

# Approaching Easter

A Devotional Series: Week of April 17

"First Fruits" (1 Corinthians 15)



# Day 1 | Read 1 Corinthians 15:1-19

## Appetizer

During the weeks leading up to Easter, what were some of the things the media discussed regarding Easter? Was there any talk at all about Easter? If so, what did they say? Was there any talk at all about the resurrection of Christ? Why/why not?

## Big Idea

The resurrection of Jesus is the focal point of the Gospel message, and through His resurrection Jesus reveals that He is in fact the Christ. How foolish would it be for us to believe in the life and death of Christ, but not His resurrection (**vs. 19**)? In **chapter 15**, the Apostle Paul goes to great lengths in sharing with the church and proving to them that the resurrection of Christ is in fact very real. The resurrection is Truth and there is no need to doubt it.

It is important to keep in mind that the Corinthian church was denying the resurrection of the body, not the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. And what Paul was insistent upon was this: if man denies the resurrection of the body he thereby denies the Resurrection of Jesus Christ and therefore empties the Gospel message of its truth and the Christian life of its reality.

1. Why do you believe those in the Corinthian church needed to be reminded of the Gospel and Christ's resurrection? Why is it so important that we are often reminded of what Christ did for us?
2. When and where did the reality of the resurrection of Christ first impact you? How does it impact your life today?
3. Read **1 Corinthians 15:14-19** again. What would it mean for us if Christ did not rise from the dead?

## Family Application Discussion

Ask your family the following questions:

1. Do you believe that Jesus was raised from the dead? Why?
2. What are the implications for those who don't believe that Jesus was raised from the dead?
3. Because Jesus did in fact rise from the dead, how should that motivate us to live?

## Day 2 | Read 1 Corinthians 15:20-49

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### Appetizer

Have you ever been entertained by the falling “helicopters” or “whirligigs” that fall from the maple trees in the late summer? Becoming disconnected from their life giving branches, they fall to the ground and die. The following Spring, the purpose for their life and death becomes abundantly clear as little Maple trees begin to break the surface of the ground bringing new life.

Think about the seeds we plant in our gardens and landscape. What needs to happen for the seeds we plant to become fruitful?

### Big Idea

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is proof that God does in fact possess the power to raise the dead to life. Also, through Christ’s resurrection, we have the blessed assurance that our resurrection is coming, when Christ returns. In His resurrection, Jesus became “the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep in death” (Christians that have died). What a wonderful Truth for those whom Jesus Christ has marked as His own. They have the eternal hope of being raised from the dead upon Christ’s return.

1. As in farming or gardening the “FIRST FRUITS” is typically a sign of what is to come for the rest of the harvest season. How is the resurrection of Christ a “FIRST FRUITS” for the believer in Jesus Christ?
2. Just as a seed needs to die in order to bring new life, what are some of the things you needed to die to as you came into relationship with Jesus Christ? Having died to these things, how have you seen Jesus cause you to become more fruitful?
3. Spend the next few moments in prayer. Thank Jesus for giving you new life. Confess to Him the areas of your life that have been hard to “die to” and walk away from.

### Family Application Discussion

Ask your family the following questions:

1. Which would you rather eat, a handful of Honey Crisp apple seeds, or a Honey Crisp apple? Why? What would it be like to eat apple seeds? What is it like to eat an apple?
2. When we come into relationship with Jesus Christ, He guarantees that we will live forever with Him some day. How does that sound to you? If you are going to live forever with Jesus, who do you want to have with you? Commit to praying for those you named who don’t know Jesus. And then, commit to sharing Jesus with these people.

## Day 3 | Read 1 Corinthians 15:51-58

### Appetizer

Do you like surprises? What has been the greatest surprise of your life, whether good or bad? How did this surprise motivate you, if it did at all?

What is it like to surprise someone? What has been the greatest surprise you have ever arranged for someone? What was his/her response to the surprise?

### Big Idea

Tied for first with the salvation experience of every believer, will be the return of Christ. And on that glorious day Jesus Christ will descend on the clouds to take his family home to be with Him for all of eternity. Paul tells us that on that day, "we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet." When Christ returns, our nasty old sinful flesh will be gloriously replaced with our eternal, imperishable, immortal flesh, no longer to suffer the pain or sorrow or temptation that is experienced in our current earthly flesh. Oh the victory we have in Christ Jesus. This amazing promise should motivate us to "always abound in the work of the Lord."

1. When you think of eternity in heaven with Jesus, no longer being dragged down by your sinful flesh, what are the top 5 things you most look forward to?
2. How does the promise of Christ's return motivate you in your life today?
3. As you focus on the Truth of this passage, list three things you can be doing better for the sake of Christ and His glory?

### Family Application Discussion

Ask your family the following questions:

1. What are some of the things you would like to be rid of in this life? Why?
2. Jesus Christ died on the Cross for you so you could escape the penalty of death. And because of your sin, your death would be well deserved. Because Jesus has done so much for you, what are some of the things you are currently doing for Him that you need to do better? Are there things He is asking you to do that you have been unwilling to do? If so, why have you been unwilling? What needs to happen for this to change?
3. Name one thing the Lord has taught you about Himself this Easter season.