

## Take-Aways for Small Group Leaders to Consider

The people of Corinth had either forgotten Paul's preaching concerning the resurrection of the body...or perhaps some of them had not believed from the beginning.

Paul did not describe a new gospel to the Corinthians. He reiterated the old gospel given in Genesis, Exodus and Leviticus: Christ died for our sins, was buried, raised, and seen by witnesses.

The Christian minister is not the head of a school or a master of people but *a servant of God*.

All are doing the work of God in their role as a part of the body of the Church. While some play larger roles than others, each is doing their part. None should be exalted above the other.

Things to Stress:

- If Christ did not rise from the grave then he cannot bring anyone with him.
- Our tendency to think instead of trust.
- Our tendency to think of the Gospel messages but not allow those messages to change our behavior.
- Our tendency to let the world into the Church instead of moving the Church into the world.

### *Help answering ANALYZE THE TEXT*

6. Jesus' resurrection is not simply a miracle that confirms his status as God's son but also an incredible reality that the great harvest ("first fruits") of the general resurrection (The Jews thought all would be raised to life in the end at the same time) is at hand. So ultimately, Christ rose but there will be more "raisings" from the dead; this was not one isolated event for God but for all of God's children.

## SUMMARY AND REVIEW

Take 5-10 minutes to discuss the sermon from Palm Sunday given by Father Greg Boyle *and* the sermon from Easter Sunday, Risen!

## INTRO TO THE TEXT

You may have noticed we have skipped a few chapters since our last week. Don't worry; we will go back to those. Today, though, we will focus on chapter 15 because of its relevancy to the great celebration of Resurrection Sunday.

In this chapter, it is the apostle Paul's work to reiterate the basic tenet of Christianity: Jesus was resurrected from death to be followed by the eventual resurrection of all believers from death. Paul proceeds to refute those in the Corinthian church who claim that there is no resurrection of the body from the dead and, therefore, can be no resurrection of Jesus.

**READ** 1 Corinthians 15:1-28

## ANALYZE THE TEXT

1. Talk about vs. 1-11. What encourages, surprises, or perplexes you?
2. Discuss your interpretation of "the resurrection of the body". Will it be your body as you are?
3. What are your thoughts about the people Jesus chose to see upon his resurrection?
4. Read vs. 12-19. What is Paul's argument? Does his logic seem reasonable? And why is this so important to the Christian faith?
5. Discuss the following: *the resurrection of Jesus proves that...truth is stronger than falsehood, good is stronger than evil, love is stronger than hatred, life is stronger than death.*
6. Discuss the meaning of verse 20.

## A FEW THINGS TO CONSIDER

Chapter 15:1-11 Paul lays out a summary of the gospel reminding the Corinthians of what he had preached to them, that is, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He lays out for them the essential

tenets that Christ died for our sins, was buried and then raised on the third day, according to the Scriptures. Then, after his resurrection, Jesus appeared to many witnesses: to Peter, all of the Twelve, almost 500 brothers and sisters, James [likely Jesus' brother], all of the apostles, and finally Saul [Paul].

Chapter 15:12-19 Paul reminds the Corinthians that if there is no resurrection of the body then Christ was not resurrected. If the resurrection of Jesus Christ was not a fact then the whole Christian message is based on a lie and the foundation of the Christian faith is destroyed.

Chapter 15:20-28 Paul reiterates the posture that as all people were subjected to the sin of Adam and under the pall of death, we are now subject to the resurrection of Jesus and the new life that it brings. Ultimately, when Jesus has completed his task of removing evil from the earth, he will return triumphantly to God.

## APPLY

How do you balance the natural order of what happens to the dead in the grave with the Christian tenet that Jesus was resurrected from death and you will be too?

1. As you visit with your church friends, what Christian tenets do they find difficult to buy into? What about you?
2. In this cynical world, what are some practical ways you are able to adhere to the Christian beliefs? i.e., Christ died for our sins, He was buried, He was raised from the dead.
3. Is there an area in your life where this gospel message seems distant and removed? If so, please share and allow group members to speak gospel truth into that area.
4. How has believing in the tenets above changed your life and how you treat others?

**MEMORIZE** 1 Corinthians 15:3

**FURTHER READING** *The Letters to the Corinthians, Revised Edition*, William Barclay