suffered by Christian converts.

- Rather than keeping his mouth closed - in order to avoid the pain of persecution…

- …Paul publicly confessed his faith in the resurrection of Jesus - as he affirmed his Christian conversion.

- It's for this reason that he ended up becoming the target of those who were opposed to the spread of the Christian faith.

- And in this way - Saul the persecutor became Paul the persecuted.

- Course
  - Now - as we consider how Paul's conversion resulted in his course correction…
    - …we should take a moment to consider how those who convert to the Christian faith…
      - …will experience the same sort of course correction - according to our confession of faith.
        - With this as our focus - let's consider how Paul explained it - in his first letter to pastor Timothy.
          - Hold your place here in 1st Corinthians - and let's turn in our Bibles to 1st Timothy chapter 6.
            - …and as we make our way to 6th chapter of 1st Timothy 6 - I wanna take a moment to consider…
              - …how our conversion to Christ Jesus will change our confession.
- Confession
  - Before we placed our faith in Christ Jesus - we were on the broad road that leads to destruction.
    - And while it's true that the course of our lives was in conflict with the will of the Lord…
      - …it's also true that the confession of our mouths was also based on a belief system - which was in conflict with the word of God.
        - But then came the day when we embraced the gospel message of grace…
          - …and it was at that point in time when our Christian conversion changed the course of our lives…

- …and it's this course correction that changed the confession of our mouths.

  - And it's for this reason that we find ourselves in constant conflict with those who reject our risen Redeemer.

- Application

  - Fight

    - Let's consider how Paul explained it to pastor Timothy - here in 1st Timothy chapter 6 - it's beginning at verse 12 - where he declared…

      1Ti 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.
      1Ti 6:13 I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate,
      1Ti 6:14 that you keep this commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing,
      1Ti 6:15 which He will manifest in His own time, He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords,
      1Ti 6:16 who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. Amen.

      - Here in these verses - we find Paul - helping Pastor Timothy to realize that…

        - …Christians have been called to fight the good fight of faith - according to the good confession of Christ's resurrection.

          - And just like Jesus - who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate ordered His crucifixion…

            - …those who trust in Jesus should also witness the good confession before those who might persecute us.

- And in this way - our Christian Conversion will correct our course - as we continue to Confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

- Transition

- Points

  - This brings us to our second point - because listen…

  1. …our Christian Conversion not only corrects our Confession…

  2. …but - our Christian Conversion also corrects our Convictions

     - With this as our focus - let's make our way back to 1st Corinthians chapter 15…

       - …where we find Paul - describing the new convictions that he developed as a disciple of Christ.

         - Look with me - there at verse 32 - where he asked…

IV. Convictions

- Text

  1Co 15:32 If, in the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantage is it to me? If the dead do not rise, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!"

  - Beasts

    - Here in this verse - we find Paul - reminding his readers - about the beasts that he fought in Ephesus.

      - Now - it's possible that Paul was literally placed in a coliseum to fight with wild beasts there in the city of Ephesus.

        - And while this certainly was a possibility - there's no mention of this event in the Bible.

- It's also possible that Paul was using the Greek word rendered - beasts in a figurative sense.

  - If so - then he was probably referring to the angry pagans in the Asian city of Ephesus…

    - …who organized a riot against Paul and his traveling companions.

- The Beast

  - With this as our focus - hold your place here in 1st Corinthians - and let's turn in our Bibles to 2 Timothy chapter 4.

    - And as we make our way to the 4th chapter of 2nd Timothy - I should take a moment to point out that…

      - …Timothy was the young man that Paul appointed to pastor the church in Ephesus.

        - And it was there in Ephesus where Paul - and his missions team were attacked by the angry pagans…

          - …who were watching the Ephesians - repenting of their idolatries - in order to embrace the gospel of grace.

            - And it's sad to say that there was a Jewish man named Alexander - who was also used to attack Paul - and his missions team.

- Lion

  - It's for this reason that Paul warned pastor Timothy - about Alexander the coppersmith.

    - Let's consider how he put it - here in 2nd Timothy chapter 4 - look with me beginning there at verse 14 - where Paul declared…

2Ti 4:14 Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm. May the Lord repay him according to his works.

2Ti 4:15 You also must beware of him, for he has greatly resisted our words.
2Ti 4:16 At my first defense no one stood with me, but all forsook me. May it not be charged against them.
2Ti 4:17 But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that the message might be preached fully through me, and that all the Gentiles might hear. Also I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.
2Ti 4:18 And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve me for His heavenly kingdom. To Him be glory forever and ever. Amen!

- Here in these verses - we find Paul - warning pastor Timothy about Alexander the coppersmith…
  - …and the reason why was due to the fact that - he had somehow harmed Paul.
    - And after describing the way that he was forced to defend himself before the Gentiles in Ephesus…
      - …Paul rejoiced as he remembered the wat the the Lord delivered him from the mouth of the Lion.
        - And the chances are - this was a reference to Alexander.

- Fought
  - It's also possible that Paul was referring to a silversmith from Ephesus named Demetrius.
    - It's in Acts chapter 19 - where we learn that Demetrius was upset with Paul - and the reason why is because…
      - …those who were converting to the Christian faith - were no longer buying the silver shrines of Diana that he was making.
        - Not only that - but - those who had practiced magic brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all.

- And they counted up the value of them - and it totaled fifty thousand pieces of silver.

- Clearly - the new Christian converts in Ephesus experienced a course correction - according to their new convictions.

- And it's for this reason that Paul found himself fighting with the unbelievers there in that Asian city.

- Value

- With that being the case - Paul asked the Christians in Corinth why he was willing to fight the good fight of faith - IF there is no resurrection.

- Let's consider how the scholars who created the New Living Translation rendered the question that Paul posed in verse 32 - they put it like this…

1Co 15:32a …what value was there in fighting wild beasts—those people of Ephesus—if there will be no resurrection from the dead?

- If there is no resurrection from the dead - - then why in the world did Paul risk his life - fighting with the angry pagans in Ephesus?

- In other words - why should the disciples of Christ engage in debates with unbelievers - if there in no resurrection from the dead?

- And why should Christians create conflict with those who reject the resurrection of Jesus - if in fact there is no resurrection from the dead?

- What is the benefit for believers - to risk relational rejection with anyone - if there is no advantage in the afterlife?

- Why wouldn't we just live our lives for the lust of the flesh - if there is no judgment in the afterlife?

- Old Conviction

- This was precisely the point that Paul was making - here in our text today - and so - look with me again - there at verse 32 - where Paul asked…

1Co 15:32 If, in the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantage is it to me? If the dead do not rise, “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!”

- Christian - listen - if there is no afterlife - - then there’s also no reason to believe that we’re going to give an account for the way we lived our lives.
  - And if there’s no reason to believe that we’re eventually going to give an account for the way we lived our lives…
    - …then - why wouldn’t we live our lives for the lust of the flesh - the lust of the eyes - and the pride of life?
      - If there is no resurrection from the dead - then - we might as well spend our time…
        - …pursuing the personal pleasures of this world - whatever they might be.

- Judge
  - Conversely - if Jesus is risen - then we can also be certain that He will also judge the world - according to the righteous standard of God.
    - Let’s consider how Paul put it - in Acts chapter 17 - it’s verse 31 - where he declared…

      Act 17:31 …He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.

      - Christian - listen - the resurrection of Jesus is also the assurance that Jesus will eventually judge the world in righteousness.
        - That being the case - those who are living their lives for the lust of the flesh - the lust of the eyes - and the pride of life…

- …should repent of their sins - and at the same time - they should trust in our risen Redeemer…

- …so that they can be saved from the righteousness wrath of God - by faith in Jesus Christ.

- And those who've already converted to the Christian faith - should correct the course of their lives - with new convictions.

- Profit

- Let's consider how the Lord Jesus explained it to His disciples in Matthew chapter 16 - it's beginning at verse 24 - where He declared…
  Mat 16:24 "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.
  Mat 16:25 "For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.
  Mat 16:26 "For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

- According to Jesus - those who set out to acquire every earthly desire - by pursuing the pleasures of this wicked world…

- …will eventually give an account of every sinful thing they ever did.

- And listen - the passing pleasures they enjoyed here in this world will be a distant memory…

- …once they find themselves suffering in the lake of fire forevermore.

- And it's for this reason that Jesus encouraged us to crucify our sinful desires - as we follow Him by faith.

- Convictions

- Christian - listen - this is the conviction that will help correct the course of our lives.

- And when we realize that those who trust in Christ have been called to crucify our carnal desires…

  - …we will become those believers who are ready to suffer the pain of persecution - so that others might be saved.

    - In order to make my case - let's consider how Paul explained it in the letter he sent to the church in Rome.

      - Hold your place here in 1st Corinthians - and let's turn in our Bibles to Romans chapter 8…

        - …you see - it's here in the 8th chapter of Romans - where we find Paul - helping the Christians in Rome to understand that…

          - …those who trust in Jesus can stand strong in the conviction that there is no enemy that can separate us from the love of the Lord.

- Application

  - Persuasion

    - Let's consider how Paul put it in Romans chapter 8 - look with me beginning there at verse 33 - where Paul asked…

Rom 8:33 Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.
Rom 8:34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.
Rom 8:35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?
Rom 8:36 As it is written:
"For Your sake we are killed all day long;
We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."
Rom 8:37 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.
Rom 8:38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come,

Rom 8:39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- Those who trust in the resurrection of Jesus Christ - can also stand strong in their conviction…
  - …that there is nothing that can separate us from the love of the Lord Jesus.
    - And with this persuasion - we can correct the course of our lives - as we walk by faith with Jesus.
      - In this way - the Holy Spirit will help us to maintaining our confident conviction…
        - …that nothing can separate us from the love of our Savior - Jesus - not even the pain of persecution - resulting in a martyrs death.

- Transition

- Points
  - This brings us to our third and final point - because listen…

1. …our Christian Conversion not only corrects our Confession…
2. …and - our Christian Conversion not only correct our Convictions
3. …but - our Christian Conversion also corrects our Connections

- With this as our focus - let's make our way back to 1st Corinthians chapter 15…
  - …where we find Paul - encouraging the Christians in Corinth to create new connections with other believers.
    - Look with me - beginning there at verse 33 - where he declared…

V. Connections

- Text

  1Co 15:33 Do not be deceived: “Evil company corrupts good habits.”
  1Co 15:34 Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame.

- Company
  - Here in these verses - we find Paul - challenging the Christians in Corinth about the company that they were keeping.
    - And just to be clear - I should remind you about the speculation that I made in our study last week.
      - Remember - it was back in verse 29 - where Paul asked his audience about those who were being baptized for the dead.
        - As we considered his question - I took the time to point out that Paul used the word - THEY - which leads me to think that…
          - …he was referring to the unbelievers - who were engaging in this religious ritual.
            - And the chances are - there were Christians at the church in Corinth who were being influenced by friends - or family members…
              - …who were trying to convince them that there is no such thing as a resurrection from the dead.
  - Deceived
    - If I’m correct about this conjecture - then - it only stands to reason that those same unbelievers were also the Evil companions that Paul was referring to.
      - But regardless of WHO Paul was referring to - - we must not fail to notice that this was a possible point of deception.
        - You see - when Paul begins a warning with the words - Do not be deceived…

- …then - the chances are - this is something that Christians can easily be deceived about.

- What this means is that - those who trust in Jesus Christ - can easily be deceived about the company we keep.

- And it's sad to say that most Christians today are convinced that they won't be affected by their connections with unbelievers.

- Companions

- If this sounds like your perspective - then I encourage you to take another look at verse 33 - where Paul declared…

1Co 15:33 Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits."

- Is this something that you've been deceived about - as you maintain close connections with carnal companions?

- If so - then - the chances are - you been duped into believing that your connections with unbelievers - has no affect on the course of your life?

- And while it's possible that there are many who are making excuses in their minds - even as I speak…

- …the fact remains the same - - the Evil company we keep will corrupt our good habits.

- And it's for this reason that every Christian convert should correct the course of their lives - according to this warning.

- Walk

- Let's consider how King Solomon put it in Proverbs chapter 13 - it's verse 20 where he declared…

Pro 13:20 He who walks with wise men will be wise,
But the companion of fools will be destroyed.

- Christian - listen - those who want to correct the course of their life should walk with those who are walking in the wisdom of the Lord.

  - Please trust me when I tell you that - those who maintain their relational connections with those who foolishly reject our Redeemer…

    - …will find themselves traversing the broad road that leads to self-destruction.

      - And knowing that Evil company will always corrupt good habits…

        - …Paul encouraged the Christians in Corinth - - to wake up and walk in righteousness.

- Awake

  - Let's consider how he put it - here in 1st Corinthians 15 - look with me again there at verse 34 - where he declared…

    1Co 15:34 Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame.

  - Here in this verse - we find Paul - reminding his readers - that we are surrounded by people who have no knowledge of God.

    - Not only that - but - we are often times in the company of those who are living for the lust of the flesh - the lust of the eyes - and the pride of life.

      - Whether we're at work - or we're at school - we are surrounded by unbelievers who don't know God.

        - And I'm sure we all have friends and family members - who still have influence in our lives.

          - And it's sad to say that many Christians have been led astray - by the corrupt counsel of their carnal connections.

- Unbelievers

- That being the case - we'd do well to follow the advice that Paul presented in 2nd Corinthians 6 - it's beginning at verse 14 - where he declared…

2Co 6:14 Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?
2Co 6:15 And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?
2Co 6:16 And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said:
"I will dwell in them And walk among them.
I will be their God, And they shall be My people."
2Co 6:17 Therefore
"Come out from among them
And be separate, says the Lord.
Do not touch what is unclean,
And I will receive you."
2Co 6:18 "I will be a Father to you,
And you shall be My sons and daughters,
Says the LORD Almighty."

  - Now - listen - Paul wasn't suggesting that we should separate ourselves from every unbeliever we know.

    - Remember - we've been called to lead unbelievers to the Lord Jesus - and so we should.

      - At the same time - Paul was encouraging every Christian to follow in his footsteps of faith…

        - …by creating new connections with Christians - who can help us to correct the course of our lives.

          - And with this as our focus - let's take a moment to consider Paul's example.

- Paul

- Prior to his Christian conversion - Paul was a religious man - who advanced in Judaism beyond many of his contemporaries.
    - He was a man who was well known by the religious rulers of Israel - including the High Priest.
        - And we can be certain that his closest connections were all Pharisees.
            - But then - after becoming a born again believer - Paul ended up joining the church in Antioch…
                - …where he became a servant - who was sent out on a mission trip - to plant churches throughout the Gentile world.
                    - In this way - we can see how our Christian conversion should cause a course correction - resulting in new relational connections.
- Testimony
    - This reminds me of the way that my own conversion to Christ resulted in a course correction - that resulted in new connections.
        - And just to be clear - I didn't reject my unbelieving friends - - no - instead - I invited them to join me in my new walk of faith.
            - At the same time - I stopped attending the drinking parties - and the secular concerts that I used to enjoy.
                - The reason why is because - I was spending time with believers - who were helping me to grow in grace - and truth.
                    - And while it's true that the course correction of the Christian faith will result in new connections…
                        - …it's also true that we should separate ourselves from backslidden believers - who are living in sin.
- Believers

- Let's consider how Paul put it - in 1st Corinthians chapter 5 - it's beginning at verse 9 - where he declared…

1Co 5:9 I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people.
1Co 5:10 Yet I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world.
1Co 5:11 But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—not even to eat with such a person.
1Co 5:12 For what have I to do with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside?
1Co 5:13 But those who are outside God judges. Therefore "put away from yourselves the evil person."

  - Christian - listen - we are not only called to avoid the influence of unbelievers who do not know God…

    - …but - we've also been called to separate ourselves from backslidden believers…

      - …who are living for the lust of the flesh - the lust of the eyes - and the pride of life.

        - The Christian who has returned to the course of carnality - should be put away from our fellowship of faith.

          - And the reason why is because - a little leaven leavens the whole lump.

- Application

  - Withdraw

    - I like the way that Paul put it - in 2nd Thessalonians chapter 3 - it's verse 6 where he declared…

2Th 3:6 …we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us.

- Rather than maintaining our connections with carnal Christians - Paul encouraged us to withdraw from every believer who walks disorderly.

- And while I realize that this might seem like an unloving decision…

- …I want assure you that - the most loving thing that we can do for a carnal Christian is to let them know that…

- …we must sever our connection with them - until they repent - and return to the Lord.

- In this way - we'll help them to realize that we can't maintain a connection with those who are headed in the wrong direction,.

VI. Conclusion

- Wrap up

- Now - as we begin to wrap up this study - it's my hope that we will all realize that…

- …our conversion to Christ is the first step - in a complete course correction that ought to impact every area of our lives.

- And as we've seen here in our study today…

1. …our Christian Conversion should correct our Confession…

- …as we learn to fight the good fight of faith - according to the good confession of Christ's resurrection.

2. …our Christian Conversion should correct our Convictions…

- …as we become those believers who are convinced that it's best to crucify our carnal cravings…

- …as we follow Jesus on the narrow path of righteousness.

3. …And finally - our Christian Conversion should correct our Connections…

- …as we become those believers who are creating new connections - with Christians who can help us walk by faith with Jesus.

- And with all of this being the case - I encourage every Christian to realize that - our conversion to Christ isn't the end of the road.

- No - instead - our conversion to Christ is the first step on a new and narrow course…

- …which will help us to become more and more like Jesus - and all according to the power of His resurrection.