March 29/30, 2008

Study Questions
Is there Life after Death?

Life After Death Series
I Corinthians 15:1-34
Pastor Bryan Clark

Opening Discussion

1. In what ways in our culture do you see an interest or curiosity concerning what happens after you die?

2. What do you think most people base their opinions or thoughts concerning life after death on? Are those reliable sources?

3. Is life after death just something we should worry about when the time comes or does it have relevance to how we live our lives today? Be specific.

Bible Study

1. Review the case for the historical resurrection of Jesus as presented Easter weekend. Based on historical fact, is it a greater leap of faith to believe or deny the resurrection of Jesus?

2. Read I Corinthians 15:1-7. Verses 3-7 are considered the earliest Christian Church creed we have. Why is it important to know what the early Church believed concerning the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus?

3. Read I Corinthians 15:12-19. What is the relationship between believing in a resurrection of the dead for those who believe and the resurrection of Jesus?

   There are those who deny the literal bodily resurrection of Jesus (to the point of mocking such a belief) yet they themselves hold some strange view of life after death. If Jesus did not conquer death, then what is the basis for life after death and how great of a leap of faith is it to believe such a notion versus what we as Christians believe based on the historical resurrection of Jesus?

4. If someone discovers the bones of Jesus in a grave tomorrow, what is the consequence to our Christian faith according to Paul in I Corinthians 15?

   This book was written around A.D. 50 (roughly 17 years after the resurrection of Jesus). Wasn't Paul giving the opponents of Christianity the recipe for how to stop the movement—just disprove the resurrection?

What does that tell us about his confidence in the historical reliability of the resurrection (see verse 6)?

5. Read I Corinthians 15:20-28. Notice Jesus is the "first fruit" meaning He is the first of what is to come. In other words, His physical, literal bodily resurrection is the prototype of what is to come for believers. Notice too that it is yet to come, even for those who have already died (see verse 23). How does challenge the notion that we are disembodied souls floating around somewhere?

   Note: This text teaches that those who believe the Gospel will be resurrected to new, literal, physical bodies like Jesus. Between now and that resurrection day, believers that die are present with Jesus in some "intermediate" state awaiting the great day of that resurrection that will define eternity.

6. Because the resurrection is true, what is true concerning our faith, preaching, forgiveness and hope according to I Corinthians 15:12-19?

7. Read I Corinthians 15:58. What is the practical response to this great promise and hope of a resurrection?

Application

1. What is the basis of our belief in a resurrection of the dead for those who believe? Is it merely wishful thinking or it does it have a basis in historical fact?

2. According to I Corinthians15:58 this truth should dramatically affect how we live today. List five practical ways this truth should affect your life today.

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