# I Corinthians 15:1-34

## Review…

- **I Corinthians 7 - The 1st question - Marriage…**
- **I Corinthians 8-10 - The 2nd question - Idols…**
- **I Corinthians 11 - The 3rd question - Rules for a worship service…**
- **I Corinthians 12-14 - The 4th question - Spiritual Gifts…**
  - There are many gifts of the Spirit - but they all serve one purpose - to encourage the church...
    - Illustration of a body - many parts under the control of one head - many gifts one church...
    - The gifts of the Spirit mean nothing without love - Agape...
  - The gift of Tongues...
    - The gift of tongues is for personal use - the gift of prophecy is for the church - better!
    - If you cannot understand what is being said - it has not power or effect...
    - If everyone is speaking in tongues in church - people will say you are mad...
    - God is not the author of confusion - 2 or 3 can speak in tongues with interpretation

## The 5th question - the resurrection… (*3 things*)

- **1st - The Gospel message… vs. 1-11**
  - Paul confirms the 'Good News' he had preached to the church in Corinth... vs. 1-2
    - It is the same Gospel Paul had himself received when he was saved - **Acts 9:17**
      - It is the same Gospel that had saved all who believed in church in Corinth...
      - Unless they didn't hold onto the Word - Jesus - in which case their faith was useless...
    - Paul warns the believers - if they did not hold onto Jesus - there is no salvation...
      - Apparently some of the people in Corinth were turning their faith into a religion...
      - Religion - faith in rules and traditions - has no power to save us from hell...
      - Religion is only men's vain imperfect attempt to reach up to a perfect God...
      - It is only when a God reaches down to fallen men there is hope...
      - It is only a relationship with Jesus - holding onto Jesus - that gets us to heaven!
  - The Good News...
    - 1st - Jesus died for our sins... vs. 3
      - This is the foundation of the Gospel message - the solution to our biggest problem...
        - All of us are sinners - there are no exceptions - **Romans 3:23**...
        - And there is only one penalty for sin - eternal death/hell - **Romans 6:23**...
      - But God loves us so much - **John 3:16** - He came and paid our debt for us...
        - God came as a man – 'in the flesh' as it were – and lived a perfect sinless life...
        - **John 1:1,14** – "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... the Word became human and lived here on earth among us."
        - Jesus Christ – the only perfect man – paid the price for our sin on the cross...
        - In that moment Jesus condemned sin – defeated the sin once and for all!
        - Then came the great mysteries of the ages – God gave us Jesus' righteousness!
        - **II Corinthians 5:21** – "For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ."
        - In Jesus – we have a perfect life – we have fulfilled the requirement of the Law...
        - Now when God looks down on us – He does not see our sinful mistakes/flaws...

- He instead sees the perfect life of His Son Jesus – He sees us as perfect/flawless!
- 2nd - He was buried... vs. 4
  - Before Jesus died – no one went to heaven – **Hebrews 11:39**
  - Those who died having faith in the Lord – went to Abraham's bosom - **Luke 16:22**...
  - When Jesus died He went there and set free all who had died in faith- **Isaiah 61:1**
  - Jesus now has the Keys to Hell and Death – **Revelation 1:18**
  - Jesus opened up the door to Eternal Life – the resurrection of the dead...
  - We are all one day going to die – these bodies wear out – (*older people say Amen*)
  - But we do not sorrow or weep like those who have no hope - death is not the end...
  - We have hope because of Jesus – we will one day get new bodies - **II Corinthians 5:1**
- 3rd - On the 3rd day He rose again... vs. 4
  - The Gospel message – salvation – hinges on the death AND resurrection of Jesus...
  - The Gospel is God so loved the world – that HE – Jesus/God – gave His life...
  - But the Good news is not that Jesus died – everybody dies – it is the resurrection!
  - By believing in Jesus – and only by faith in Jesus – we are forgiven – saved!
  - The Gospel is we get to go to heaven only because of Jesus' death & resurrection!
- 4th - Jesus appeared... vs. 5-7
  - Jesus resurrection was not a rumor - there were MANY witnesses!
  - Cephas/Peter - by the Sea of Galilee - **John 21:14**
  - By the twelve (*the title for the Apostles - though only 11 remained*) - **Luke 24:36**
  - The 500 - when Jesus went up to Galilee after His resurrection - **Matthew 28:16**
    - A group of over 500 people saw Him - the resurrected Christ!
    - Most of them were still alive at the time of Paul's writing **I Corinthians**...
    - Meaning there were plenty of eye-witnesses who could testify to the resurrection
  - James - the brother of Jesus - a meeting only recorded for us here by Paul...
  - Then by all the Apostles at Jesus' ascension into heaven - **Acts 1:14**

- Finally Paul - **Acts 9** - on the road to Damascus... vs. 8-11
  - Paul came along after the crucifixion/resurrection - born at the wrong time...
    - He called himself the 'least' of the Apostles - because he persecuted the church...
    - Paul would later go on to call himself the least of all the saints - **Ephesians 3:8**
    - And towards the end of his life call himself the chief of sinners - **I Timothy 1:15**
    - The closer Paul got to Jesus - the more he realized how much he needed grace...
    - When you first get up in the morning - you might think you look pretty good...
    - But when you turn on the light - get closer to a mirror - you see lots of imperfections!
    - The closer we get to Jesus - the more we realize just how much of a sinner we are...
    - Diving us to hold all that much tighter to Jesus - not trusting in ourselves!
  - God used Paul as an example of the power of Grace...
    - **I Timothy 1:16** - "That is why God had mercy on me, so that Christ Jesus could use me as a prime example of his great patience with even the worst sinners."
    - If God could save Paul - who persecuted the church / murdered believers...
    - No one is beyond the reach of grace - anyone can be saved!
    - The worst - most Godless - spiteful bitter sinner - is just the one God wants to save!
  - No that Paul did nothing - 'I am what I am by the Grace of God'...
    - He understood his salvation was only by the grace of God...
    - But He worked harder than anyone else - through the power of God's grace in him...
    - The Grace of God does not mean we do not work – just the opposite...

- We work harder – but recognize it not about our efforts – but God's Grace!

- **2ND - QUESTIONING THE RESURRECTION… VS. 12-19**
  - Apparently there were some in Corinth who questioned the resurrection...
    - Not particularly Jesus' resurrection - just the idea of anyone being resurrected...
      - **I Corinthians 1:22-23** – "Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness…"
      - To many - intellectual pride kept them from getting past the idea of the dead rising...
      - They had never seen a dead man live again – so the resurrection was just foolishness…
    - You live - then you die - that is the end - there is no life after death...
      - If we are honest - all of us have asked this question at some point in our lives...
      - Perhaps while attending a funeral - looking at the body of someone we knew...
      - What happens when we take our last breath - is there really anything after death...
      - Is there really a heaven for those who believe / hell for those who do not...
  - The problem is if there is no resurrection of the dead - then Jesus also was not raised...
    - If Jesus was not raised from the dead - then the Gospel message is not true...
      - We have all believed in something that is lie - our faith is useless...
      - Paul and all the apostles are liars - because they taught God raised Jesus up...
      - If Jesus is not risen - then there was no price paid for sin - we are still condemned!
      - Those who have died believing in Jesus (*everyone who dies*) - are lost forever...
      - If our only hope is in Jesus - if it is all a lie - then we are hopeless!
    - Life without hope - **Isaiah 22:13**
      - If we only have this life to live - then there are no consequences for our actions...
      - There is no right - there is no wrong / there is no heaven - there is no hell...
      - We mind as well live it up - eat / drink / and have all the fun we can...
      - Because when it's over - there is nothing - we cease to exist...
      - Much of the world lives by this doctrine - as though there are no consequences...
      - Unfortunately for them - Jesus is risen - therefore there is life after death!

- **3RD - JESUS IS RISEN - THERE ARE CONSIWENCES TO OUR CHOICES… VS. 20-34**
  - Jesus is risen! He is the first fruits... vs. 20, 23
    - The Bible uses the word 'fallen asleep' - to describe the death of a believer...
    - Because for us it is not the end - we have the hope of eternal life to come...
    - Jesus was the first to be resurrected - but all who believe will follow His example!
    - In fact everyone will live forever - our spirit is eternal...
    - The question we are left to answer - is where will we spend out eternity!
  - From Adam to Jesus... 21-22
    - All men come from Adam - the first man - through him all men 'inherited' death/hell...
    - All men followed in Adam's sin/disobedience – all men are all sinners...
    - But in Jesus - all men had the opportunity to receive Grace/heanen!
    - The choice is do we remain in our sin (*death*) / or believe in Jesus (*life*)...
    - We were once under Adam – cursed – destined for death and hell...
    - But now we are under Jesus – blessed – destined for life and heaven!
  - Death is not the end - it is only the beginning... vs. 24-28
    - The end is not when we die - the end comes when Jesus has conquered all...
      - Jesus will rule - till He brings an end to every authority and power - **Psalms 8:6**

- All nations / all kingdoms / all men / even satan and his demons...
- **Philippians 2:10** -"At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth..."
- And the very last enemy Jesus will destroy is death...
- Death was never part of God's original plan - it was the result of sin - **Genesis 3**...
- God created us to have an eternal relationship with Him - but that was lost...

▪ When Jesus defeating sin through the power of the cross - He defeated death!
- When the works done - God separates believers from unbelievers - **Revelation 20:12**
- Jesus will put Himself under God the Father...
- Then God will be all in all - His creation back to the way He originally intended...
- That is the end of the story - not when we take our last breath here in earth!

o Until then because of the resurrection - there is persecution...

▪ Baptism of the dead... vs. 29
- This is a very problematic verse - it's meaning is highly debated...
- Most likely Paul is referring to the picture of baptism...
  - Baptism is a picture of the death and resurrection of Jesus...
  - We were buried with him in baptism - raised up in new life...
  - If there was no resurrection - then why would be bother to get baptized!
- This verse has been heretically interpreted by some cults (*Mormons*)...
  - They use this verse to justify - 'baptism for the dead'...
  - The practice of proxy baptism - being baptized in place of dead loved ones...
  - Providing salvation through baptism to those who are already dead

▪ Paul faced death every day... vs. 30-32
- Paul was in constant danger - daily faced death because of the Gospel message...
  - From the moment Paul was saved - his life was in danger...
  - He had to be lowered out of a basket from the city of Damascus - **Acts 9:25**...
  - He was stoned to death on his 1st missionary journey - **Acts 14:19**
  - He even 'fought wild beasts' while he was in Ephesus - and lived...
  - The Romans would take prisoners and put them in their arenas for amusement...
  - Often Christians would be fed to lions for the entertainment of the crowds...
- If the resurrection not true - if it was just a lie - know one would have cared...
  - But the name of Jesus causes men to react - it reminds them of their sin...
  - So those who preach Jesus - preach the resurrection - are persecuted...
  - You can talk about just about any subject - and people will not care - except Jesus!

▪ Don't be fooled - preach the Gospel... vs. 33-34
- We are foolish if we think those around us do not affect us...
  - If you hang out with people who gamble - tell bad jokes - and get drunk...
  - You think to yourself - I will not be like them - I am a godly Christian - foolish...
  - Choose VERY wisely who you spend time with - cause you will become like them!
- Instead sober up - stop sinning - tell others about Jesus...
  - There are some who don't know about the Gospel (*agnostic*)...
  - Rather than going along with those who are a bad example...
  - Stop sinning - and start telling them about the Good News of Jesus...
  - Because there is a resurrection - and we will all live forever...
  - We don't share Jesus out of some sense of obligation – or for some reward...
  - But cause of the very real danger of Hell - the destination for any who reject Jesus

- Hell is not temporary – it is the 2nd death – eternal separation from God – no hope
- It is to our shame that people do not know how to stay out of hell...
- We NEED to tell them - we need to stand up for the Gospel!