

1 Corinthians 15



"To win people for Christ and to build them up in Christ."
www.stjameschorley.org Registered Charity No. 1130725

Introduction

Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of ... the resurrection of the dead... (Hebrews 6.1)

Over the previous 2 years we have done a short series of sermons, and some Bible studies, entitled "Back to Basics". The themes are taken from Hebrews 6 verse 1 and in four sermons this term we will be looking at "the resurrection of the dead" and "eternal judgment". To accompany this are three Bible studies on the famous chapter on the resurrection, 1 Corinthians 15.

The resurrection of the dead is one of the fundamental truths of the Christian faith, but that doesn't make it easy to understand. In 1 Corinthians 15 Paul is tackling some problems in the Church in Corinth and in doing so helps us to see both the foundational truth about the resurrection of the dead, and some of its depth, wonder and glory.

Hebrews does not spell out what is meant by the resurrection of the dead but it seems to mean what is normally called "the General Resurrection" which will occur when Christ returns. Paul writes about this in 1 Corinthians 15 but he starts with the resurrection of Jesus.

Christians have used the Apostle's Creed at baptisms for at least 1600 years, and we still do at St James. In the creed we declare our own personal faith saying, amongst other things: *"I believe ... on the third day (Jesus) rose again. I believe in ... the resurrection of the body"*

In the Nicene Creed, which we say at most 8.45 Communion, we declare our common faith by saying together:

"We believe ... on the third day (Jesus) rose again in accordance with the Scriptures ...

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come."

One of the problems in the church in Corinth was that some people were teaching that there would be no resurrection (v12). This seems to have been in part because they could not understand what it would be like (v35). But in doing so they were doing what people have done since the Garden of Eden, and what many even in churches today do, i.e. giving their own ideas and reasoning more importance than the word of God.

There are three Bible studies in this short series entitled

- "I believe He rose again" (1 Corinthians 15.1-11)
- "We look for the resurrection of the dead" (1 Corinthians 15.12-34)
- "I believe in the resurrection of the body" (1 Corinthians 15.35-58)

I am hoping that people will take the opportunity to attend the Christian Life and Witness course, which is being organised by the Billy Graham Association in preparation for the Lancashire Festival of Hope in September. This takes place in the weeks of 14th and 21st May and there information on the notice sheet and fliers at the back of church.

After half-term there will be a central meeting on 5th June and all the study groups will restart the following week, beginning 11th June when we are probably going to look at some Psalms.

*David Phillips,
April 2018*