

SMALL GROUP SERMON STUDY

Leader's Guide

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Christ's Resurrection

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The Big Idea

The great news is that Jesus rose from the dead, and his resurrection assures our resurrection, as well!

The Background

The letter to the Corinthian church Paul brings his readers "back to basics" on many issues. They were confused about his apostleship, their morality, taking other Christians to court, singleness and marriage, their relationship to idols, the Lord's Supper, spiritual gifts, AND EVEN the resurrection of Jesus.

Paul saves the best for last in the letter. In Chapter 15, he spends 58 verses making sure they understand the importance of the resurrection. He describes it as the thing that Christianity stands or falls on. He believes that Jesus was actually raised from the dead. And further, he believes that the same power that raised Jesus from the dead can raise us from the dead, too. Knowing that God's power can be fully at work in our new lives in Christ opens up exciting spiritual opportunities for us!

For Discussion

1. Have someone in the group read 1 Corinthians 15:1,2. Tell the reasons Paul says that the gospel is important.
2. Read 1 Corinthians 15:3-8. List the appearances of Jesus alive after his resurrection. Add to Paul's information any further details you recall about these instances.
3. Read verses 9-11. What does Paul describe as his qualifications to be an Apostle of Jesus? Is there anything in his attitude that you and I can imitate?
4. Read verses 15-19. What are the problems that Paul says are raised for Christians if Jesus has not been raised from the dead?

5. Read Verses 20-26. What hope do these verses offer us about our enemy, death?
 6. Ask someone in the group to read 1 Corinthians 6:14.
 - What is the promise of this verse?
 - When does/will this resurrection happen?
 7. Read Ephesians 1:18-21. How much of God's power is at work in us? If this is the case, what might we be able to accomplish for God that we are not attempting right now? Try to think of a "big dream" that might be finished in our day if we trust in God's resurrection power and not our own.
 8. Paraphrase Paul's lofty goals in Philippians 3:10
 9. Read the encouraging words of 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18. When was the last time you practiced what verse 18 says to do?
 10. Jesus is alive! How does that affect your life?
 11. Name some reasons why you think some people today still do not believe that Jesus is the resurrected Lord? How would you answer each of the arguments you've just mentioned if a person confronted you with them?
 12. How did Jesus' resurrection affect the disciples who followed Him? Does it affect our lives today in any of the same ways?
 13. Many proofs point to the truth of the resurrection, which include:
 - The Bible, a reliable historical document, claims that it happened
 - No good explanations for the tomb being empty
 - How did the large stone get moved?
 - Grave clothes left in place as though Jesus' body were still there
 - Jesus' post-resurrection appearances (including more than 500 people at the same time.)
- Have you considered any of these in the past and can tell more about them? What proofs would you add?
(Note: if you want to explore this idea more, the resources listed below may be helpful.)

For Further Research

Article by Josh McDowell on the web: <http://www.leaderu.com/everystudent/easter/articles/josh2.html>

The following books have good chapters on the Resurrection, as well as other topics on reasonable defense of Christian faith:

- More Than a Carpenter by Josh McDowell
- Evidence That Demands a Verdict by Josh McDowell
- Know Why You Believe What You Believe by Paul Little