

Thinking about Easter – Back to Basics

(Suitable for use within a group over approximately one hour, or for an individual's personal Bible reading)

Thinking about life as a student in healthcare

1. How do your unbelieving classmates think about Easter? How do they think about the events that the Easter holidays commemorate?
2. How do you think about the events that the Easter holidays commemorate?
3. In contrast to some societies in the world, our society recognises Easter. What opportunities can this bring to talk about the Truth of Jesus with your classmates?
Consider how you might use these potential opportunities with your closest non Christian classmate.

What does God have to say?

Read 1 Corinthians 15:1-5.

Much of the Apostle Paul's letter to the Corinthians is written in response to questions they had written to him about (1 Corinthians 7:1). The final and most important question he answers concerns the resurrection of Jesus and the implications this has for all people on earth (Chapter 15 of 1 Corinthians). Paul responds by reaffirming the historical certainty of Jesus' resurrection from death (1 Corinthians 15:4-10), and the guarantee that people in relationship with Him will also be raised from death when He returns (1 Corinthians 15:20-23). Paul explains that the resurrection of people will be physical – in a body that will be imperishable, a body unlike earthly bodies that are so fragile and destined to decay (1 Corinthians 15:49). Paul explains that the resurrection of people (which comes about because of their connection with Jesus by faith), means death will not have victory over them (1 Corinthians 15:54-57). In light of this, Paul indicates the only appropriate response to such an amazing reality:

⁵⁸Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labour in the Lord is not in vain.'

It is within this context that Paul pens the words of 1 Corinthians 15:1-5: a 'bare bones' version of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The historical events recorded in verses 3-5 are what make the realities of resurrection and freedom from death possible. They do this by appeasing the just wrath of God towards sin (yours and mine), thereby liberating the path of righteousness required to access the Life-Giving God.

1. So, why does Paul insist that these things (verses 3-5) are of first importance? (Why are they so important/significant for us?).
To assist you in answering this, think through each of the following:
 - a. Christ died for our sins. What is sin? Why has Paul listed this as something of first importance?
 - b. Christ was buried.
 - c. Christ was raised on the third day.
 - d. Christ appeared to Peter and to the Twelve [disciples].
2. Why does Paul emphasise that Jesus' death and resurrection was 'according to the Scriptures'?

- a. How is this an encouragement to you? To know that God's salvation through Christ was always a part of his plan?
- b. Consider how this foretelling makes God's mode of salvation through Christ different from the mode of salvation offered by Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism. Were their modes of salvation foretold?

Putting it into practice

1. If you think honestly about your own life are these things (mentioned in 1 Corinthians 15:3-5) also of first importance to you? Or do other things take the place of first importance? To answer this question it may be helpful to consider what things commonly take the place of first importance in the 'average' student studying to be a high calibre health care professional. Consider:
 - a. Meeting the expectations of peers;
 - b. Meeting the expectations of family;
 - c. The prospect of earning large amounts of money;
 - d. The prospect of a particular lifestyle;
 - e. Reputation and status before others.
2. As students in healthcare what is our response to the truths revealed in 1 Corinthians 15:1-5 (reflect again on the response Paul sees as fitting in 1 Corinthians 15:58)? To help you get started, think through the following three issues:
 - a. What are some things in your life that make it difficult for you to stand firm?
 - b. What is 'the work of the Lord' in your context?
 - c. How do you know your labour in the Lord is not in vain?

Bible Bites

(Suitable to be completed over approximately 20-25 minutes by a group or an individual)

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What does God have to say?

Read 1 Corinthians 15:1-5,

¹Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. ²By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.

³For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, ⁵and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve.'

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Here in 1 Corinthians, Paul addresses the Corinthian's query regarding the resurrection of Jesus and the implications this has for all people on earth (Chapter 15 of 1 Corinthians). Paul responds by reaffirming the historical certainty of Jesus' resurrection from death (1 Corinthians 15:4-10), and the guarantee that people in relationship with Him will also be raised from death (1 Corinthians 15:20-23). Paul explains that the resurrection of people means death will not have victory over them (1 Corinthians 15:54-57). In light of this, Paul indicates the only appropriate response to such an amazing reality:

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1. So, why does Paul insist that these things (verses 3-5) are of first importance? (Why are they so important/significant for us?). Think through each of the things he lists individually.
2. Why does Paul emphasise that Jesus' death and resurrection was 'according to the Scriptures'?
 - a. How is this an encouragement to you? To know that God's salvation through Christ was always a part of his plan?
 - b. Consider how this foretelling makes God's mode of salvation through Christ different from the mode of salvation offered by Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism. Were their modes of salvation foretold?

Putting it into practice

1. If you think honestly about your own life are these things (mentioned in 1 Corinthians 15:3-5) also of first importance to you? Or do other things take the place of first importance? (Consider 'other things' such as meeting the expectations of peers, meeting the expectations of family, the prospect of earning large amounts of money, the prospect of a particular lifestyle, reputation and status before others.)
2. As students in healthcare what is our response to the truths revealed in 1 Corinthians 15:1-5 (reflect again on the response Paul sees as fitting in 1 Corinthians 15:58)?

To help you get started, think through the following three issues:

 - a. What are some things in your life that make it difficult for you to stand firm?

- b. What is 'the work of the Lord' in your context?
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