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WHEN HAVE YOU BEEN AN EYEWITNESS TO AN EXCITING EVENT?

The Truth of the Resurrection

The POINT >

The resurrection of Christ is a historical fact.

> 1 CORINTHIANS 15:1-8

¹Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, ²and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.

³For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁴that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁵and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. ⁶Then he appeared to more than five hundred

brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. ⁷Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. ⁸Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.





THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

FACT:

In 2011, there was widespread rioting in the UK, which included looting and vandalism throughout London. Though many other businesses were destroyed, bookstores were unexplainably spared.¹



LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING // JESUS

From the beginning, God planned that Jesus would save people from their sins, and it was necessary that He would be crucified and raised.

For most of us, national or global news stories are just that—stories we read about on the Internet. However, for the relatively few, they experience these things first-hand. In April 2015, there was an incident in Baltimore that sparked riots, which became a national story. Only a couple months after my family had moved into the city, we locked ourselves in our small, city row home for three days as rioters and ruffians smashed car windows and burned out shops on our street. For a moment that had a dramatic impact on our city, we were able to say—for better or worse—"I was there!"

Of course, none of us were there at the event that changed everything—the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Churches around the world celebrate Jesus' resurrection. But do we embrace the resurrection as an actual historical event, or do we simply see it as a fairytale? Sadly, many people view it as fiction and not fact. They see the resurrection as an "inspiring story" about a great teacher named Jesus, but they do not believe He is the true Messiah who was resurrected for all mankind.

The apostle Paul had something to say about that! In 1 Corinthians 15, Paul made an objective, truthful claim—Jesus did physically rise from the dead, and there were many witnesses. They could say, "I was there!"

1 CORINTHIANS 15:1-3

1 What makes the death of Jesus so significant?

2 Why is it so important that we know Jesus' crucifixion is historically true?

1 CORINTHIANS 15:4

3 What are the implications of Jesus' being fully man and fully God?

4 Why is the resurrection an essential element of the gospel?

5 Why do some people find it difficult to believe Jesus' resurrection?

Through Jesus' death, we see that good and evil aren't a matter of opinion, and there are real consequences for our choices. #BSFLResurrection



1 CORINTHIANS 15:5-8

6 What's the importance of eyewitness testimony?

7 How has Jesus revealed Himself to you?

8 How can you be a witness of the resurrection of Jesus to others who need to believe?





LIVE IT OUT



LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING // JESUS

From the beginning, God planned that Jesus would save people from their sins, and it was necessary that He would be crucified and raised.

Since Jesus' death on the cross, many have claimed that the resurrection never happened. However, Jesus' death and resurrection are central to our faith, for without these, there would be no forgiveness of sin. Without the cross, there would be no payment for sin. Without the resurrection, death would not have been defeated. Thankfully, the death and resurrection of Christ are actual events that did take place according to God's plan. As a result, forgiveness and salvation are available to those who place their faith in Jesus.

> CHRIST

Jesus said that living by faith in Him requires that we follow Him in His death (Luke 9:23). When we're willing to die to ourselves, it's then we are able to share in Jesus' resurrection.

9 How does your life demonstrate that you've denied yourself and taken up your cross?

10 What will you intentionally sacrifice for the sake of Jesus this week?

GOD

JESUS

HOLY SPIRIT

BIBLE

SALVATION

CREATION

CHURCH

PEOPLE

FAMILY

COMMUNITY
& WORLD



> COMMUNITY

Following Christ means not only making sacrifices for Him, but for our friends, family, and neighbors, as well.

11 Who do you know that has a need right now, whether it is something practical (e.g., food, clothes, school supplies, a ride to school, etc.) or more relational or emotional?

12 How can you make sacrifices to meet these needs?

> CULTURE

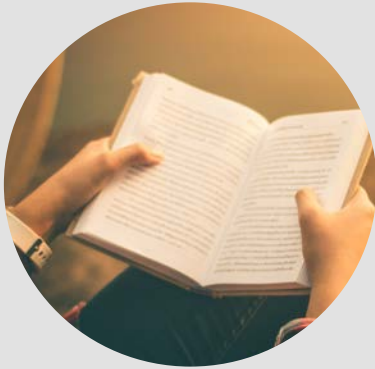
Many lost people think we're silly or foolish to believe Jesus' resurrection actually happened. However, the truth is that if they refuse to trust in the resurrected Christ, they will suffer for eternity.

13 This week, how can you help someone understand that the resurrection is real?

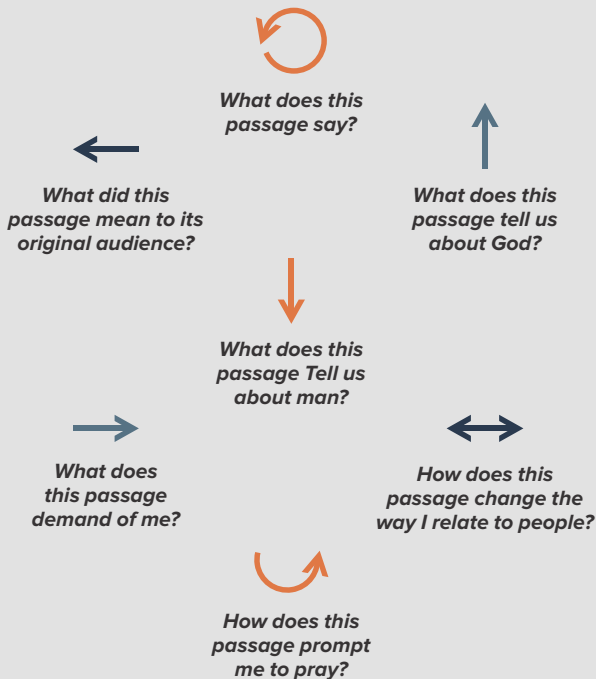
14 How can you demonstrate in the ways you live that you've been raised with Christ?

- > If you haven't been baptized—which symbolizes your identifying with Jesus in His burial and resurrection—talk with a leader about being baptized. This is one of the best ways to show others you share in Jesus' resurrection.

DAILY DEVOTIONS



The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



Day One JOHN 11:17-19

Mary, Martha, and Lazarus were some of Jesus' closest friends, and He loved them very much. In fact, when Jesus would come to Jerusalem for the feasts, He was known to stay with this family, as their home was a relatively short walk into the city. When Lazarus became sick, his sisters sent word to Jesus for help, but Jesus didn't hurry to them. Instead, He took His time, and by the time Jesus arrived in Bethany where His friends lived, Lazarus had been dead for four days. This is significant because Jews held a superstitious belief that a person's soul lingered near the body for three days after death, and a person could potentially come back to life. But after four days, the body began to rot and stink, and death was final! At least, that's what they thought.

> **How do you think Mary and Martha felt when Jesus didn't hurry to them?**

> **Why do you think He waited?**

Day Two

JOHN 11:20-22



Mary was known to be the more quiet and contemplative sister who kept to herself. Martha, on the other hand, was driven and outspoken, and when she heard that Jesus was near their home, she ran out to meet Him—and perhaps to give Him a piece of her mind. Why didn't you come sooner? If You'd been here, You could have healed my brother! Maybe she'd forgotten that Jesus had healed people from a distance. (See Mark 7:24-30; Matt. 8:5-13; John 4:46-54.) Either way, though she was upset on many levels, she held onto the hope that Jesus could bring something good from this tragedy.

- **When have you been upset that God didn't answer your requests the ways you wanted?**

- **How have you seen God bring good from a difficult situation?**

Day Three

JOHN 11:23-24

Though Martha likely didn't believe Jesus could raise Lazarus—after all, it had been four days—she was hopeful that Jesus could bring good from the situation. When Jesus told her, “Your brother will rise again,” her response was like ours often is—*I know, I know, I know. I've heard it before.* She'd learned throughout her life that, on the day of judgment, God's people would rise from the dead. But Martha wasn't happy about this. Her expression was one of disappointment. She wanted Lazarus to be alive now. But, as people often did, she had misunderstood what Jesus truly meant. Jesus wasn't referring to the resurrection on the last day. He had plans to give Martha something that was even better than she would have thought to ask for. However, up to that point, her mind wasn't open to seeing things from Jesus' perspective.

- **When have you misunderstood something that God has said?**

- **How can we make sure to be open-minded enough to hear from God, but not so open as to be led astray by false teaching?**

Day Four

JOHN 11:25

When Jesus used the words “I am,” they held great significance. In the Old Testament, when Moses asked God to reveal His name so Moses could tell the people who was sending him, God replied, tell them “I AM has sent me to you” (Ex. 3:14). “I AM” as the name of God carried a ton of weight in the Jewish culture, and Jesus used these very words in speaking to Martha. Using the name of God, Jesus said “I am the resurrection and the life.” He helped Martha to see that the resurrection wasn’t simply some far-off abstract concept, but mattered in her life at that moment. Further, the resurrection was possible only because of Jesus. In order to be raised, whether on the last day or on that very day, faith in Jesus was necessary.

- **What is the significance of Jesus’ referring to Himself as “I am”?**

- **How do you think Jesus’ statement affected Martha? How does it affect you?**

Day Five

JOHN 11:26-27



Throughout His ministry on earth, Jesus performed many miracles. The reason Jesus performed signs and wonders was to help those who were weak in faith to believe the truth about who He is. Only moments later, Jesus would raise Lazarus, and many who witnessed it were amazed and believed in Jesus (v. 45). However, Martha’s experience was different. Many believed because of the miracle, but even before seeing this miracle, Martha believed. For her, Jesus’ word was enough. He promised her that those who believe in Him will never die. And she believed.

- **When have you asked for a sign in order to believe?**

- **Why did Martha believe even before the miracle? How should this impact you?**