

Resurrection Realities – Reflection Questions (Week 3)

Day 14

Monday, April 27, 2020

1 Corinthians 15:1-11

- 1) Why would Paul start his whole discussion on the future resurrection of believers by talking about the facts of the resurrection of Jesus?

- 2) According to 1 Cor 15:3-4, what were the key components of Paul's proclamation of the Gospel to the Corinthians that he delivered to them as of first importance?
 - a. What phrase does Paul repeat in both verses to emphasize the important place of these two actions within God's plans?

 - b. When Paul talks about "the Scriptures," to what part of the Bible is he referring?

 - c. Where does Paul's view come from that all Scripture should be read in light of the death and resurrection of Jesus? See Luke 24:25, 27, 44-46.

- 3) In 15:8-10, Paul emphasizes the contrast of his experiences from the experiences of the rest of the apostles and first witnesses of Jesus.
 - a. How is Paul's experience different than the others?

 - b. Why does it matter for Paul's proclamation of Jesus that his experience was different?

- 4) For all the contrasts between Paul and the other apostles, what does Paul say that they all have in common according to 15:3a, 11?
 - a. Though they had different preaching styles they all proclaimed one _____ (15:3-4).

 - b. Though they had different life stories they all had the same goal that people would _____ (15:11b).

"Paul's thought runs to one point: no matter which of these competent witnesses the Corinthians examine, no matter to which of these notable heralds they listen, they will always hear the identical testimony and proclamation: 'The Lord is risen...'" (RCH Lenski 644)

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Day 15

Tuesday, April 28, 2020

1 Corinthians 15:12-19

- 1) Now that Paul has gotten all his readers on the same page in 15:1-11, what is the big issue that some among the Corinthians are questioning?
 - a. Are they questioning that Jesus was raised from the dead or that we would be raised from the dead?
 - b. How serious of an issue does Paul consider any doubting the 'fact' of our future resurrection? Why?

Why were some doubting the resurrection of the dead?

Likely 'some' within the Corinthian congregation were returning to aspects of their pagan philosophical or religious background, which led them to deny a physical resurrection. The Greek mindset of the day believed that the spirit/soul was good, and the body was evil. Therefore, they saw death as a good thing, as it 'freed' the soul from the corrupt and decaying physical world. With this dim view of the material world and God's creation, it is easy to see how they would question the desirability of a physical and bodily resurrection. It was an error of overestimating the importance of the spiritual over the physical.

- 2) What conclusions does Paul draw about the importance of this false contention? If the dead are not raised, then what effect does it have on the Christian message? If the dead are not raised then...
 - a. Not even _____ is raised v. 13
 - b. Our _____ is useless v. 14
 - c. Your _____ useless v. 14
 - d. We are therefore _____ witnesses v. 15
 - e. Your _____ is futile v. 17
 - f. You are still in your _____ v. 17
 - g. Those who have died in Christ are _____ v. 18
 - h. We are to be _____ v. 19

"if there is no resurrection, there is also no redemption, no reconciliation with God, no justification, no life and salvation." ... "Christ's resurrection is the positive proof that his sacrifice was, indeed, sufficient and fully accepted by God" (RCH Lenski 656).

Resurrection Realities – Reflection Questions (Week 3)

Day 16

Wednesday, April 29, 2020 1 Corinthians 15:20-28

- 1) After laying out all the negatives realities that would be the case if the resurrection of the dead were not true (see above Day 15 Ques #2; 1 Cor 15:12-19), what does Paul boldly proclaim in 15:20?

- 2) What evidence has Paul already given that the resurrection of Jesus is “a fact” (15:20a)? Look again at Day 14. In 1 Cor 15:1-11, Paul began his entire argument for the resurrection of the dead on the fact that Jesus was raised from the dead and this can be attested by...
 - a. The Holy _____ (15:4b)
 - b. The testimony of the multitude of _____ (15:5-7)
 - c. The witness of even _____ himself (15:8)

- 3) What does it mean for Jesus to be the ‘firstfruits’ from the dead? What would this have meant to a Jewish believer? See Leviticus 23:9-14)

When the priest waved the sheaf of the firstfruits before the Lord, it was a sign that the entire harvest belonged to Him. When Jesus was raised from the dead, it was God’s assurance to us that we shall also be raised one day as part of that future harvest” (Warren Wiersbe, NT Commentary, 493).

- 4) Not only has Jesus risen from the dead, but one day what will he do for all believers according to 1 Cor 15:23-28?

Resurrection Realities – Reflection Questions (Week 3)

Day 17

Thursday, April 30, 2020

1 Corinthians 15:29-34

- 1) What do you think of when you hear the opening verse of today's reading, "*Otherwise, what do people mean by being baptized on behalf of the dead? If there the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptized on their behalf?*" What do you think Paul means?

- 2) Many people immediately think that Paul is saying that living people were being baptized to somehow benefit the dead (i.e. a vicarious baptism), which has never been accepted within the Christian church. So, what then does Paul mean?

While there are many possible suggestions that have been advanced, the best reconstruction seems to be that some were being 'baptized' because of the testimony and witness of those who have died in the faith. Their godly lives and confident faith even in their death gave witness to others who in turn were baptized 'on behalf of' or 'because of' the dead. So, Paul is saying, "If there is no resurrection of the dead, then why should we bother baptizing others into the faith?"

- 3) Before we "lose the forest for the trees," we need to set aside our curiosity about verse 29 to ask about the main point of this section. What is Paul trying to show the Corinthians about the implications of their line of thinking?
- a. If there is no such thing as the resurrection, would there be any reason to baptize new Christians? But what has the Corinthian church been doing (15:29)?
 - b. If there is no such thing as the resurrection, would there be any reason for Christians to risk their lives for the message of Jesus? But what has Paul been doing for the sake of his ministry (15:30-32a)?
 - c. If there is no such thing as the resurrection, would there be any reason to live a life of purity, truth, honor, etc.? But what does Paul encourage the Corinthians to remember and do (15:33-34)?

- 4) What 'little lies' do you allow into your life that have the potential to lead you away from Jesus?

- 5) What is the result of a little bit of illness or a little bit of cancer in the body (15:33-34)?

***Paul is reminding us of the impact of right believing on right living and vice versa.
To use the words of Jesus, a little leaven can leaven the whole lump.
One rotten apple can spoil the barrel.***

Resurrection Realities – Reflection Questions (Week 3)

Day 18

Friday, May 1, 2020

1 Corinthians 15:35-49

- 1) What do you think heaven will look like? What do you think we will look like in heaven?

- 2) Does your 'vision' or 'version' of heaven have room for the "earthiness" that Jesus and others use to describe it (e.g. a wedding banquet [Matt 22]; a great feast [Isaiah 25]; a sprawling family mansion [John 14]; a majestic garden city [Rev 21-22])? Is there room in your vision for flesh and bone; eating and drinking; trees and grass? Or have we allowed our culture to fill our minds with images of clouds and harps and a place where 'everyone will get their wings'?

- 3) According to Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:35-41, will our body be the same as it is now? What three illustrations from nature does he use to remind us that we will be changed and yet the same?

- 4) If we think back over the resurrection appearances of Jesus, how might the resurrection of Jesus help us understand what it means for the perishable to be raised imperishable, for the natural body to be raised a spiritual body?
 - a. Matthew 28:1-5 If the angel had just opened the tomb, then how did Jesus get out of the grave?
 - b. Matthew 28:9 What did the women grab hold of when they met Jesus along the road?
 - c. Luke 24:37-39 What do the disciples think they have seen when Jesus shows up among them? What 'proofs' does Jesus provide about himself?
 - d. Luke 24:41-42 When the disciples are still struggling to make sense of Jesus, what secondary proof does Jesus provide for them?
 - e. John 20:19, 26 How was Jesus able to enter the room if the doors were locked?
 - f. John 20:20, 27 Even though he had just entered a locked room, what proof does he repeatedly offer his disciples to see and do?
 - g. John 21:12-14 What did Jesus share with his disciples alongside the Sea of Galilee after the miraculous catch of fish?

Resurrection Realities – Reflection Questions (Week 3)

Day 19

Saturday, May 2, 2020

1 Corinthians 15:50-56

- 1) What is this great 'mystery' that Paul proclaims to us? What is so 'mysterious' about what he is preaching?
- 2) Even if we allow our minds to 'run wild,' can we truly comprehend what will happen on the last day when Christ shall come again? Is that a good thing or a bad thing? Why?
- 3) Are we able to say that death has no sting in our present time? Why or why not?
- 4) Where in your life have you experienced the sting of death?
- 5) When we think of the imagery that Paul is using here, what creature do we usually associate with 'stings?'
 - a. What happens to a bee when it uses its stinger upon you?
 - b. If Jesus has already taken the punishment and sting of death upon the cross, what does this mean for your life and even your death?

Resurrection Realities – Reflection Questions (Week 3)

Day 20

Sunday, May 3, 2020

1 Corinthians 15:56-58

- 1) Despite all our medical technologies and advancements, have we been able to claim victory over death? Why or why not?

- 2) What have the recent events of the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic taught us about life, death, the world, and our place within it?

- 3) Who is the main character in the events and storyline of the Scriptures according to Luke 24:27, 44-48?

- 4) If we are honest, who is the main character in the events of our life story? Does Jesus have the lead role or does he play a minor part? Why does it matter according to 1 Corinthians 15:57?

- 5) As Paul wraps up this whole chapter on the **fact** of the resurrection, what implications and applications does he desire us to make to how we live our life **today**? See 1 Corinthians 15:58.

Resurrection Realities – Reflection Questions (Week 3)

Day 21

Monday, May 4, 2020

2 Corinthians 5:1-10

- 1) How does Paul use the imagery of this passage to compare our current 'earthly situation' with the 'resurrection realities' to come in the new creation?

- 2) How does Paul express his great trust and confidence in the Lord throughout this passage?

- 3) What hope does it give us that the Spirit that dwells inside us is God's deposit or down payment of greater things to come (2 Corinthians 5:5)?

- 4) How does the promise of the resurrection and the hope of a new creation allow us to 'take risks' now?

- 5) How does the promise of the resurrection and the hope of a new creation allow us to 'rest secure' now?