

This midweek study will explore the doctrine of the resurrection. Use the following main points, Scriptures, teaching/discussion ideas, and questions to help students gain a better understanding of the essential doctrine for this session.

Essential Doctrine: Resurrection

The Old and New Testaments both teach that believers will one day experience a resurrection of the body from the dead (Isa. 26:19; Ezek. 37:12-14; John 11). The promise of the resurrection is found in the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and it will take place at the future return of Christ. Because Christ was the firstfruits of the resurrection, Christians can be assured that their resurrection will be similar in nature, meaning it will be both bodily and glorious (Rom. 8:22-23; Phil. 3:20-21). The hope of the future resurrection gives Christians confidence that death has been defeated in the death and resurrection of Christ.

1 All human beings will one day be bodily resurrected from the dead (Matt. 10:28; John 5:28-29; Rev. 20:4-5,12-13).

- ▶ What kinds of things will happen when Jesus returns?
- ▶ For deceased Christians, what will be different about their lives before Jesus' return and after?
- ▶ For deceased unbelievers, what will be different about their lives before Jesus' return and after?

Read John 5:28-29.

- ▶ What will happen when Jesus calls for the dead?
- ▶ What two groups will emerge? What will they emerge from? Can mere spirits emerge from graves? So what will they have?

Read Revelation 20:4-5.

- ▶ What happens to Christians in this passage?

Read Revelation 20:12-13.

- ▶ What happens to everyone else in this passage?

Read Matthew 10:28.

- ▶ According to Jesus, why should we fear (i.e., respect) God? What will be punished in hell? Why doesn't He just specify "spirit"?
- ▶ Does the teaching of bodily resurrection make heaven and hell more or less powerful than if they were merely residences of spirits?

2 Christians' bodily resurrection will mean putting on an immortality similar to Jesus' resurrection (1 Cor. 15:42-55; Phil. 3:21; Rev. 21:4).

- ▶ Would you rather be simply a spirit, or would you rather have a body?
- ▶ What pleasures can a body experience that a mere spirit can't? What service can a body render that a mere spirit can't?

Read Philippians 3:21.

- ▶ What will Jesus do to our bodies? What could Jesus do with His body? Is the idea of a resurrection body like Jesus' enticing?

Read 1 Corinthians 15:42-55.

- ▶ What is Paul's biggest idea in this passage?
- ▶ In what ways will our resurrection bodies be superior to our earthly bodies?

Read Revelation 21:4.

- ▶ What does this passage teach us about our resurrection bodies, especially with reference to pain?

3 The hope of our bodily resurrection drives us to greater holiness (Col. 1:4-5; 3:2-4; 1 John 3:2-3).

Read 1 John 3:2-3.

- ▶ What does John tell us here about our resurrection bodies? How should these verses make us excited?
- ▶ How do people with this hope respond (v. 3)? Why do you think such hope spurs purification?

Read Colossians 1:4-5.

- ▶ According to Paul, what is the motivation for the Colossians' faith and love? How does this idea overlap with 1 John 3:2-3?
- ▶ When you are really looking forward to something (like a concert or a football game), how does your behavior and attitude change in the week prior?

Read Colossians 3:2-4.

- ▶ How can we set our minds on the hope of the resurrection the way we set our minds on the hope of a concert or other exciting event? How should we act, think, and feel differently?

WRAP IT UP

- ▶ When 18th century pastor Jonathan Edwards thought about the resurrection, he resolved "to obtain for myself as much happiness, in the other world, as I possibly can, with all the power, might, vigor and vehemence, yea violence, I am capable of, or can bring myself to exert, in any way that can be thought of." How can you pursue this resolution this week?