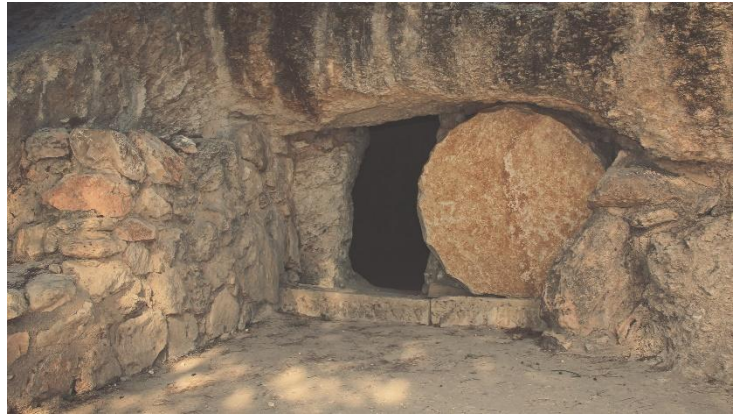
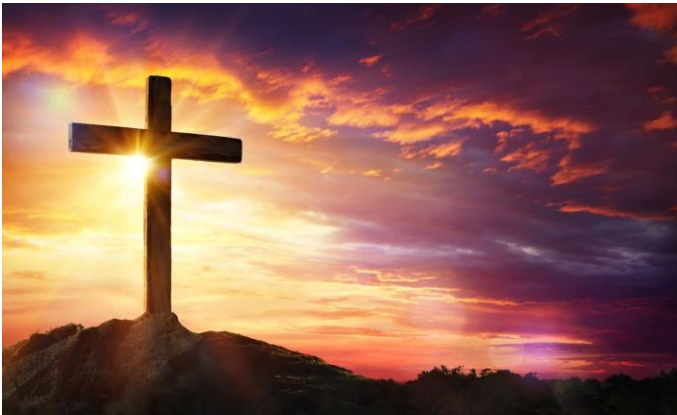


Easter Bible Study 2025



3 studies

Study 1 – Palm Sunday – Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord – Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29 and Luke 19:28-44 - [See also: Matthew 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-10 and John 12:12-19]
(Sermon on 13-April-25)

Before we begin: What sort of Psalm is Psalm 118? When do you think the people of Israel sang this Psalm?

Psalms 113—118 are known as the Hallel Psalms, or simply the Hallel (Hallel means “praise” in Hebrew and is where we get Hallelujah from!). While many psalms praise God, this set of psalms became associated with Passover due the mention of the deliverance from Egypt in Psalm 114. The focus on the exodus is the reason these psalms are also sometimes referred to as the Egyptian Hallel. These psalms were recited at Jewish feasts, especially Passover. Depending upon which tradition was being followed, one or two of the psalms were recited before the meal, and the rest after.

Taken as a group, the Hallel Psalms focus on deliverance, both nationally and individually. It is quite possible that, when Jesus finished the Last Supper and He and His disciples sang a hymn (Mark 14:26), the hymn that they sang was this group of Hallel Psalms. At the Last Supper, Jesus took the Passover meal and infused it with new meaning. The salvation that He promised was not deliverance from physical danger or human bondage but salvation from spiritual bondage and the grave danger of the penalty of sin.

In the conclusion to the great chapter on salvation, Paul in Romans 8:31 asks, “If God is for us, who can be against us?” This may be an allusion to one of the Hallel Psalms: “The Lord is with me; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?” (Psalm 118:6).

The Hallel Psalms were a fitting passage to be included in Passover celebrations and fitting for today’s New Covenant believer to celebrate salvation from the power and the penalty of sin.

Though this was likely David’s psalm, it was also Luther’s psalm. “This is my own beloved psalm. Although the entire Psalter and all of Holy Scripture are dear to me as my only comfort and source of life, I fell in love with this psalm especially. Therefore, I call it my own. When emperors and kings, the wise and the learned, and even saints could not aid me, this psalm proved a friend and helped me out of many great troubles. As a result, it is dearer to me than all the wealth, honor, and power of the pope, the Turk, and the emperor. I would be most unwilling to trade this psalm for all of it.” (Martin Luther, cited by James Montgomery Boice)

Read Psalm 118:1-29

1. Who is the focus of praise in Psalm 118?

As should be expected, the Lord God is the focus of praise in Psalm 118. He is praised for His steadfast love, salvation, protection and triumph over enemies. The psalmist gives thanks for God’s deliverance and declares that it is THE LORD who brings victory.

2. What phrase is repeated in verses 1 to 4 and verse 29? What does the phrase mean?

*“His love endures forever”. In Hebrew the word used for love is **chesed** which means God’s steadfast love – God’s love, mercy, kindness and faithfulness for His creatures. This phrase is saying these attributes of God never fail and **emphasizes that God’s love is unchanging and eternal!***

The word endureth has been properly supplied by the translators, but yet it somewhat restricts the sense, which will be better seen if we read it, ‘for his mercy forever.’ That mercy had no beginning and shall never know an end.” (Spurgeon)

3. In what ways does the psalmist say God has helped in the following verses:

Verses 5 to 7

*Verse 5 = **God heard the psalmist cry** and God helped by bringing the psalmist to **a place of safety** (symbolized by a spacious (open) place)*

*Verse 6 = God helped when the psalmist was afraid; instead, the psalmist had confidence and courage. Because God is with him, **he has no fear of human threat!***

*Verse 7 = God helped the psalmist by **giving victory over his enemies.***

“Thou must learn to cry/call, and not to sit there by thyself, and lie on the bench, hang and shake thy head, and bite and devour thyself with thy thoughts; but come on, thou indolent knave, down upon thy knees, up with thy hands and eyes to heaven, take a Psalm or a prayer, and set forth thy distress with tears before God.” (Luther, cited in Spurgeon)

In a world that is crazy, God is stable and dependable

Verses 8 to 14

*Verse 8 & 9 = **God is a trustworthy refuge; more than any human or powerful ruler** Spurgeon suggested many reasons why this is true.*

- *It is better because it is wiser.*
- *It is better morally, fulfilling the duty of the creature to the Creator.*
- *It is better because it is safer.*
- *It is better in its direction, lifting us up instead of bowing us down.*
- *It is better in its outcome.*

Verses 10 to 12 = Even though the psalmist is surrounded by his enemies; the psalmist prevails, because “in the name of the Lord”, he prevails.

Verse 13 = Even when the psalmist was pushed back and about to fall, the Lord helped him!

*Verse 14 = God is the psalmist source of strength, joy and **ultimate salvation!***

Verses 15 to 18

Verse 15 & 16 = there are songs of victory in the camp because the Lord has done mighty things

Verse 17 & 18 = The psalmist says “I shall not die but live” = the psalmist life has been spared; he has not been given over to death!

Verse 17 was precious to John Wycliffe: “John Wycliffe, the Protestant Reformer, fell sick at one point as the result of his incessant labors for the gospel. The friars heard that their enemy was dying and hastened to his bedside. Surely Wycliffe would be overcome with remorse for his Protestant heresies. Surely he would renounce his views and ask for God’s forgiveness and the friars’ blessing. A crowd of monks representing four major orders of the friars gathered around him. They began by wishing him health, then quickly changed their tune and urged him to make a full confession since he would soon have to give an accounting of himself to God. Wycliffe waited patiently until they had ended. Then, asking his servant to raise him a little so he could speak better, Wycliffe fixed his keen eyes on them and said in a commanding voice, ‘I shall not die but live and proclaim...the evil deeds of the friars.’” (Boice)

Verse 17 was also precious to Martin Luther, who faced threats on his life due to his reformation efforts. “According to Matthesius, Luther had this verse written against his study wall.” (Spurgeon)

4. What picture does the psalmist paint in verses 19 and 20?

The picture painted is the psalmist approaching the gates of a temple and entering into the presence of the Lord Himself. It reflects a desire to come before God with thankfulness after experiencing His saving help. This is no ordinary gate; it is God’s gate and it’s for those who are righteous (i.e., those who right with God and approved by God – through faith in Jesus!) Jesus refers to Himself as the “gate” (John 10:9)

5. Who has become the psalmist salvation in verse 21?

The Lord Himself has become the psalmist’s salvation! This points to Palm Sunday at the coming of that salvation through our Lord Jesus.

6. Who is the “stone” and “cornerstone” in verse 22?

The “stone” the builders rejected has become the “cornerstone” points to our Lord Jesus. Jesus confirms this in Matthew 21:42 and quotes from Psalm 118 - Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures: “The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvellous in our eyes”?”

Jesus is referring to Himself as being this cornerstone. He is like the cornerstone of a building from which all measuring and building is done. In the same way, we are to make Jesus the cornerstone of our lives; and build our lives on Him as the foundation of our life.

7. What has the Lord done in verses 23 and 24?

What the Lord has done is something unexpected and wonderful (v23). He has brought about salvation and victory in a very surprising way; Jesus the 'rejected stone' becomes the 'cornerstone' of salvation! And so, God has given a special day of salvation and victory and deliverance. It's not just any day; a special day. Tied originally to the celebration of Passover and the salvation achieved by God in the Exodus; and also pointing forward to the very first Palm Sunday – the day when Jesus was officially recognized as the promised King and Messiah.

8. What event do verses 25 to 27 refer to?

*Firstly, it refers to the joyful, public celebration of God's salvation as the people join a procession into the Temple to give thanks – as at the time of Passover
Secondly, it proclaims the coming of a King – no ordinary King – but a Saviour King. In verse 25, the people shout 'Lord, save us' = Hosanna – which was shouted to Jesus at Palm Sunday (Matthew 21:9; Mark 11:9; John 12:13). And also verse 26 "Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord" – also shouted to Jesus on Palm Sunday. Verse 27 "with boughs in hand" reminds us of the first Palm Sunday where the people had palms branches (boughs) in their hands!*

9. Why do you think the psalmist can make the statement he makes in verse 28?

The psalmist can declare in verse 28 – "I will praise you" and "you are my God I will exalt you" because of the amazing salvation God has brought about salvation for all people who care to come and believe in His death and resurrection!

*Throughout the entire psalm, the psalmist has **personally experienced God's saving power, presence, and faithfulness.***

- *God heard the psalmist cry (v5)*
- *God rescued and protected the psalmist (vv6-14)*
- *God gave the psalmist new life and purpose (vv17-18)*
- *The psalmist sees God's hand in everything (v23)*

10. **Ponder:** What verse in Psalm 118 encourages you the most?

V6 - The Lord is with me; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?

11. **Ponder:** What things in your life does God deserve praise for?

God deserves praise because:

- *By God's grace and mercy - I was saved at age 33 – and came to believe Jesus is my Lord and Saviour – and that I am forgiven and have eternal life because of Jesus*
- *He saved my life from cancer twice*
- *He gave me a wonderful wife, Heather, and 4 wonderful children and 9 grandchildren*
- *He gave me the privilege of being a Minister and gave me a fantastic church family at Toukley to love and serve – and to be loved by*
- *His faithfulness in hard times*

- *New mercies each day*
- *His unfailing love (a love that endures forever!)*
- *His constant presence in my life*
- *His glorious Word to meditate upon*
- *His Holy Spirit to encourage, guide and enlighten*
- *Forgiveness of my sins*
- *And the certain hope of Heaven*

Read Luke 19:29-44 [if you have time you might want to read and compare parallel passages in Matthew 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-10 and John 12:12-19]

1. Where is Jesus and where do you think He is headed?

Jesus and His disciples are near the town of Bethphage and Bethany, on the Mount of Olives. They are situated in a place that offers a view of Jerusalem, which is just a short distance away. Jesus is on His way to Jerusalem where He will make a triumphant entry; only to be crucified less than a week later.

2. What did Jesus tell His disciples to do in verses 30-31? Why?

*Jesus tells two of His disciples to go into the nearby village (likely Bethphage) and find a colt (a young donkey) **that is tied up and which no one has ever ridden**. They are to untie the colt and bring it to Jesus. If anyone asks why they are untying it, they should say, "The Lord has need of it."*

Why?

- **Which no one has ever ridden:** *F.B. Meyer observed that this is an illustration of how **God requires of us undivided loyalty**; that the seat of authority is for Jesus and Jesus alone. He also noted that Jesus may require of us only one brief service of renown or notice; and if this is His plan, we will find satisfaction in it. The unridden donkey is a symbol of purity and the donkey being "set apart" for divine purposes.*
- *To fulfil prophecy of Zechariah 9:9 - Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. By riding a colt, Jesus is making a **public declaration** that He is the **promised King**, but not a conquering, war-like king. Rather, He is the humble, peaceful King, fulfilling this prophecy and revealing His identity as the Messiah.*
- *Jesus also shows that He has **divine knowledge and authority** by telling the disciples exactly what they will find and how to respond when asked. This **demonstrates His control over the situation and His divine purpose in this moment**.*

3. What kind of animal did Jesus ask for, and why was that important? (verse 30)

*Jesus chooses a **donkey**, a symbol of **peace** (in contrast to a horse or chariot, which were often associated with war), indicating that His **kingdom** is not about earthly conquest, but about bringing peace and salvation.*

4. How did the owners of the colt respond when the disciples took the colt and how did they reply? (verses 33-34)

*The **owners** ask them “Why are you untying it?”. This is a natural question because they see strangers taking their animal.*

The disciples reply, “The Lord needs it.”

*The phrase “**The Lord needs it**” indicates that they recognize that this is a **divinely orchestrated moment** and that Jesus has the authority to take the colt for His own purposes. The fact that the owners are willing to let the colt go at the disciples' simple explanation shows a level of **trust or understanding** that this is not just an ordinary request, but one that has a **divine purpose** behind it.*

5. What did the disciples do with the colt before Jesus sat on it? Why? (verse 35)

*By placing their cloaks on the colt, the disciples were showing that **they recognized Jesus as the Messiah and were willing to serve and honour Him.***

*This act also ties back to the prophecies and traditions of the time, where **kings or important figures were welcomed with such gestures**. It sets the stage for the triumphal entry, where Jesus is declared King—not in the way people expected (as a military conqueror), but as the humble, peaceful Messiah fulfilling God's plan.*

6. How did the crowd react when Jesus entered the city? (verses 36-37)

In verse 36, the crowd spread their cloaks on the road. Something that was done in 2 Kings 9:13 when the people welcomed King Jehu of Israel. Spreading cloaks on the road was a way of welcoming kings and important people – akin to a red carpet today.

In verse 37, the whole crowd joyfully praise God with loud voices.

7. What were the people shouting as Jesus entered Jerusalem? Sound familiar? (verse 38)

The people were shouting “Blessed is the King who comes in the Name of the Lord”. It sounds familiar because it is a direct quote from Psalm 118 verse 26. Here the people are acknowledging Jesus as King and Messiah!

8. **Ponder:** If Jesus were to enter Toukley today, how do you think people would react?

Given the post-Christian society we now live in; Jesus' arrival in Toukley would be a mixed reaction:

- *Those who believe in and follow Jesus – would **welcome Him with joy** – like the “hosannas” of the people of Jerusalem with red carpet and banners/flags and palms!*
- *Some might be amazed*
- *Others curious*

- *Some sceptical and full of doubt*
- *Others in confusion or uncomfortable – their status quo and lives would be interrupted or disturbed and they wouldn't like that*
- *Sadly many [just like in our doorknocking] would reject Him – 'I'm not interested' – 'I'm not religious' – 'I'm good thanks'*

9. In what ways can we welcome Jesus into our lives like the crowd welcomed Him?

In the following ways:

- *With joy and praise – as our Saviour King*
- *By surrendering our hearts and submitting to Him as King of our lives*
- *By believing in ALL his promises*
- *Actively preparing the way for Him in our lives – by removing any distractions and repenting our sins*
- *With humility – just as He humbly rode into Jerusalem on a donkey – we can humble ourselves before Him and be prepared to humbly serve, follow and love as He did (WWJD)*

10. How can we praise Jesus in our daily lives, just as the people did in this passage?

- *By speaking words of thanks in worship and prayer*
- *Living our lives with gratitude – recognizing how God has blessed us in both big and small things*
- *Serving others – whatever we do for others, we do for Jesus*
- *Obedying His words – as Jesus says "if you love me, you will keep my commandments" (John 14:15)*
- *By sharing the Good News of Jesus with others – and not keeping it to ourselves!*

11. Why did the Pharisees tell Jesus to rebuke His disciples in verse 39?

- *They were **angry** at the crowd's praise "Blessed is the King who comes in the Name of the Lord" which was **a messianic declaration**. Because the Pharisees did not accept Jesus as the true Messiah, they **saw the crowd's praise as blasphemous** and as **a direct threat to their religious authority**; their **status was directly threatened**!*
- *The **fear of civil and political unrest** – if Jesus continued to be this popular; this could lead to civil unrest and affect the Jews relationship with the Romans – and the Romans might revoke the religious privileges the Jews enjoyed under Roman occupation*
- *Their religious and political power under threat - The Pharisees were the **religious leaders** of the time, and they were **protective of their influence** over the people. Jesus' teachings often challenged their authority and exposed their **hypocrisy**. His acceptance of the crowd's praises would further undermine their control, and they feared losing their **status and power**.*

- *They misunderstood Jesus' Mission - They were expecting a **military conqueror** who would overthrow the Roman Empire. The way the disciples and the crowd were praising Jesus as the King who would bring peace didn't fit their expectation of a **political ruler**. They thought it was inappropriate or even dangerous for Jesus to be **celebrated in such a way**.*
- *Reluctance to accept Jesus as the Messiah - Deep down, the Pharisees' request for Jesus to rebuke His disciples stemmed from their **refusal to acknowledge** Him as the Messiah. The crowd's public **proclamation of Jesus** as the **King of Israel** was a direct challenge to their **spiritual authority**, and they could not accept this claim.*

12. What Jesus mean by His reply in verse 40?

What Jesus means here is:

- *Jesus' identity and Mission cannot be hidden – even if the people's praise of Jesus was silenced, then creation itself (even the stones) would sing His praises!*
- *Nothing can stop God's plan and Mission for His Son, Jesus, from being proclaimed*
- *Jesus is also acknowledging that the praise He is receiving is appropriate and in line with God's sovereign plan for His life, even if the Pharisees don't accept it!*

13. In verse 41, Jesus wept for the people of Jerusalem. Does verses 42 to 44 help you understand why?

- ***Jesus wept** over Jerusalem because He **grieved deeply** the city's spiritual blindness and its failure to recognize the moment of God's visitation. He saw that the people of Jerusalem were **rejecting the salvation** He offered. He wanted to bring peace to them but the people were blind to it. This spiritual blindness broke Jesus' heart.*
- *Jesus can see into the future – from 33AD to 70AD - Jesus prophesies the **destruction of Jerusalem** in the future, which would come about because the people **rejected Him**.*

14. When did the event described in verses 42 to 44 actually happen?

*This prophecy was fulfilled in **70 AD**, when the Romans destroyed the city and the temple!*

15. Why is Palm Sunday important to you? If at all?

Palm Sunday is important to me because:

- *It confirms Jesus is the Promised Messiah and Suffering Servant King*
- *It reminds me that Jesus deserves constant praise and thanks for being our salvation*
- *It reminds me He is King of Heaven and Earth*
- *It reminds me of His Mission – from Luke 19:10, earlier in the same chapter – “The Son of Man came to seek and save the lost!”*
- *It reminds me of God's Plan from Psalm 118 – that He Himself will become our salvation*
- *It reminds me that Jesus is fully man AND fully God!*
- *It anticipates Good Friday and Easter Sunday!*

What's the **BIG IDEA** of **Luke 19:28-34**

Blessed is the King who comes in the Name of the Lord

OR

Jesus is our salvation



Give a **light globe** moment you experienced in this passage?

The contrast between the crowd's praise and Jesus weeping over Jerusalem!



How does this passage **apply to your life**?

- a. Jesus is MY Lord, MY King and MY Saviour – it has to be personal! Am I allowing Him to be Lord and King of my life or am I usurping Him?
- b. Jesus deserves my constant heartfelt thanks, praise and worship! Am I giving Jesus enough praise?
- c. It prompts me to examine myself for any spiritual blindness on a regular basis? What are my spiritual blind spots? Judgmental? Prideful? Lacking the fruit of the Spirit?
- d. The importance of regular humble repentance and confession.
- e. The realization that many [as in Jerusalem] can miss out on Jesus – gives me the urgency to share the Good News of Jesus

Share the verse that had a special meaning to you in this study?

Psalm 118:6 - The Lord is with me; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?

Psalm 118:17 - I will not die but live and will proclaim what the Lord has done.

Luke 19:38 – Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!

Luke 19:41 - As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it

Finish in prayer: Praising God that His love endures forever and give thanks for King Jesus, our salvation, and the One who came in the Name of the Lord.

Study 2 – Good Friday - “It is Finished” - Psalm 22 and John 18:1-19:42

(Sermon on 18-April-25)

Read Psalm 22

1. What are the first words of this psalm? (verse 1)

The first words are “My God, my God, why are you forsaking me?” quoted by Jesus on the Cross (Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34) – as “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?”

2. How does the psalmist describe his feelings in verses 1-2?

He feels forsaken, abandoned. He feels like God is far away from him and not hearing his cries of anguish.

3. Have you ever felt like God was distant, like in verses 1-2? How did you respond?

Yes, when I was living on my own after my marriage broke up and when my Dad passed away suddenly and when my Mum died after a short illness. At times I responded by withdrawing; but God didn't withdraw from me. I heard His gentle whisper comforting me. At times I pleaded with God in prayer; and forced myself to read His Word, where I got great comfort. One verse that spoke to me was Romans 8:31 – “If God is for us, who can be against us”

4. What does the psalmist remember about God's faithfulness in the past? (verses 3-5)

- *Even in suffering, the psalmist acknowledges God's position and character.*
- *He recalls how his ancestor trusted in God and were delivered*
- *Trusting in God is never wasted – those who trust in God are not put to shame*

It's always good when we are feeling down/low to remind ourselves what God has done in the past!

5. How do the people treat the psalmist? (verses 6-8)

He is despised and rejected, even called a “worm”.
People mock his faith, saying, “Let the Lord rescue him”, ridiculing his trust in God.

6. What does the psalmist remember about God in verses 9 to 11?

God brought him safely from the womb and made him trust from infancy.
He acknowledges that God has been his God from the very beginning.

7. What physical suffering does the psalmist describe? (verses 12-18)

- *Surrounded by enemies like strong bulls and lions.*
- *He feels poured out like water, and his bones are out of joint.*
- *His heart melts like wax, and he's dried up with a parched tongue.*
- *His hands and feet are pierced, and bones are visible.*
- *People stare and gloat and cast lots for his clothing.*

The psalmist is in extreme pain, feeling physically broken, exposed and dehumanized!

8. In what ways does this psalm point to Jesus' crucifixion?

- *Jesus quotes verse 1 on the cross – “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Matthew 27:46).*
- *Verse 5 – The one who trusts in God will not be put to shame. Paul says this about Jesus in Romans 9:33*
- *Verse 6 – despised by people. Jesus predicted in His suffering like this (Matthew 16:21)*
- *Mockery from onlookers – Verses 7–8 describe people mocking the psalmist's trust in God, just like the crowd did to Jesus (Matthew 27:43).*
- *Piercing of hands and feet – Verse 16 says, “They pierce my hands and my feet,” clearly echoing the crucifixion.*
- *Dividing clothes by casting lots – Verse 18 says, “They divide my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment,” which is fulfilled in John 19:23–24.*
- *Physical suffering – The vivid descriptions of exhaustion, bones being out of joint, and extreme thirst (verse 15) mirror Jesus' physical agony on the cross.*

9. How does the psalm change in tone in verses 22-31?

The tone changes from despair to worship!

The psalmist moves from crying out to declaring God's name publicly: “I will declare your name to my people” (v.22).

He invites others to praise and revere God, especially those who are suffering.

He celebrates that God has not ignored his pain but has heard his cry (v.24).

The focus broadens to include the whole world—even future generations will hear of what God has done (v.27–31).

10. Why do you think Jesus quoted verse 1 while on the cross? (See Matthew 27:46)

There are few reasons:

To express real anguish – *Jesus was fully human, and in that moment, He felt the weight of sin, separation, and suffering. This cry shows the depth of His pain.*

To fulfill Scripture – *By quoting Psalm 22, Jesus points to a prophecy being fulfilled. So many details in the psalm (mocking, pierced hands and feet, casting lots for His clothes) align with His crucifixion.*

To point to the whole psalm – *Though verse 1 begins in despair, the psalm ends in hope and victory. Jesus may have been signaling to those who knew the Scriptures that, even in suffering, God's plan would be fulfilled and redemption was coming.*

To identify with human suffering – *Jesus used the words of David to show that He understands abandonment and pain. He entered fully into human experience.*

If anyone understands human suffering, Jesus does! That is why He understands our prayers!

11. What does this psalm teach about trusting God when we go through tough times?

Psalm 22 teaches that even in the darkest, most painful moments of our lives, we can still cry out to God honestly and trust His faithfulness. Though Psalm 22 begins with feelings of

abandonment, it ends in hope, praise, and confidence that God hears, rescues, and will be worshipped by future generations.

12. What part of psalm 22 encourages you the most?

V24 – “For he has not despised or scorned the suffering of the afflicted one; he has not hidden his face from him but has listened to his cry for help”

This tells me that God will listen to our cries for help in those darkest moments!

V31 – “They will proclaim his righteousness, declaring to a people yet unborn:

He has done it!” This verse tells me that future generations will always declare what God did in sending His Son to the cross; and the last words “He has done it” and similar to Jesus’ last words “It is finished!”

God has been worth us from the time we were in our mother’s womb (see verses 9-10)

Whatever is going on – God is sovereign (see verses 27-28)

Read John 18:1-14

13. How does Judas know where to find Jesus? Who does Judas bring with him?

Jesus often went to the garden (Gethsemane) with His disciples (v.2), and Judas had been with Him many times before. It was a familiar meeting place.

*Judas brings with him: **A detachment of soldiers** (likely Roman troops), **Some officials from the chief priests and Pharisees**. They came **armed with torches, lanterns, and weapons** (v.3).*

14. In verses 5 & 6 Jesus literally (in the original language) says “I am”. Where else has He said that?

These phrase I AM (Greek: ego eimi) echoes Exodus 3:14 when God says “I AM WHO I AM”. Jesus uses this I AM statement several times:

- *John 6:35 – “I am the bread of life.”*
- *John 8:12 – “I am the light of the world.”*
- *John 8:58 – “Before Abraham was born, I am!” (This one especially made the religious leaders angry because He was clearly claiming divinity.)*
- *John 10:9 – “I am the gate, whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come and go out, and find pasture”*
- *John 10:11 – “I am the good shepherd.”*
- *John 11:25 – “I am the resurrection and the life.”*
- *John 14:6 – “I am the way and the truth and the life.”*
- *John 15:1 – “I am the true vine.”*

15. Why do you think those approaching Jesus, drew back at the end of verse 6?

By Jesus using “I AM” and His persona/aura, Jesus revealed His identity and at that moment His power and authority were so overwhelming even His enemies could not stand before Him! It was a glimpse of His true glory; even though he was being arrested.

16. Why does Jesus go with them willingly?

Jesus goes willingly because He must do the Father’s will. By Him going willingly, He confirms what He said in John 10:18 – “No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father”

17. How does Jesus deal with Peter’s impulsiveness?

Jesus remains calm and tells Peter to put his sword away. Jesus reminds Peter that this particular moment is all part of God’s plan and that violence is not the way Jesus’ mission and salvation will be achieved. Jesus chose obedience rather than resistance.

18. What does Jesus mean in verse 11 “Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me”?

Jesus is referring to the “cup” of the Father’s anger and judgment on sin. Jesus is saying God the Father’s anger and judgment on sin will be put on Him. No wonder He cried “Why have you forsaken Me!”.

In the Old Testament “cup” often symbolizes God’s wrath or will or judgment or suffering. All of which apply to Jesus in this case.

Isaiah 51:17 - “You who have drunk from the hand of the Lord the cup of his wrath...”

*The cup is associated with **God’s judgment**.*

*Jeremiah 25:16-17 - “This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, said to me: ‘Take from my hand this cup filled with the wine of my wrath and make all the nations to whom I send you drink it. When they drink it, they will stagger and go mad because of the sword I will send among them.’” God’s wrath is pictured as something that must be “drunk” by the nations—a symbol of **inescapable judgment**.*

*Psalms 75:8 - “In the hand of the Lord is a cup full of foaming wine mixed with spices; he pours it out, and all the wicked of the earth drink it down to its very dregs.” A powerful image of **God’s final and total judgment** on the wicked.*

Read John 18:15-18; 25-27

19. Why do you think Peter denied knowing Jesus? (cf. John 13:38)

Peter denied knowing Jesus out of fear—fear of being arrested, harmed, or even killed.

In John 13:38, Jesus had already predicted this moment: “Will you really lay down your life for me? Very truly I tell you, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times!”

Even though Peter had boldly promised to follow Jesus to the death, in the pressure of the moment—surrounded by soldiers and questioned by strangers—his courage crumbled. He was overwhelmed, scared, and unprepared for the cost of standing with Jesus.

It shows that even the most devoted followers can stumble under pressure—but also reminds us that Jesus knew it would happen and still loved Peter.

20. Reflection: How do you think you would have gone in Peter's situation? (cf. Matthew 26:41b)

Honestly, like Peter, I might have struggled too. It's easy to be bold when things are safe, but in a moment of fear, confusion, or danger—faith can be tested in ways we don't expect. Jesus' words in Matthew 26:41b ring true: "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

I might have wanted to stand strong for Jesus, but my human weakness—fear of rejection, suffering, or shame—could have led me to hesitate or deny too. Peter's story reminds me that failure doesn't have to be the end. Jesus restores him later (John 21), showing that grace is greater than weakness.

Read John 18:19-24

21. How does Jesus handle His interrogation here? (cf. John 7:26; Matthew 5:39)

Jesus handles His interrogation with calm confidence and integrity.

He doesn't get defensive or afraid.

He answers honestly, pointing out that He has spoken openly to the world, and nothing was done in secret (v.20).

Jesus wants them to own their unfair treatment and their sin!

He challenges the unfairness of being struck, saying, "If I said something wrong, testify as to what is wrong. But if I spoke the truth, why did you strike me?" (v.23)

This aligns with: John 7:26 – People had noticed Jesus always spoke boldly and without fear. And Matthew 5:39 – "If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also." Jesus models this—He doesn't retaliate, but He stands in truth without violence.

Read John 18:28-40

22. Where did the Jewish leaders take Jesus?

*In John 18:28, the Jewish leaders take Jesus to the Roman governor's headquarters, also known as the **praetorium**. They brought Him there because they were not allowed to execute anyone under Roman law, so they needed Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, to carry out the sentencing.*

23. Why didn't the Jewish leaders enter the Palace? Where's the hypocrisy in this?

*The Jewish leaders didn't enter the **praetorium (Palace)** because they wanted to avoid **ceremonial defilement**. According to Jewish law, contact with a Gentile, especially in a place like the Roman governor's palace, could make them **unclean** and thus unfit to participate in the **Passover celebration** (see **John 18:28**).*

*This reveals a deep **hypocrisy**:*

- **They were concerned about ceremonial purity but unconcerned about the moral purity of their actions in condemning an innocent man (Jesus).**
- **They were willing to violate the core of God's law by orchestrating an unjust trial and seeking Jesus' execution, yet they held to minor ritual rules like avoiding entering the palace.**

It shows how they were focused on external, superficial purity while ignoring the deeper, more important matters of justice, truth, and righteousness.

24. What does Pilate say the Jewish leaders should do in verse 31? On what grounds do they refuse?

Pilate tells the Jewish leaders: "Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law."

Pilate is essentially telling them that they have the authority to handle the situation under their own religious law, and they don't need Roman involvement.

However, the Jewish leaders refuse because:

- They wanted Jesus dead, but under Roman law, they couldn't execute anyone (only the Roman authorities had the right to carry out capital punishment).*
- They were hoping to have Pilate condemn Jesus to death on charges that would appeal to Roman authority, specifically making Jesus appear as a political threat (a king opposing Caesar).*

Their refusal reveals their manipulative intentions—they wanted to ensure Jesus was executed but were using the system to avoid getting their hands "dirty" in carrying out the sentence themselves.

25. What's so impressive about Jesus' answers in verses 34, 36 and 37?

Verse 34: When Pilate asks if He is the King of the Jews, Jesus doesn't give a simple yes or no. Instead, He asks Pilate if he's asking out of his own curiosity or because of what others have said (i.e., "Is that your own idea, or did others talk to you about me?"). This demonstrates that Jesus is in control of the conversation and forces Pilate to reflect on his own motives.

Verse 36: When Pilate asks if Jesus is a king, Jesus replies: "My kingdom is not of this world." This answer is profound because it redirects the focus away from worldly power and political authority. Jesus isn't claiming a political throne; He's speaking of a spiritual kingdom, one that transcends earthly rulers.

Verse 37: When Pilate asks, "So you are a king?" Jesus responds: "You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth." Jesus defines His kingship as one rooted in truth, and He emphasizes that His purpose is not to overthrow earthly rulers, but to bear witness to the truth of God. This is the true power of His mission—not political dominance, but spiritual authority in the truth.

26. How does Jesus define truth?

Remember John 1:14 – Jesus is the WORD made FLESH.

Jesus says He is the TRUTH - Everyone on the side of truth listens to me (V37).

So, if Jesus is God's WORD and He is the TRUTH – then truth by definition is God's Word.

He says the same thing in John 14:6 "I am the way, the TRUTH and the Life"

27. What custom does Pilate introduce and what is the Jews' response? Why?

Pilate introduces the custom of releasing a prisoner to the Jewish people at Passover. He offers to release Jesus (whom he finds no fault in) to them, asking if they want him to release the "King of the Jews."

However, the Jewish leaders respond by demanding the release of Barabbas, a notorious criminal, instead of Jesus.

The reason they choose Barabbas over Jesus is that they were blinded by their own expectations and desires. They saw Jesus as a threat to their religious authority and political stability—they did not recognize Him as the Messiah. Instead, they were willing to choose a violent criminal over someone who had brought healing, peace, and truth because they wanted a ruler who would fit their vision of a powerful, earthly king. Their rejection of Jesus reveals the depth of their hardness of heart and rejection of God's plan.

Read John 19:1-16

28. What is Pilate hoping to achieve in verses 1 to 6? What is the response of the chief priests and officials?

In John 19:1-6, Pilate is hoping to achieve a few things:

Avoiding a death sentence for Jesus – *Pilate is trying to placate the Jewish leaders and the crowd without condemning Jesus to death. After having Jesus scourged (whipped), he presents Jesus to the crowd, hoping that the physical suffering will satisfy them and they'll be willing to let Jesus go. His hope is that Jesus' suffering will be enough to appease the religious leaders and prevent an escalation of the situation.*

Demonstrating Jesus' innocence – *Pilate says in verse 4: "I find no basis for a charge against him." Pilate repeatedly tries to show that Jesus is innocent, and that there is no reason for Him to be condemned.*

The response of the chief priests and officials is:

They demand Jesus' crucifixion with an unwavering resolve. Despite Pilate's effort to show Jesus' innocence and reduce the punishment, they cry out in verse 6: "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

Their demand for crucifixion shows that they are determined to see Jesus condemned, no matter Pilate's efforts to avoid it. They want Him executed, believing it is the only way to rid themselves of the threat Jesus represents to their power and authority.

This interaction reveals how the religious leaders were willing to push for a cruel and unjust punishment, even when Pilate tried to deflect their demands.

29. What charge do the Jewish leaders make in verse 7?

The Jewish leaders charge is that Jesus' claim to be the Son of God is blasphemy and according to the Jewish Law, He must die (Leviticus 24:16)

30. What does Jesus say about Pilate's power in verse 11?

Jesus says "You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above. Therefore, the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin." Although Pilate will condemn Jesus to be crucified, Jesus is saying the Jewish leaders are guilty of the greater sin!

31. What dilemma does Pilate have according to verse 12?

*Pilate is **caught between two opposing forces**:*

1. **His desire to release Jesus** – Pilate knows Jesus is innocent, and he has already stated that he finds no basis for a charge against Him (John 18:38). Pilate wants to avoid condemning an innocent man.
2. **Pressure from the Jewish leaders** – The chief priests and officials use **political pressure** to force Pilate's hand. They accuse Pilate of not being loyal to Caesar, implying that if Pilate doesn't act against a man who claims kingship (Jesus), he could be seen as a **traitor to Rome**. This is a **serious charge** that could endanger Pilate's position and his standing with the Roman Empire.

32. What's ironic about Pilate passing judgment on Jesus?

*Jesus is the true Judge, but He is judged – Pilate, a Roman governor, is in a position of power, yet he is the one who must **pass judgment on Jesus**, the true King and Judge of the world. The irony is that **Jesus, who will one day judge all nations** (Matthew 25:31-32), is now being judged by a mere earthly ruler.*

Pilate declares Jesus innocent but still condemns Him!

Pilate holds power, but Jesus is in control!

Pilate represents the Roman rule/authority and has the title to go with it – but He is blinded to the greater truth – and blinded to the fact that Jesus is the ultimate truth!

33. What's wrong with the chief priests' statement in verse 15?

They too are blaspheming!

God is their King and in their statement that they have no king but Caesar, they are rejected God as their King! They are hypocrites.

They are also going against God's plan and authority!

Read John 19:17-27

34. What's the purpose of Jesus' carrying his own cross?

- *Fulfilling prophecy as the suffering servant (Isaiah 53:3-4)*
- *Relating to human suffering*
- *Demonstrating His sacrificial service and pointing to us as His followers to carry our cross too (Matthew 16:24)*
- *It was also a Roman custom, as a way of deterring others from breaking the law when they saw condemned criminals carry their cross to their own crucifixion*

35. What did Pilate have written on the notice fastened to the cross? Why?

"Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews."

*The notice is written in **Hebrew, Latin, and Greek** so that it can be understood by the Jewish people, the Roman authorities, and the Greek-speaking population.*

Although Pilate might have written the inscription with a tone of mockery or sarcasm – unknowingly he was proclaiming the truth; Jesus is the King of Heaven and Earth!

36. Why did the chief priests and Jews complain about the wording of the notice?

- Because they did not believe Jesus was/is their King*
- Because they were afraid that if Jesus was declared King it would stir up political unrest and challenge Roman authority and they might lose their special worship privileges.*

c. What scripture is fulfilled in relation to Jesus' clothes?

This event fulfills the prophecy found in Psalm 22:18, which says: "They divide my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment."

37. What does Jesus do in verses 25-27? Why?

Jesus ensures that His mother, Mary, is cared for. He entrusts Mary to John; and John to Mary. This also fulfils Jesus idea of what a spiritual family is - "Who are my mother and my brothers?" he asked. Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother." (Mark 3:33-35)

Note: John is the only disciple who was not martyred; It would have been pointless to get one other disciples to look after Mary. Jesus foreknew this!

Read John 19:28-37

38. What does Jesus mean by the words "It is finished" (Luke 12:50; John 4:34; John 17:4 and Psalm 22:31)

*He is declaring that His **mission is complete**—the work the Father gave Him to do has been fully accomplished.*

Luke 12:50 - “But I have a baptism to undergo, and what constraint I am under until it is completed!”

Here, Jesus refers to His **suffering and death** as a kind of baptism—something He must go through. “It is finished” means that this baptism—His **suffering for sin**—has now been completed.

John 4:34 - My food,” said Jesus, “is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. This shows that Jesus’ whole purpose was to **do the Father’s will**—to teach, heal, love, and ultimately to **sacrifice Himself for our salvation**.

John 17:4 - “I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do.” In His prayer before the cross, Jesus says He has **glorified the Father** by completing the mission—teaching the truth, making God known, and preparing His followers.

39. What problem is there with leaving Jesus’ body on the cross?

It violated Jewish Law. See Deuteronomy 21:22-23 - “If someone guilty of a capital offense is put to death and their body is exposed on a pole, you must not leave the body hanging on the pole overnight. Be sure to bury it that same day, because anyone who is hung on a pole is under God’s curse.”

John 19:31 explains that the day following Jesus’ death was a **special Sabbath (Passover week)**, making it even more urgent for the bodies to be removed and buried.

Allowing the bodies to remain on the crosses would have been seen as **ritually unclean**, especially during one of the most **sacred festivals** of the Jewish calendar.

In Jewish tradition, **proper burial** was a sacred duty and a sign of respect. Leaving a body on a cross was not only shameful but **dishonoring** to the person and their family.

40. Why don’t the Romans have to break Jesus’ legs?

Breaking the legs (called **crurifragium**) was a common Roman practice during crucifixion to **speed up death**. It made it impossible for the person to push up to breathe, leading to **suffocation**. But Jesus was already dead!

This fulfilled prophecy Exodus 12:46; Numbers 9:12 which say that **no bones of the Passover lamb** are to be broken. Jesus, as the **true Passover Lamb** (1 Corinthians 5:7), dies without a bone being broken.

In **John 10:18**, Jesus says: “No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord.”

His early death, compared to the others, shows **He chose the moment** to surrender His spirit—it wasn’t taken from Him”

Since they didn’t break His legs, one soldier **pierced His side with a spear** (John 19:34), which fulfills **Zechariah 12:10**: “They will look on the one they have pierced.”

41. What evidence are we presented with that Jesus is dead? What scripture is fulfilled?

The soldiers do not break His legs “But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs.” (John 19:33)

– This confirms He had already **stopped breathing**, unlike the two others crucified with Him.

Jesus had already “given up His spirit” “Jesus said, ‘It is finished.’ With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.” (John 19:30) – Jesus **chose the moment of His death**, fulfilling His earlier statement in **John 10:18**.

A soldier pierces His side “Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus’ side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water.” (John 19:34) – The flow of **blood and water** is a medical sign that death had already occurred (many believe it points to the rupture of the heart or separation of fluids after death)

Eyewitness testimony confirms it “The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may believe.” (John 19:35) – John himself, as an **eyewitness**, affirms that Jesus truly died.

Read John 19:38-42

42. What do Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus have in common?

They were both secret followers of Jesus (John 19:38 and John 3:1-2)

They were both members of the Jewish Ruling Council – The Sanhedrin.

They both took steps of faith: Joseph asked Pilate for Jesus’ body – a courageous public act; and Nicodemus brought a large amount of expensive burial spices showing his devotion and reverence.

43. What did they do with Jesus’ body? Why?

They took Jesus’ body down from the cross; they wrapped His body in linen with spices. They laid Him in the tomb.

*They placed His body in a **new, unused tomb** that Joseph owned, located in a garden near the crucifixion site (John 19:41). – Because it was **the Jewish Day of Preparation** and the **Sabbath was approaching**, they needed to bury Him quickly (John 19:42).*

Note: With this amount of spices; it was a Royal burial – fit for a King!

44. What prophecy is fulfilled?

*Jesus’ burial fulfils prophecy of Isaiah 53:9 - “**He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth.**”*

What’s the **BIG IDEA** of John 19:16-42?

He had to die to fulfil the Father’s will and so our sin was paid for!

OR

Obedient to God until the very end!

OR

It is Finished!

OR

Though betrayed, rejected, and crucified, Jesus remains in complete control, fulfilling prophecy and offering Himself as the sacrificial Lamb to bring salvation to the world.

OR

These chapters show Jesus' courage, obedience, and purpose through His arrest, trial, crucifixion, and burial—not as a victim, but as the Savior fulfilling the Father's will.



Give a **light globe** moment you experienced in this passage?

- *Jesus' received a Royal burial!*
- *Hypocrisy of the Jews!*



How does this passage **apply to your life**?

- a. **Trust in God's sovereignty** – even in the chaos of our lives or the dark valleys we go through – Jesus is fully in control
- b. **Follow Jesus with courage** - We are called to follow Jesus openly, boldly and courageously, even when it is risky or unpopular or counter-cultural – like Joseph and Nicodemus did – and Peter (eventually) did
- c. **Take sin seriously** – Jesus suffered and died for our sin – not His, but ours. We shouldn't treat sin lightly. It cost Jesus His life, and that should lead us to repentance and gratitude.
- d. **Stand for the Truth, like Jesus did.** We're called to speak and live the truth with grace and courage, even in the face of opposition.
- e. Jesus' words "It is finished" remind us that the work of salvation is complete. **We don't have to earn God's love—we live from a place of grace and freedom, not fear or striving**
- f. **Become more like Jesus – model Jesus for the world to see Jesus in us!**

Share the verse that had a special meaning to you in this study?

John 19:30 - "When he had received the drink, Jesus said, 'It is finished.' With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit."

Finish in prayer: Thanking Jesus for always obeying the Father's will and laying down His life for the sin of the world. Confess our sin (past, present and future) that was placed on Jesus.

Study 3 – Easter Sunday – Victory over death – 1 Corinthians 15:1-58

(Sermon on 20-April-25)

Before we begin: What happens when we die?

CHAPTER 32 - Of the State of Man After Death, and of the Resurrection of the Dead

I. The bodies of men, after death, return to dust, and see corruption; but their souls (which neither die nor sleep), having an immortal subsistence, immediately return to God who gave them. [ref 1] The souls of the righteous, being then made perfect in holiness, are received into the highest heavens, where they behold the face of God in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies; [ref 2] and the souls of the wicked are cast into hell, where they remain in torments and utter darkness, reserved to the judgment of the great day [ref 3]. Besides these two places for souls separated from their bodies, the Scripture acknowledgeth none.

II. At the last day, such as are found alive shall not die, but be changed: [ref 4] and all the dead shall be raised up with the self-same bodies, and none other, although with different qualities, which shall be united again to their souls forever. [ref 5]

III. The bodies of the unjust shall, by the power of Christ, be raised to dishonour; the bodies of the just, by his Spirit, unto honour, and be made conformable to his own glorious body. [ref 6]

Ref 1 - LUK 23:43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, to day shalt thou be with me in paradise. ECC 12:7 Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

Ref 2 - HEB 12:23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect. 2CO 5:1 For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 6 Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. 8 We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. PHI 1:23 For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better. ACT 3:21 Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. EPH 4:10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.

Ref 3 - LUK 16:23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. ACT 1:25 That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from

which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place. JUD 6 And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. 7 Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. 1PE 3:19 By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison.

Ref 4 - *1TH 4:17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so, shall we ever be with the Lord. 1CO 15:51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed*

Ref 5 - *JOB 19:26 And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: 27 Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me. 1CO 15:42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: 43 It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: 44 It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.*

Ref 6 - *ACT 24:15 And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. JOH 5:28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, 29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. 1CO 15:43 It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. PHI 3:21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*

Read 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

1. What problem does Paul address in these verses?

There seems there might be some doubt that Jesus rose from the dead – since in v1 he reminds them of the Gospel he preached and he says ‘unless you believed in vain’

2. Why would Paul take them back to the Gospel (verse 1)?

The Gospel is fundamental to our faith. Without the Gospel we don't have forgiveness or eternal life.

3. What did Paul do with the Gospel?

He preached it as the truth – v1

Delivered it to the Corinthians as of first importance – v3

4. What did they do with it?

V1 – received it and they stand upon it. Unless they believed in vain?

5. What does the Gospel do (verse 2)?

Saves people [from sin and death and Hell]

6. What does this tell us about the Gospel?

It's lifesaving and life transforming.

7. What significance is there in the fact that Jesus was buried?

This means he was actually dead – not just wounded or passed out

8. To whom did Jesus appear (verses 5-7 and Acts 1:3-5), and why is this important?

To Cephas (Peter) – the Apostles; 500 brothers (most still alive); then James (Jesus' brother) and to Paul – over a period of 40 days (Acts 1:3)

It's importance because we have eye-witnesses to Jesus' resurrection.

Unlikely that many people could be in collusion.

In our courts today – we don't need that many witnesses to prove a case.

Read 1 Corinthians 15:12-19

9. In verses 12-19, what is the implication of saying there's no resurrection of the dead

If Christ is not risen – then there's no resurrection for anyone else.

Preaching is useless – back then and now.

Our faith is useless/futile.

People like Paul have been false witnesses – i.e. telling lies.

The people who have fallen asleep (already died) are lost – they haven't gone to Heaven.

Our hope is only in this life – there is nothing beyond our death.

It calls into question the truth of the whole Bible.

10. **Discuss in your group:** What are some of the **alternatives** to resurrection, and how should we respond to them?

Here's some:

a. Jesus' body stolen – it would be in the best interest of Jewish leaders and officials to produce his body.

b. Jesus wasn't really dead – just fainted (swoon theory) – but no one could survive a Roman crucifixion

c. The women and disciples lied about Jesus' resurrection – impossible for that many people to collude. Why would so many people be prepared to die for a lie.

Read 1 Corinthians 15:20-28

11. What does it mean that Jesus is the firstfruits (verse 20) (cf. Lev 23:9-14)?

Just like in the OT harvest festival – the priest the first sheaf of grain of the harvest to the Lord – which assured the Jews of God’s blessing on the whole harvest. In the same way, Jesus’ resurrection, as the firstfruits, assures our own resurrection one day.

12. What do Adam and Christ have in common?

Both men. Jesus was fully man as well as fully God.

13. What’s different about them?

Adam causes all of us to die. Jesus makes us alive.

Adam sinned. Jesus didn’t (he took our sin upon Himself – even though perfect and without sin)

14. What will Jesus do at the end (verses 24 to 28)?

Hands over kingdom to the Father – after destroying Satan’s power.

Puts all enemies under his feet – including death.

15. What is Jesus doing in the world today? (verse 25)

Reigning until all enemies are defeated once and for all.

16. Why is it important for death to be destroyed? (cf. Gen 2:17; 3:19; Rom 5:12; Rom 6:23)

Genesis 2:17 – eating the forbidden fruit brings death

Genesis 3:19 – man formed from dust and will return to dust

Romans 5:12 – Sin entered the world through Adam and because of that, death came to all people.

Romans 6:23 – Wages of sin is death – BUT – the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

It is important that death is destroyed because that was not God’s plan for humankind.

Humankind was designed to live and enjoy God forever. However, because of Adam and Eve’s sin – sin and death came into the world for everyone.

But God had a plan to fix this brokenness by sending Jesus to fix the punishment of sin and fix the problem of people dying; so that they can spend eternity with God. This can’t happen unless, death is destroyed.

Read 1 Corinthians 15:29-34

17. What does Paul mean when he speaks of baptism of the dead (verse 29)?

It seems like there was a superstitious custom, where some people had died before they had ever been baptized. Paul is not necessarily condoning this practice but saying, why would there been such a practice of baptism of dead people – if resurrection doesn’t exist?

18. Why does Paul speak of suffering in verses 30 to 32?

Paul’s point is why would he suffer in his work in spreading the Good News of Jesus’ death and resurrection; if it’s not true? He would be crazy to do that for a complete falsehood.

19. Think it through: How does the average Aussie think they're getting to Heaven?

Aussie thinking might include:

- a. *I'll get to Heaven by being "good".*
- b. *"Everyone goes to Heaven" and "Hell doesn't exist".*
- c. *God wouldn't let people go to Hell, would he?*
- d. *No such place – this life is all there is – just enjoy it while you can.*

20. Does verse 32 undermine this thinking?

V32 – is saying, why would Paul fight off wild beasts in Ephesus if our hopes were just on Earth and not in Heaven; then the attitude would be party until we die.

21. How can we use 'the resurrection' evangelistically?

- a. *At funerals.*
- b. *Ask people what they think happens when they die.*
- c. *There is a better place than Earth – where there are no more tears, or pain or suffering or death.*

22. How should our theology of resurrection impact our lives today?

We are not just thinking about this life on Earth.

We are thinking about the eternity for ourselves and for others.

Our attitude should be – Jesus' is coming back one day – our job is to spread the Gospel so everyone hears about it, so they don't miss out.

Read 1 Corinthians 15:35-41

23. What two issues does Paul address in verse 35; and how might they relate to the first part of the chapter?

- a. *How are the dead raised?*
- b. *What kind of body?*

It relates to the first part of the chapter in that Jesus appeared to be fully functional in his resurrected body; what will it be like for us?

24. What analogies does Paul use, in verses 36-41; what's Paul's point here?

- a. *Analogy one - We have to die – like a dead seed which is planted and comes to life. This is a picture of our dead body going into the ground and they rising again.*
- b. *Analogy two – people, animals, birds and fish have different types of bodies; so, do we*
- c. *Analogy three – earthly and heavenly bodies are different. Even sun, moon and planets are all different.*

Paul's point – our new body will be suitable for Heaven – not for this Earth.

Also, we will all be different.

Read 1 Corinthians 15:42-44

25. How will our resurrected bodies compare with our present bodies?

- a. *Present body is perishable – resurrected body is imperishable*
- b. *Present body is dishonoured (because sinful) – resurrected body is glorious*
- c. *Present body is weak – resurrected body is raised in power*
- d. *Present body is natural (physical) – resurrected body is spiritual*

Read 1 Corinthians 15:44-50

26. Which body came first?

The natural (physical) body came first; then the spiritual

27. How do Adam and Christ differ, and how are they the same?

Adam came from the dust of the Earth

Jesus came from Heaven

Adam a living being

Jesus a life-giving spirit

Both in God's image.

28. What point is Paul making with the "Adam – Christ" comparison? (cf. v50)

The earthly body (flesh and blood) cannot inherit the Kingdom of God because it is perishable. Therefore, resurrected body will be imperishable so it can be in eternity in Heaven

Read 1 Corinthians 15:51-54

29. What is the mystery, and when will it happen?

Mystery is we will not all sleep (die) – because Jesus will return one day – and those who are still alive won't die.

However, mystery is also that we will all be changed (into imperishable bodies)

When? When Jesus returns!

30. What will have happened when we are resurrected?

The dead will be raised with imperishable (never-dying) bodies.

We will all be changed – ready for Heaven.

We will become immortal.

Death will be swallowed up in victory – because of Jesus' death and resurrection.

Read 1 Corinthians 15:55-58

31. What victory is described?

Victory over sin – sin's punishment (death) is gone.

Victory over the law – which has the power to identify our sin.

Victory over death.

All, only possible, because of Jesus.

32. What 3 commands does Paul give in verse 58?

1. *Stand firm.*
2. *Let nothing move you.*
3. *Give ourselves to the work of the Lord (=Gospel = Great Commission) because our labour for the Lord is not in vain.*

33. What is our motivation to obey these commands?

- a. *We are working for the Lord*
- b. *We don't want anyone to perish and miss out on Heaven*

34. **Think it through:** What is our labour in the Lord, and why isn't our labour in the Lord in vain?

Telling people, the Good News of Jesus.

Not in vain because God wants us to bear fruit – fruit that lasts.

Luke 15:10 – "In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

35. Do you believe: a) Jesus was resurrected from the dead; and b) you will be resurrected?

- a) *Yes*
- b) *Yes*

36. How should this impact our work for the Gospel?

There should be an urgency and a compassion to help those who are lost from God – to become believers in Jesus, our Lord and Saviour.

What's the **BIG IDEA** of 1 Corinthians 15:1-58?

Christ is raised from the dead – and we can be confident will be too. IF we believe in Jesus' death and resurrection.

Give a **light globe** moment you experienced in this passage?



How does this passage **apply to your life**?

- a. *We have a certain hope of Heaven, which should help us to continue our labour on Earth – even though this life on Earth is difficult.*
- b. *We have a purpose (a job) to do for the Lord – in sharing the Gospel.*

Share the verse that had a special meaning to you in this study?

V20

V51

V58

Finish in prayer: Thanking God for Jesus' resurrection and His victory over sin and death.
Thank God for our certain hope of our own resurrection.