

1 Corinthians Chapter 15

Why is the resurrection so important to Christians?

Many of the letters (also known as epistles) in the New Testament were written by Paul, an early Christian missionary and preacher. He had been travelling around the Mediterranean world, teaching about Jesus and establishing churches, for around ten years when he wrote his first letter to a group of Christians in Corinth, Greece. It was probably written in 53 or 54 CE, about 25 years after the crucifixion of Jesus.

In these passages Paul explains what Jesus' death and resurrection mean for Christians.

*I passed on to you what I received, which is of the greatest importance: that **Christ** died for our sins, as written in the **Scriptures**; that he was buried and that he was raised to life three days later, as written in the **Scriptures**; that he appeared to Peter and then to all twelve apostles. Then he appeared to more than 500 of his followers at once, most of whom are still alive, although some have died. Then he appeared to James, and afterward to all the apostles.*

**1 Corinthians chapter 15
verses 3-7**

Paul gives Jesus the title 'Christ', which comes from 'Christos', the Greek word for the Messiah.

When Paul refers to the scriptures, he means the Old Testament. His letters were written before any of the Gospels. Here he is referring to his belief that Jesus' death and resurrection had been foretold in Old Testament prophecies (see pages 30-32).

To do...

-  Highlight the reason Paul gives for why Christ died.
-  Highlight the people who Paul says have witnessed Jesus' resurrection.

To do...

-  What can you say about Paul's view of the significance of Jesus if he calls him 'Christ'?

-  Do these events explain why Paul gives Jesus the title of 'Christ'?

For the scripture says, "The first man, *Adam*, was created a living being"; but the *second Adam* is the life-giving Spirit. It is not the spiritual that comes first, but the physical, and then the spiritual. The first Adam, made of earth, came from the earth; the second Adam came from heaven. Those who belong to the earth are like the one who was made of earth; those who are of heaven are like the one who came from heaven. *Just as we wear the likeness of the man made of earth, so we will wear the likeness of the Man from heaven.*

Listen to this secret truth: we shall not all die, but when the last trumpet sounds, we shall all be changed in an instant, as quickly as the blinking of an eye. For when the trumpet sounds, the dead will be raised, never to die again, and we shall all be changed. For what is mortal must be changed into what is immortal; what will die must be changed into what cannot die. So when this takes place, and the mortal has been changed into the immortal, then the scripture will come true: "Death is destroyed; victory is complete!"

*"Where, Death, is your victory?
Where, Death, is your power to hurt?"*

**1 Corinthians chapter 15 verses 45-49
and 51-55**

'Adam' refers to Adam from Genesis (see. page 12). 'The second Adam' is usually understood to mean Jesus.

To do...

-  Highlight what Paul says about the second Adam.

Wearing 'the likeness of the man made of earth' refers to our current life on earth and to our being like Adam, mortal and imperfect.

Wearing 'the likeness of the Man from heaven' refers to the Christian belief in a future existence in heaven.

To do...

-  Paul expects a big change to take place when 'the last trumpet sounds'. What will change?

-  Highlight the line in this passage which offers Christians the most hope for a future existence in heaven.

To think about...

This is a complicated passage which can be interpreted in different ways.

After studying it for yourself, are there any questions which it has raised for you, or which you feel it leaves unanswered?