

1 Corinthians Part Two

Lesson #22, Chapter 15:1-11

Please read all of Chapter 15 before starting your lesson and especially focus on verses 1-11. Ask the Lord to help you glean goodies from the encouraging truths in this chapter.

1. First Corinthians 15:1-11 is an interesting little section. After addressing conflicts in the church, immorality, Christian liberties, women's roles, and spiritual gifts in his letter to the Corinthians, what issue does Paul now seek to correct? See 1 Corinthians 15:1, 11-14, 15-19.

2. Based on what you've just read; what impact would this misunderstanding of the gospel message have upon the Corinthians' faith if not corrected?

3. Where were the Corinthians getting these ideas? See verses 12 and 35. For more on how this thinking was part of the culture of the time read Acts 17:32-34 and 26:8.

4. What do we learn about the gospel according to verses 1-2?

5. Let's take some time to look at each phase of the gospel's work that Paul lays out in verses 1-2. First, Paul was faithful to preach the gospel to them. Why did he do that? See Acts 15:7; 18:1-11; Romans 1:16; 1 Corinthians 1:18.
 - a. How did you come to hear the gospel? At what point were your eyes opened to the life-saving truth of the gospel?

6. Next, we see that the Corinthians *received* the gospel. What does that mean? See Romans 10:16-17; 1 Thessalonians 1:6-10; 2:13.
 - a. What was the manner in which you received the message of the gospel?

7. Thirdly, we find that the Corinthians were *standing* in the gospel. What does Paul mean by that? See 2 Corinthians 1:24; Colossians 4:12; 1 Thessalonians 3:8.
 - a. How can you tell if you are standing firm in the gospel?

8. Verse 2 says the Corinthians were saved. What were they saved by? See verse 1 and 2 Timothy 3:15; 1 Peter 1:23-25.

9. What is confirmation that someone is truly saved according to verse 2?
 - a. What do you learn from the following verses about “holding fast” in the faith? See John 10:27-29; Philippians 1:6; Hebrews 10:23; 1 Peter 1:3-5; Revelation 2:13.

10. Define *vain* [Strong's #1500].

11. How is it possible to believe “in vain?” See Colossians 2:18-19; Hebrews 4:2, 6; 11:6; James 1:21.

12. Let's review again: What wrong thinking was influencing the church? See verse 12.
 - a. How would that wrong thinking lead to their faith being “in vain?” See verses 13-14, 16-19.

 - b. How does understanding those implications about the resurrection help explain why Paul would spend five verses (verses 4-9) identifying whom Christ appeared to when He rose from the dead?

13. What observations can you make about Paul's preaching to the Corinthians from this part of verse 3, *For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received?* Notice how 1 Corinthians 11:2, 23 and Galatians 1:12 similar.

14. What did Paul preach to the Corinthians according to verse 3?

15. What assurance do we have in verse 3 that Paul's preaching wasn't just something he made up? See Matthew 21:42; Romans 1:2-4; 16:25-26; 1 Peter 1:10-12; 2:6.

16. What else did Paul preach to the Corinthians according to verse 4? See also Psalm 16:10; Luke 24:46 (Isaiah 53:4-12).

17. What impact should that phrase, *according to the Scriptures*, have upon those who were saying there was no resurrection of the dead and for those who listened to them?

18. Not only do the Scriptures testify of Christ's resurrection, but God also provided a visual testimony of the risen Christ. Approximately how many people were eyewitnesses of the resurrection according to verses 5-9?

19. How does Paul describe himself in verse 9? Why did he feel that way?

20. Though Paul felt one way, his theology told him something else. What did Paul's doctrinal understanding teach him? See verse 10. How did that motivate him?

21. There were many things in Paul's previous life that he was ashamed of, yet the grace that God extended to him intensely motivated Paul. Consider verse 10 in light of your life: *By the grace of God I am what I am. His grace toward me did not prove vain. I labored even more than all of them. Yet it wasn't me. It was the grace of God with me.* How has God's grace affected you? Also consider how 2 Corinthians 5:14-15 is similar to verse 10.

"In this revealing verse let us take note of three things: the *evidence* of grace, "I am what I am;" the *power* of grace, "labored more abundantly than they all;" the *fellowship* of grace, "the grace of God which was with me." All that he now is can be traced to grace. The transformation in his life was due to a power outside of himself; the persecutor was now the preacher, preaching the faith he once destroyed (Gal. 1:23)." ~Jack Hunter¹

22. Who is the "they" referring to in verse 11? How does the consistency of the message preached, no matter from whom it came, provide another reason why the Corinthians should believe in the resurrection?

¹Jack Hunter, *I Corinthians: What the Bible Teaches*, Ritchie New Testament Commentaries (Scotland: John Ritchie Ltd., 1986), pg. 186.

23. This section of Paul's letter is just picking up steam as he moves toward his triumphant conclusion, and though the information is foundational, we've learned some valuable truths to aid us in our daily walk with the Lord. What truths have encouraged you from verses 1-11?

“The resurrection of Christ was the Father's expression of satisfaction in the work His Son so blessedly accomplished on the cross, when He gave Himself a ransom for our sins. We need to remember that apart from His physical resurrection there was no proof that God had accepted His work as an atonement for our sins.” ~H. A. Ironside²

²H. A. Ironside, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Neptune, New Jersey: Loizeaux Brothers, 1938), pg. 463.