

Wednesday, April 4, 2018: Discussion Guide for “He was raised”—Sermon preached on Sunday, April 1

Text: 1 Corinthians 15:1-20 (ESV)

Brief summary (what’s the point of this text/sermon?):

This past Sunday was Easter, of course, and millions of people around the world commemorated the resurrection of Christ. Of all the events in Jesus’ life, none is more significant or more life-changing than the empty tomb. He died on Friday, but that death would have been meaningless had his tomb remained occupied early Sunday morning. When the apostles preached, they emphasized the resurrection more than anything else.

We studied 1 Corinthians 15, probably the earliest account of the resurrection in the New Testament. The Corinthians apparently had been influenced by some early Greek thinking that led them to believe that there would not be a bodily resurrection, and Paul responds to that in this chapter.

He grounds his thoughts about a bodily resurrection in the resurrection of Christ and explores its implications for believers today. The main point here is that the resurrection changes everything. It validates Jesus as the Christ, and for us it confirms that the God who raised Jesus’ body from the tomb will one day raise our bodies to live eternally in the new heavens and earth. This conviction completely changes how we live our lives (our priorities, our values, the way we face difficulties, etc.).

How do I live out the implications of this passage? (Discussion starters for applying the sermon)

1. What connection does Jesus’ resurrection have with God’s promise to resurrect us? (Hint: See Romans 8:11—“If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.”)
2. If we truly believe that we will be resurrected from the grave when Jesus returns, how does that change . . .
 - a. The priorities that guide our lives and the choices we make?
 - b. The values we attach to work, material things, spiritual things?
 - c. How we face bad news (job loss, terminal illness, etc.)?
 - d. How we handle good news (job promotion, financial windfall, etc.)?
 - e. How we think about the deaths of loved ones?
 - f. How we face our own imminent death?
3. If there were no future resurrection (i.e., if your physical death was the end), how would it change the way you live?
4. What things in your life are nonsensical to unbelievers? Here’s another way of putting it: what things in your life make sense only in view of your belief in your own future resurrection?
5. Why do you think the resurrection was such an important part of the apostles’ preaching in the book of Acts? How did it serve apologetically?