

The Watershed Doctrine of the Christian Faith
Exploring the necessity of the Resurrection

Accountability: Let's hold ourselves accountable!

- Last week we discussed the Gut Level Gospel. We learned that the gospel is repentance from sins, faith in Christ to save us completely, followed by a life of obedience. We were challenged to examine our own walk with Christ to determine whether there was evidence of a transformed life, or just window dressing religion.
- How did you do this week in trusting God alone for salvation? Were you successful in removing the things that often compete with the gospel, such as our family heritage, a church culture, our good works, our morality, etc.? Were you able to accept that "good people go to heaven" is not Biblical Christianity?

Refresh: Let's take a fresh look at our focal scripture again!

- 1 Corinthians 15:12-34 (This is a lengthy passage, so it may help to share the reading.)

Exploration: Questions to guide our group discussion.

- This week we discussed the difference between Doctrines, Convictions, and Preferences. Often, things that are preferences or convictions are undeservedly treated with the same importance as Biblical Doctrines. Which of these three levels of belief is a test of fellowship, and which are those that are important, but areas where Christians may differ? How can grace be dispensed when there are important, but non Biblical differences between otherwise Jesus loving believers?
- Paul taught us about the importance of believing in the resurrection. Some of the believers at Corinth had begun to deny this vital watershed doctrine. What were the implications that Paul mentioned in verses 12-19 if resurrection was a sham, and if Jesus didn't rise? Based on your answers, why does the resurrection emerge as a watershed doctrine?
- Paul referred to the resurrection of Jesus as the "first fruits" of the harvest. This was a reference to the fact that Christ's resurrection is a first indicator that a greater harvest is coming, a harvest of believers in Jesus. Like a military parade, resurrection happens in order. Christ was first. After that the gathering of believers unto the Lord. Then finally the end comes. In what way is the resurrection already in progress, beginning with Jesus, and moving slowly like a parade towards the culmination of all things?

- Paul challenged the Corinthians to let the assurance of our coming ingathering to the Lord have an effect on how we live our lives here and now. How did Paul say that a person would live if they thought that this life was all they got? How does Paul admonish us to live in light of the reality of everlasting life with Jesus? Do you see more people living like there is, or is not, life after death, eternity, and the judgment?

Study: Additional scriptures for deeper Bible study.

- Luke 14:7-24 Questions at a Pharisee table.
- John 5:24-30 Both the believer and the unbeliever will be resurrected.
- Romans 6:1-6 Alike in resurrection with Jesus.
- Philippians 3:3-11 Hope in the resurrection.

Application: How can I apply this to my life this week?

- The resurrection is a critical doctrine to be embraced by all who are Christians. Ask yourself if you are receiving the teaching of the resurrection as a doctrine, and not just a conviction or a preference. Are we comprehending that this is a watershed doctrine without which we have something less than Biblical Christianity?
- What would be a good response to an encounter with another Christian who held the belief that once a person dies, they just cease to exist...that resurrection and the afterlife were less than reality?
- What are some specific ways that yielding our thinking to accept the doctrine of the resurrection should challenge us to live a life free from sin, in pursuit of righteousness, and seeking to please Christ? Does a future understanding of our promised eternal state impact our present earthly conduct?