**BCM Bible Study: February 12/13, 2019**

**1 Corinthians 15:1-34: The Resurrection Part 1**

Looking Back: Follow up on last week’s challenge: “Reach out to an authority figure in your life and tell them what they have meant/mean to you. This can be a text, phone call, letter, email, or in person.”

The Gospel:

* Begin by asking people to describe the gospel in their own words.
* Paul will start chapter 15 with a gospel statement. **Read 1 Cor. 15:1-11.**
  + What is the focus of Paul’s gospel presentation?

Chapter 15 represents a turning point in 1 Corinthians as Paul turns to discuss the resurrection. The resurrection is central to everything Paul has said and the entire Christian life in general.

* How central has the resurrection of Jesus been to your own thoughts about your faith? Do you feel like this is a sometimes-overlooked component of the gospel?
* Do you ever think about your own resurrection from the dead? What impact does that have on your walk with Jesus?
* Why do you think the resurrection is integral to the Christian faith and the gospel?

The Resurrection: **Read 1 Corinthians 15:12-13**. It is unclear what exactly the Corinthians were claiming. Some may have believed that Christ was raised from the dead, but that his followers would not be. Some may have denied the resurrection of Jesus. Many Greeks believed that afterlife only involved a disembodied soul. Paul will not leave room for any of this thinking.

* Do you ever encounter skepticism about the resurrection of Jesus?
* Have you ever tried to convince someone of the resurrection? How did you do that? How did it go? What arguments have you heard for and against it?

**Read 1 Corinthians 15:12-19**.

* What is the foundation of Paul’s belief in the resurrection?
* **Read Acts 9:1-9** and **1 Cor. 9:1-2**. There are many solid arguments in favor of the resurrection of the Lord. One is the implausibility of stealing Jesus’ body under such careful Roman watch. Another is that the self-sacrificial behavior of the previously timid disciples can only be explained by a sincere conviction that Jesus was raised from the dead. But the firmest argument and Paul’s foundation is his eyewitness testimony of the raised Jesus. This is the basis of everything he has done and therefore the foundation of all who came after him. We too rest in the eyewitness testimony of him and the countless others mentioned in vv.3-8.
* According to Paul in vv.17-19, why is the resurrection crucial to our faith?
  + If Jesus had merely died, the problem of sin and death remains. Rom. 4:25 suggests that without the resurrection there is no atonement of sin. All people still die, so if Christ isn’t raised, Paul says that those who have died have no hope and neither does anyone else. Moreover, God created us with bodies, not just souls; without the resurrection, redemption is incomplete. Central to the Christian faith is that we are united with Christ in his resurrection and we stand united with him on the judgment day. If you think it would benefit your group, take a look at Romans 4:20-25, 6:6-11; Eph. 2:4-7; Col. 2:11-15.
* Is this different from how you typically think about hope and heaven?

All in All: **Read 1 Cor. 15:20-28**

* What does Paul say is going to happen in vv.20-23? What does it mean that Jesus is the firstfruits?
* In vv. 24-28 Paul is saying that there will be a period of time when Christ will reign and destroy all his enemies. After this, he will “hand over” the kingdom to the Father. Jesus is God, but is also willfully subordinate to the Father (note his prayer in Gethsemane).
* Key to understanding these verses is Psalm 8. **Read Psalm 8.**
  + What was God’s intention for mankind? (note especially v.6)
  + How has mankind failed to do this?
  + In what way does Jesus do what mankind didn’t?
* According to Paul, what is God’s ultimate plan for all of creation?
* What does it mean that “God may be all in all” in 1 Cor. 15:28?
* In the Lord’s Prayer, Jesus asks his Father for his will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. How does v.28 broaden your view of what this means? What would it look like for the whole earth to reflect God’s glory and character?
* How does this shape the way you think about living out your faith? Are there areas of life that need to be brought into submission to God’s will? (school/work ethic, treatment of others, relationship with nature, parental relationships, etc.)

**Read 1 Cor. 15:29-34**.

* What is Paul’s overall argument in these verses?
  + Paul is not advocating nor denying baptism on behalf of the dead. Here, he simply notes that it is happening and that it is worthless without aresurrection. There is no Scriptural argument in favor of baptism on behalf of the dead. Paul’s silence on it should not be seen as an argument in favor of it – he is picking his battles!
* What kind of mindset leads to the “eat, drink, and be merry” attitude that Paul addresses in v.32?
  + “Christians must have a radically different mind-set? Recognizing that far better life awaits them, they can risk their lives or well-being for the gospel in ways other people would not be willing to emulate.” (Craig Blomberg)
  + Do you find it tempting to find your sense of satisfaction and escape from troubles in things other than Jesus? What does that usually look like for you?
  + How does the hope of life after death challenge that mindset?
  + What things might you need to let go of in order to be able to have a whole-hearted hope in the resurrection?

Challenge: Our tendency is to hold on tightly to things in our lives – our reputation, our sense of security, loved ones, our future, etc. The resurrection and the redemption of **all things** (v.28) allows us to detach from these things and enjoy them properly, without fear. This week, practice this detachment in ways suggested in the “Detachment” pdf online.