

LEADER DISCUSSION GUIDE

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Summer 2022

Week of July 24

1 Corinthians 15:1–22

DISCUSSION FOCUS

Read (Primary Text): 1 Corinthians 15:1–22

Supporting Texts: Romans 5:12–20

MAIN IDEA: The historical bodily resurrection of Christ demonstrates that His sacrifice on the cross for our sins was accepted by God, we are forgiven, and our faith is not in vain.

OBSERVE

What does Paul mean when he says, “if you hold to the message I preached to you--unless you believed for no purpose” (v. 2)?

- *Paul references past, present, and future aspects of salvation. They received what was proclaimed to them (past), have taken their stand (something done in the past but has lasting significance in the present), and are saved by it if they hold to the message proclaimed (a sense of perseverance into the future).*
- *The “if” in v. 2 is used in a way that is assumed true for argument’s sake (“let’s say for the sake of argument that you do hold to the message I preached to you”). If they stray from this as they are in danger of doing (much of what Paul says in this chapter indicates that some in the Corinthian church doubted the possibility of a resurrection), they have believed in vain because they are toying with the idea that there is no bodily resurrection, and therefore, Christ did not resurrect.*

What is the importance of Paul’s words in saying that he “passed on to you...what I also received”?

He uses the same introductory language here regarding the content of the gospel that he did for the Lord’s Supper tradition in 11:23, pointing to an early tradition that Paul is simply passing along. In other words, this gospel has not changed. Look at the amount of eyewitnesses to the resurrection!

INTERPRET

What does Paul mean by “most important” (v. 3)?

Dr. Al Mohler, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, wrote an article years ago about what he called “theological triage.” He separated different theological issues into 1st, 2nd, 3rd tiers of importance. The first tier would be those that are necessary doctrines for every Christian as they are the heart of the gospel. The second tier would be those issues that are denominational doctrines that do not determine whether one is a Christian or not but will determine which church/denomination they will attend. The third tier would be those issues that

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people can disagree on and yet attend the same church. When Paul writes “most important,” he is referring to what Dr. Mohler would call a 1st tier issue!

Why does Paul refer to himself in the way he does in vv. 8–11?

- *“Last of all, as to one abnormally born, He also appeared to me” – referencing the Damascus Road experience he had when he was called to be an apostle (Acts 9).*
- *“least of the apostles” is probably another reference to what has been leveled at Paul but it does state he indeed is to be counted as an apostle, something he really emphasizes in many letters (Galatians, 2 Corinthians, etc.).*
- *Paul, here, as elsewhere, emphasizes the grace of God working in him. He further unifies his testimony of the gospel with that of the other apostles.*

APPLY

What if Easter was just a conspiracy? (vv. 12–19)?

If Christ was not resurrected,

1. *your faith is empty;*
2. *the dead have no hope*
3. *the apostles are false witnesses*
4. *you have no forgiveness for your sins*
5. *you are to be pitied*

How do verses 20–22 give you hope?

- *Thankfully, we know that Easter was not just a conspiracy. Jesus actually did rise from the dead!*
- *Because Christ has been raised, we will be also (vv. 20 – 22). The bodily resurrection is proof that God not only raised Him but demonstrated that His sacrificial death was accepted and proved that Christ is Who He said He is. In the same way that the Spirit is the down payment for our salvation (Eph 1:14), Jesus’ resurrection is the down payment for our own resurrection.*
- *See also Rom 5:12–20. The “all” in v. 22 must be interpreted in the context. Paul is speaking of believers in this chapter so this is what he means by “all” in v. 22. It does not mean unbelievers didn’t die in Adam nor does it mean they will not be raised (Dan 12:2; John 5:28–29) but they will not be made alive in the sense of canceling spiritual death. They will be resurrected for judgment.*

How does the truth of the resurrection of Jesus Christ shape the way we live our lives on a daily basis?

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City Groups exist as an extension of our Sunday gatherings, providing an environment for spiritual formation through intentional study, prayer, and fellowship, to equip Christ followers to make disciples.