

HANDOUT FOR “THE RESURRECTION”

BIBLE STUDY 1 Corinthians 15:50-58

“The resurrection of Christ has altered the face of the universe,” writes David Gooding. “Not only is death not an irreversible process; it is not even a permanent institution” (True to the Faith, Hodder).

Here in this passage the apostle Paul has arrived at the stirring climax to his classic chapter on the Resurrection. He has covered various difficulties and objections; now he concludes with a ringing declaration:

1 In verse 50, Paul demolishes any idea of a crude return of a dead corpse to what it was before. How does he do this, with his use of terms?

What was the difference between the raising of Lazarus and the resurrection of Christ? Compare John 11:44 with John 21:6-7.

2 Look on at verses 51-53. Discuss the nature of the “changed” bodies of Christ’s followers. What clues do we have? Look back to verses 42-43 and Philipians 3:21.

3 “The last trumpet” (verse 52). To what does this refer?

A parallel is found in Matthew 24:31 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16.

How much does this expectation make sense of the present for you?

4 Turn to verses 55-57.

“The sting is not in death but in sin,” wrote Leon Morris (1 Corinthians, Tyndale Press). Relate this to the achievements of Christ on our behalf.

5 Apply verse 58 to the various callings and pieces of service represented in your life.

6 How confident are you that your own body will one day be resurrected?

REFLECTION

A Read 1 Corinthians 15:20-28. How does Christ’s resurrection affect the future?

In what sense do we understand the defeat of death?

How is this confidence reflected in Christian living today?

B What difference, in practice, does a Christian faith seem to make to people in the face of death?

C Turn to the Old Testament passage of Ezekiel 37:1-14, which relates to the message of resurrection. Think and pray about situations that need this kind of transformation.

D Because Christ is risen, we too shall be raised from death.

In what ways does this give the Easter story extra meaning for you?

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BIBLE CHECK

Christ its guarantee:

1 Corinthians 15:20-23; Philipians 3:20-21

Nature its illustration:

1 Corinthians 15:35-38

Eternal life its outcome:

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; John 5:24-26; 6:40

From humiliation to glory:

1 Corinthians 15:43; 1 John 3:2

From the natural to the spiritual:

John 20:19; 1 Corinthians 15:44; Luke 24:36-43

From mortality to immortality:

1 Corinthians 15:42,50-55; Philipians 1:21-24

KEY TRUTH

The Bible teaches that Christians will be raised from death to enjoy eternal life with God.

POSTSCRIPT

The Christian’s hope is not to escape from the body, but to be raised as a new body to live the quality of life God has always intended for us.

