

# 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

## Before reading or mentioning the passage:

1. Make a list of the essential points of the Gospel message.

## Now Read 1 Corinthians 15:1-11:

2. In vs. 1 Paul says he is going to remind them of the Gospel, and then goes on to do that in vs. 3-8. Do you think these verses are a balanced summary of the Gospel? How do they compare with the list you just made?

70% of vs. 3-8 consist of listing the eye witnesses to the resurrection! Why might Paul give this such a large emphasis?

Now read vs. 12. What is the situation that Paul is writing to?

3. As you read vs. 3-8 and hear the piling up of one eye witness after another, what effect does that have on you?
4. In vs. 3 we read “Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures”. Paul would be referring to the Old Testament Scriptures here. What parts of the Old Testament point to one dying for the sins of others?

In vs. 3 we also read “Christ was buried and was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures”. What parts of the Old Testament point to the resurrection?

5. In vs. 6, what would have been the significance for the Corinthians of the statement that most of these 500 eye witnesses were still alive?

If you were arguing for the truth of the resurrection with someone in 2010 (now that all 500 have ‘fallen asleep’) what is its significance?

6. Look at vs. 8. When did Christ appear to Paul? Why do you think Paul refers to himself as “one abnormally born”?
7. We have seen that some in Corinth were saying there is no resurrection, and it seems other were being tempted to believe it. In vs. 1 Paul reminds them of the firm commitment they had previously made. If you were one of the Corinthians, what effect would reading vs. 2 have on you?
8. Along with Paul’s message being attacked, the way Paul defends himself in vs. 9-11 seems to imply Paul himself is being attacked as well. So Paul concludes this section with a reminder that this message of the resurrection of Christ is what all the Apostles preached, and is what they had believed. How has the message of the resurrection of Christ affected your life? How can we make sure we hold firm to it?

# 1 Corinthians 15:12-34

## Before reading or mentioning the passage:

1. What sorts of concerns motivate people who believe there is no resurrection or life after death?

## Now Read 1 Corinthians 15:12-34:

2. Look at vs. 12-19. In these verses Paul lists the consequences that flow from the belief that the dead are not raised. List the steps (make a chart) in the logic that leads from there to the fact we are to be pitied more than all men. (be careful, Paul restarts his argument in vs. 16)
3. Why, in this view, are we to be pitied?
4. Vs 17 says “if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins”. Why, do you think, is that?
5. In the Bible there are some big “But”s, and none bigger than in vs. 20. To the assertion that there is no resurrection, Paul answers “get the timing right”.
  - a. What’s it mean for Christ to be the “firstfruits”?
  - b. What will it mean for us that we are “in Adam”?
  - c. What will it mean for us that we are also “in Christ”?
  - d. List the order of events mentioned in vs. 20-26. Where were the Corinthians up to on that time line? Where are we up to?
6. What do you make of vs. 29? (have a guess, everyone else does – but don’t spend more than a couple of minutes on this question)
7. Look at vs. 30-32a. If there is no resurrection, Paul’s labours are futile. How would you describe Paul’s commitment to preaching the Gospel? In what sense, do you think, does he “die every day”?
8. Look at vs. 32. Who do you know has this attitude? Mention a specific person (you don’t need to give their name, but do speak of about a specific individual). What sort of life do they have? What is the end result of living like this? How might we share the good news of Jesus’ resurrection with these friends of ours?
9. How might “bad company” (vs. 33) tempt us to let go of the truth of the Gospel? How can we help each other “come back to our senses” if we start to stray?

# 1 Corinthians 15:35-58

## Before reading or mentioning the passage:

1. For those trusting Christ, what will we be like when Jesus returns? Will you still be you? What will be similar about you to now, and what will be different?

## Now Read 1 Corinthians 15:35-58:

2. It seems that those who argue there is no resurrection question how our frail and injured bodies could be fit for heaven. What answer does Paul give in vs. 35-44a?
3. How do you see the reality of our current bodies being perishable, sown in dishonor and weakness? What do you most look forward to when our bodies are imperishable, raised in glory and power?
4. In vs. 44b-49, how are we like Adam? What will it mean for us to bear the image of the man from heaven?

Now also consider Colossians 3:10. To what extent are we experiencing heaven now?

5. From vs. 50-53, list the things that will happen at the end. Give a rating out of 10 as to how real this seems to you and much you think about Jesus' return.
6. Looking at vs. 54-57 why, from what you know of the rest of the Bible's teaching, is the sting of death sin?

Why is the power of sin the law?

How has Christ won the victory for us?

7. Paul concludes this chapter with two exhortations, the first is to stand firm and let nothing move you. From the whole chapter, list the things we lose if we start believing there is no resurrection. What do we gain if we stand firm?
8. The other exhortation Paul concludes with is to give yourself fully to the work of the Lord. Given what we have seen in this chapter, why is that worthwhile? How can the example of Paul in vs.30-32a encourage us in this?

# 1 Corinthians 16:1-24

## Before reading or mentioning the passage:

1. Briefly, what principles should we apply to giving to Christian ministry?

## Now Read 1 Corinthians 16

2. The Christians in Jerusalem were in a famine, and Paul is organizing a collection to help them. In vs. 1-4, what principles are set out for how the Corinthians are to give?

We are in a different situation when we give to our church to support Christian ministry, so how do these principals apply to us?

3. Who was to take the money the Corinthians collected to Jerusalem? Why do you think Paul and his traveling companions didn't just take it themselves? What would characterize the relationship between the Corinthian Church and the Jerusalem Church after the gift was given?
4. In vs. 4-9, Paul wants to spend a good amount of time with the Corinthians. If the apostle Paul wanted to spend a good amount of time with you, how would you feel? Is Paul's priority people or projects?
5. What two reasons are given in vs.8-9 for why Paul wants to stay in Ephesus? For each, why is it a reason to stay?
6. Timothy seems to have not been fully accepted by all (1 Tim 4:12) and may have been timid (2 Tim 1:7). What do we hear the Corinthians were boasting about back in 1 Cor 3:1-4 and 3:21-23? In 1 Cor 15:10-11, why might Timothy have had reason to fear? Does Paul withdraw him from this ministry? How does Paul do to help Timothy in it?
7. Look at vs. 13. How can we be on our guard? What do we need to be on our guard about? How can we ensure that we are strong and stand firm?
8. [for men's groups] The Greek translated "be men of courage" consists of just one word, literally "be men". The NIV adds in the "of courage" bit to help us get the sense of it. Paul can simply say "be men" and knows that one word carries with it the whole idea he wanted to get across. What does it mean to really "be a man"?
9. Give some examples of vs. 14.
10. In vs. 15 to the end, would you describe Paul as a team player or an individual star? What can we learn from this example?