

“Living the Resurrection”

1 Corinthians 15

What happens after death? Do we live on as disembodied souls, as the Greeks taught. Do we go through countless cycles of reincarnation, as the Hindus believe? Do both body and soul cease to exist, as naturalism maintains? In chapter 15 the apostle Paul turns his attention to the resurrection, correcting the Corinthian’s misunderstandings of the resurrection by going over with the meaning and significance of Christ’s resurrection for our own destiny. In doing so, Paul reminds us that the resurrection is a crucial aspect of our love in Christ. (*Since ch. 15 is very long, you may want to break your study up into two parts.*)

Opening Question(s) – Choose one.

- Compare and contrast a funeral of a believer and a funeral of an unbeliever. How do people try to camouflage death?
- What understandings of death (and/or life after death) have you encountered in your conversations with people or from attending funerals?

Study Questions

- 1) **Read 1 Corinthians 15:1-11.** Paul reminds the Corinthians of the gospel he preached to them. Where did Paul get this gospel? What are the essential aspects of the gospel in this early confession of faith (vv.3-4)?
- 2) What *evidence* for the resurrection is given and what *importance* does the resurrection of Christ have? What points do you find helpful in showing unbelievers that Christ did rise from the dead?
- 3) In what way was Christ’s appearance to Paul unique? In what way was it transformative (vv.9-10; cf. Acts 9)?
- 4) **Read 15:12-28.** What doubt or false teaching was making the rounds at Corinth (v.12)? If there is no resurrection, what are the consequences for Christ, for Paul, for us, for creation (vv.12-19)?
- 5) Why is “fallen asleep” (vv.18, 20) a good way to describe the dead in Christ (cf. John. 11¹¹)?
- 6) How will Christ’s resurrection overcome the effects of Adam’s sin for us and for creation (vv.21-29)?
- 7) **Read 15:29-34.** How does belief or disbelief in the resurrection affect a person’s lifestyle?¹ How can our lifestyle affect our witness to a world bent on “eating and drinking” (*e.g. How can you demonstrate the hope you have in Christ this coming week?*)?
- 8) **Read 15:35-49.** What illustrations does Paul use to explain why the resurrection is not crazy but actually makes good sense (vv.35-41)?
- 9) Although the resurrection body is somehow related to the natural body, how is it also radically different (vv.42-49)?
- 10) **Read 15:50-58.** How does Paul summarize what he has said so far about the resurrection body (v.50)? What will happen at the time of the resurrection (vv.51-53) What words in Paul’s closing verses do you find most encouraging or compelling? Why?

¹ Since so much time & expense in our society is given to fitness and to the last days/weeks of a person’s life, you may want to also discuss, “to what extremes should we go to preserve our physical bodies?” or “what about extreme medical practices?”