
EQUIP

The ultimate life
Small Group Session Four
Week beginning 9th October



Being Equipped

Over the past few weeks, we have been laying the foundation that will equip us to live life to the full. That foundation is the gospel. We have looked at God's glorious creation. We have seen human rebellion against God and the devastating consequences of living under the curse of God. Last week, we saw our glorious redemption, won on the cross through Christ's propitiatory atoning death.

Now we can start to pull those strands together. Have a look at 1 Corinthians 15 verses 1-3. Here we are given Paul's summary of this gospel - the gospel he preached to the Corinthians and which they received. The simple sentence in verse three defines the gospel for us. It involves: the death of Jesus Christ for our sins; his burial; his resurrection from the dead and his appearing before many people. This is all in fulfilment of the promises of Scripture. It describes Jesus as the Christ, that is the King. It describes his death as substitutionary, 'for our sins', the basis of the atonement. Finally, it claims that Jesus really did die and really did rise from the dead.

But the resurrection is not just 'and finally' or a 'happy ever after'. For Paul, without the resurrection we have all believed in vain 15:2 and we are to be more pitted than all people 15:18. Why? Why is the resurrection so important? If Jesus died but did not rise, what difference would it make to us? Our sins would still be forgiven? We would still be back in relationship with God? Our guilt would still be removed?

So what difference does the resurrection really make? Here is the key. The gospel is not just about what we have been rescued from, but what we have been rescued for. The resurrection of Jesus is all about our future, our resurrection future. So let's dive into the resurrection this week - can we be sure Jesus really rose and what difference does it make if he did?

If you would like a question to start you thinking, why not ask what difference the resurrection currently makes in your life at the moment - then we will come to our passage.

Where, O death, is
your victory?
Where, O death,
is your sting?

1 Corinthians 15:55

The ultimate life

1 Understanding the importance of resurrection

Read 1 Corinthians 15:3-8. What evidences does Paul give for the resurrection taking place? What makes them compelling?

It is really important for the resurrection of Jesus to be established because many people think that there is no physical resurrection after death. That was the same in Paul's day (15:12). Read 1 Corinthians 15:12-19. What are the consequences of thinking there is no resurrection from the dead?

Having seen the terrible consequences of there being no resurrection, Paul now shows the glorious consequences of the resurrection. Read 15:20-28 and list some of those glorious consequences.

2 The resurrection body

One of the reasons we maybe struggle to believe that we will be raised is because it seems crazy to say our bodies can live for ever. We all know bodies age, decay, die and then rot. Now read 15:35-49. What do we learn about the nature of our resurrection bodies?

Now read Paul's glorious conclusion 15:50-58. How should this future moment of change impact our feelings now towards death? What comfort do they give to Christians in their later years?

3 The ultimate life

So now let's meditate on these truths and let them turn our lives upside-down:

Would your life now make no sense without the future resurrection? How should your future resurrection have more impact on the way you live now?

How might this passage make you more excited about your eternal future?

What frustrates you about your current body? How might these verses help?

