

## 1 Cor 15:12-34 Bible Study

1. On the back of this page, draw what comes to mind when you hear the word “resurrection” (If drawing is too much of a challenge, you can describe it in words).

2. Read 1 Cor 15:12-19. Speculate as to why some were saying there was no resurrection of the dead. Why do some deny it today?

*We can't be sure why (it's the implications that are important) but possibly they were influenced by the Greek separation between body/flesh and mind/spirit, where the mind is everything and flesh is base, a 'prison' to be escaped from. Today, often it is disbelief in the miraculous, or even blatant materialism (rejection of anything other than what you can see and touch as real).*

3. Make a list of all the things that follow if there is no resurrection of the dead. What is at stake if there is no resurrection of the dead?

- *Christ has not been raised*
- *Preaching the gospel is useless*
- *Christian faith is useless, futile*
- *The apostles were false witnesses – liars - about God.*
- *Sins are not removed – Christians are still 'in their sins'*
- *Christians who have died are lost*
- *Christians are the most pitiable of people for such false hope.*

4. Why does Christ need to be raised for our sins to be removed? Didn't he 'die for our sins'? Isn't his death enough?

*We must understand that death is not merely a 'natural' process, it is the outworking of the curse; Gen 2:15-17. If Jesus remained dead, he remained under God's curse, meaning that our sins were still incurring God's wrath (Rom 6:23). But Jesus' resurrection shows that God's wrath was fully spent, Jesus himself is shown to be righteous – he didn't die for his own sins – and so we can be sure that our sins are dealt with – we are no longer 'in our sins'. See Rom 4:23-25.*

5. Read 1 Cor 15:20-28. Why is Jesus' resurrection different to other stories in the Bible of people be raised back to life (eg Jairus' daughter Matt 9:23-26, Lazarus John 11)?

*Other accounts were of 'resuscitation', clearly miraculous (eg Lazarus had been dead 3 days), but they were only to die again later (see John 12:10!). As Adam brought something new about – death to all humanity, so Jesus brings something new – resurrection to new & eternal life.*

6. What assurance is given that those in Christ will be raised to this new life?

*Christ is already reigning. Other 'dominion, authority and power' exists, but as defeated foes, and will one day be destroyed ("dethroned"), including death itself. If Jesus has been raised and death defeated, then those in him cannot remain in death. God's plan is to rule over all (the meaning of "that God may be all in all") which is what Jesus taught us to pray for in Matt 9:10. The resurrection of Jesus guarantees this plan's fulfilment.*

7. Read 15:29-34.

*It is difficult to know for certain what v.29 means. Most likely, it is either a practice that the Corinthians were doing – being baptised on behalf of those already dead. Paul is not condoning the practice, just showing the inconsistency of it with the denial of resurrection. Or, it refers to their own baptism, understanding that their own bodies are dying and baptism is a symbol of our being united to Christ in his death and resurrection see Rom 6:3-4, Col 2:12.*

Paul gives an example from his own life of v.19. How can we keep ourselves from living the life of v.32b? How can you ensure that you live as though you believe in the resurrection of the dead? Use as a basis to pray together.

*Belief in the resurrection of the dead gives us confidence to live the Christian life, carrying our cross, denying self, putting to death the sinful deeds of the body etc. We need to remember the gospel and keep 'as of first importance' that Jesus rose from the dead. We might need to guard ourselves from the sort of company that lives (and talks) as though there is no resurrection – v.33. Not that we need to cut ourselves off, but ensure we do not spend all our time with them, or do not envy them and imitate them. NB The 'bad company' here will especially apply to those who call themselves Christians yet live like this eg 1 Cor 5:9-11. And of course, we need to confess and repent of ways that we are living like this – v.34.*