

Why I Want to Follow Christ? | 1 Corinthians 15 Sermon Discussion Participant Guide

Purpose of Discussion: To live our lives in the bigger story of following Jesus, and not let the little moments suck us out of God's purpose for our lives.

Icebreaker: The year 2020 is coming to an end. Looking back at this year, what is something you have been thankful for?

Introduction: Sometimes in hardships or crisis, we wake up and see the One we are truly thankful for. Dave preached from 1 Corinthians 15, sharing the good news that is in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and ultimately our resurrection with the second coming of Christ. Knowing this good news, should guide us to live our lives in the bigger story of following Christ.

Discussion:

1. Dave shared a story of a time when he was camping with friends in high school. On this night, he realized he was dying inside as he was not living out the story he wanted his life to be. Have you had a time when you have had this wake-up call, and realized that you are not living the life you want to live? Maybe that time is now?
2. In 1 Corinthians 15; Paul is responding to the doubts about the resurrection of the body when Jesus returns. Read the following verses in 1 Corinthians 15 (NIV) aloud:

1 Corinthians 15:1-8 (NIV)

“Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. ² By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. ³ For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, ⁵ and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. ⁶ After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. ⁷ Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, ⁸ and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.”

1 Corinthians 15:20 (NIV)

“But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.”

1 Corinthians 15:23 (NIV)

“But each in turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him.”

Why is the resurrection of the dead fundamental to the gospel?

3. Read 1 Corinthians 15: 30-32 together aloud and discuss the question below:

“And as for us, why do we endanger ourselves every hour? ³¹ I face death every day— yes, just as surely as I boast about you in Christ Jesus our Lord. ³² If I fought wild beasts in Ephesus with no more than human hopes, what have I gained? If the dead are not raised,

“Let us eat and drink,
for tomorrow we die.”

Paul asks a good question here, that we should try to answer ourselves: Paul provides the testimony of his sacrifice for the gospel as well as historical certainty of Jesus’ resurrection to prove that believer’s bodies will be resurrected upon the second coming of Christ. If this were not true, why would Paul and the apostles risk their lives every hour of every day in vein? What gain would there be for them?

4. As Dave said in his sermon, if there is no coming resurrection, then we are all just living to die and everything we are and everything we do will come to nothing. In verse 32, Paul is citing the hedonistic motto *carpe diem*, ‘seize the day’, to say that if there is no bodily resurrection, we might as well follow this motto because we are all just living to die.

How are you living to ‘seize the day?’ In what moments are you living recklessly in your sin and not following Jesus?

5. Read 1 Corinthians 15:35-44 and discuss what you think your resurrected body will be like?

³⁵ But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?" ³⁶ How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. ³⁷ When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but just a seed, perhaps of wheat or of something else. ³⁸ But God gives it a body as he has determined, and to each kind of seed he gives its own body. ³⁹ Not all flesh is the same: People have one kind of flesh, animals have another, birds another and fish another. ⁴⁰ There are also heavenly bodies and there are earthly bodies; but the splendor of the heavenly bodies is one kind, and the splendor of the earthly bodies is another. ⁴¹ The sun has one kind of splendor, the moon another and the stars another; and star differs from star in splendor.

⁴² So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; ⁴³ it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; ⁴⁴ it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body

Sharing and Prayer:

If you are having difficulty believing that our bodies will be resurrected, pray for the Spirit to help you believe. Dave said, 'don't let life's *moments* suck you out of the bigger story of the Good News.' What moments are sucking you away from following Christ? Share this with the group, so that together we can pray to 'stand firm and let nothing move us' (1 Corinthians 15:58).