

LOVING JESUS, LOVING PEOPLE, PLOWING A COUNTER-CULTURE

[Spring Season: April 12 – June 14 | Fall Season: September 27 – December 6]

LEADER DETAILS

- **MAIN TEXT:** I Cor. 15:12-34 (supporting texts - 2 Cor. 11:24-27; Acts 2:24; Rom. 10:9)
- **MAIN IDEA:** If Jesus is truly risen, it should change everything about how we live!
- **GROWTH FOCUS:** Help your group grow in transparency by modeling it at some point in the discussion.
- **ICEBREAKER:** What was one highlight for you this Easter?

ANNOUNCEMENTS (Full details at: emergence.church/digital-bulletin)

- **Totowa is in the Temporary Auditorium!** - Be sure to pray that God does even more than we ask or imagine in this new space! **Keep updated on changes here:** <https://emergence.church/totowa-updates>
- **Spring Community Season** - Week of April 12 through the week of June 14th! Obviously, y'all know about it, BUT it's a great time to invite a friend to jump in. After this season, we go on break until late September. Getting people connected now can help them stay connected to the church body as we head into the Summer.

GETTING STARTED:

- **Pray:** This helps everyone to prepare their head and hearts as you head to the discussion
- **Watch Community Extras Video** (length 2:17 – questions from video are included below)

LAST WEEK'S GROWTH STEP FOLLOW-UP:

- Since we were on break, we will resume with this next week once we have some :)

SERMON DISCUSSION

Prioritize meaningful conversation over getting through every question.

I Corinthians: A letter

[Leaders: I included this section because depending on where your group is at, you might find this applicable. It's more of a teaching section, then application/discussion, but I wanted to offer it if you think it fits your group. Feel free to just move on to the next section if not!]

Pastor Tyler began by reminding us that I Corinthians is a letter written by the Apostle Paul to the church in and around the city of Corinth. A letter (or epistle) is a genre of writing in the Bible. Here are a few important notes when interpreting and applying these types of books in the Bible:

They are *occasional* - These letters were written to specific people for a specific purpose.

They are *logical* - Each verse isn't put there in isolation, but follows a logical flow. Words and phrases like "therefore", "So then", "Now, I want you to know", etc. help to understand the main point of the verses as the author intended.

They are (most often) *Communal* - We should read these letters not as written privately to an individual, but read out loud to the whole community.

- How does reading with those principles in mind change the way you engage with books like I Corinthians?

The Resurrection Changes Everything

Read I Corinthians 15:12-19

Paul addresses a major issue in the Corinthian church of some people claiming there is no resurrection of the dead. As Pastor Tyler shared, this isn't a small matter. If the resurrection isn't real, then Jesus hasn't been raised, our faith is empty, and we are still in our sins. The resurrection is the foundation of everything we believe.

- Why do you think the resurrection is so essential to the Christian faith?
- What evidence has helped strengthen your confidence in the resurrection?

Comfortable or Costly Faith?

Paul takes it further in v. 19, saying that if Jesus hasn't been raised, Christians should be pitied more than anyone else. Real faith in a risen Jesus changes how we live. It leads to sacrifice, risk, and surrender. Following Jesus isn't about comfort in this life. The call is to die to ourselves and take up his life, leading to true joy and life as we live out our purpose in Him. Following Jesus comes at a cost that's well worth paying.

- Where do you see the tension between a *comfortable* faith and a *costly* faith in your life?
- What are some ways following Jesus has cost you something - or might need to?

A Risen and Reigning King

Read I Corinthians 15:20-28

Paul contrasts two realities: life "in Adam" and life "in Christ." In Adam, we inherit sin, brokenness, and death. In Christ, we are made alive. Jesus is the "firstfruits" of what's to come, like the first signs of spring pointing to a coming harvest. Yet, Jesus is not just alive. Jesus is ruling and reigning, putting every enemy under His feet, and one day even death itself will be destroyed. As Pastor Tyler pointed out, we're not called to sit back as spectators. We are called to step into the fight, living with confidence in His victory and joining His mission.

- In your own words, what does it mean to "live in Adam" and to "live in Christ"?
- If Jesus is already reigning and has ultimate victory, how does that shape the way you see your life and approach challenges, opposition, or spiritual battles?

Wake Up Call

Read I Corinthians 15:29-34

[Leader note: I wouldn't spend a ton of time on this, but in case it comes up: Verse 29 talks about an apparent practice of some believers in the early church where believers would get baptized on behalf of family members or friends who had passed away before being baptized. Paul is not prescribing or condoning this practice, but rather using it as evidence of their inconsistency. Essentially, Paul is saying "Why would this practice exist if there is no resurrection? It wouldn't matter".]

Pastor Tyler shared that belief in the resurrection isn't just intellectual, but changes how we live. It's possible to admire Jesus without actually trusting Him. However, true faith "gets in the wheelbarrow," even when it feels risky. Because the resurrection is real, Paul calls us to wake up, turn from sin, and stop living like this world is all there is.

- Why do you think it's so easy to admire Jesus without actually trusting Him?
- Paul says "bad company ruins good morals", meaning that the people and influences around us shape our beliefs and actions. How have the people or influences around you shaped your beliefs or actions? What guardrails help you stay grounded in your faith?
- Paul says to "wake up" and turn from sin. What might that look like practically in your life this week?

GROWTH STEP THIS WEEK

- **Outward Action:** Take one visible step of faith this week, especially in an area where you've been hesitant or playing it safe (invite someone, confess sin, serve, give, share your faith, etc.).
- **Inward Prayer:** Ask God to help you not just believe in the resurrection, but live like it's true.

PRAYER PROMPTS:

- Thank God that Jesus is truly raised bodily from the grave!
- Ask for faith that leads to action
- Pray for freedom from sin and comfort
- Pray for people in your life who don't yet know Jesus

NEXT WEEK'S TEXT: I Corinthians 15:35-58