



**Reaching,  
Restoring,  
Raising Up**

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**L.I.F.E. Group Questions—(Phil 2:14-30)**

Our L.I.F.E. Groups that meet in homes use the following questions from the sermon for discussion and application. To find a group pick up a L.I.F.E. Group brochure in the Welcome Center.

- 1.
2. Of the 4 things that were listed—the Word, the Spirit, circumstances, and people—which have you most often turned to for help, and which the least?
3. What it would take to allow the Word and the Spirit to be true resources from God for your life?
4. What type of circumstances or situations normally sidetrack you (maybe positive or negative)? What steps could you take to deal with them differently this week?
5. Generally speaking, do you normally connect with others in the process of trying to “work out your salvation”? Specifically how can you change this?
6. Talk about anything else that impressed you from the message if you have time.

**We're on the Web!**  
**Www. Celebrationnet.com**

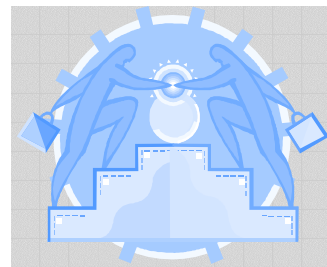
**You Can Join an ABF Anytime — Find  
Yours Below and Join Us!**

**Adult Bible Fellowships**

**Locations, Times, Descriptions**

9:00

10:45



**ADULT BIBLE FELLOWSHIPS**  
**- CONNECTING AROUND THE WORD -**

Rm104	30s-50s—Waller-Crary	Rm 104	Open—Hixson-Sturgill-Bower
Rm 112	Small Group Leaders Training	Rm 112	Women—Byrum
Rm 201	30s-40s—Sims-Fendley	Rm 201	20s—Jones-Norwood
Rm 202	Master Your Money (April 18)—Lux	Rm 202	30s—Miller-Tripp
Rm 203	Young Singles—Franklin	Rm 203	Singles—Bentzel
Rm 204	Making Peace with Your Past	Rm 204	Blessings in Disguise
Rm 205	40s&Up—Christensen-Hasler	Rm 205	30s—Heritier-Sharp
Rm 206		Rm 206	Engaged/Newly Married
Rm 207	40s-50s—McBrayer-Wicks	Rm 207	20s—Alexy
Rm 208	Women—Knox-Anderson	Rm 208	Open—Regis-Hubbard-Anderson- Robertson
		Gym-3rd fl	College Ayres-Getchell-Hopkins

April 4, 2004

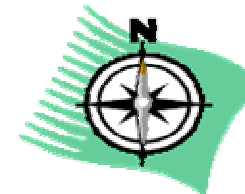
**Enjoy the Rest of Your Life**

*Discover principles for happy living from the book of Philippians*

**Celebration Fellowship**

**A Happy Ending**

**A preview of 1 Corinthians 15**



Volume 2, Issue 35

April 4, 2004

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To most of us there's nothing better than a happy ending, although in recent years the compositions of many writers are anything but that. When we're dealing with actual events, however, there's little control over how the story will conclude. A sense of fatalism has so enveloped our generation that few people think everything will ultimately turn out well. Given man's sinful tendency to use or abuse almost everyone and everything, this negative scenario is easy to project. For Christians, though, there is one event that enables

us to have hope in the future, to have confidence that a happy ending is in store. That event is the resurrection. Had Jesus remained in the tomb, a lifeless body, then sin, and death, would have won the day forever. But because Jesus was brought back to life by His Father, and His body resurrected, we have reason to be excited about the future. In 1 Corinthians 15 Paul thoroughly explains the resurrection, and answers many questions about it. He recaps the eyewitness evidence for it and explores the way life would be if Christ



**The secret of happiness  
is found in Christ!**

had not been raised. He also shows the importance of our own bodily resurrection, explains how it will happen and how it should affect our life today. Christ's resurrection is the one fact of history that allows us to expect a real happy ending.

**Surprised by Joy**

**(Phil 2:14-30)**

**The 5 Purposes of the Purpose Driven Life**

- **Worship**—You were planned for God's pleasure
- **Fellowship**—You were formed for God's family
- **Discipleship**—You were created to become like Christ
- **Ministry**—You were shaped for serving God
- **Evangelism**—You were made for a mission

One of the things we least suspect from sacrifice is the joy that often comes with it. But from Philippians 2:14-30 we see 3 examples of those who gladly made sacrifices; surprisingly, joy was the result. Because Paul, the 1st of these examples, had experienced this himself, he was able to encourage the Philippians (along with us) to also make sacrifices, knowing they would be glad they did. Paul begins by telling them to do all things without grumbling or disputing. The word “grumble” means to have a general complaint about life, like growing below our breath about everything that happens. It is a typical reaction to difficulties, because we think we deserve better. Getting into disputes with each other is another typical reaction when things aren't going well for us. We tend to “take it out on others”, looking for someone to hurt because we are hurting. We must understand that these “roots of bitter-

ness”, if left unchecked, can hurt those we love the most. It requires sacrifice on our part, though, to not react this way. When we take things in stride, maintaining our joy and unity with other believers, we have to be willing to sacrifice the attention we receive when we grumble or dispute. However, because this sacrifice keeps us blameless and innocent before God, and allows us to present a good witness to the world for Christ, we should be motivated to respond in this way. When we grumble we are essentially accusing God of not acting in love towards us, thus incurring blame in our relationship with Him. When we dispute we present an ugly picture to the world of the normal Christian's life. So, we lose on both counts. Conversely, when we refuse to grumble or dispute the world has no explanation for our positive response, and it leads them to want what we have. The fact that we live in a world

that is crooked—not lined up with the truth, and perverse—it twists the truth it does have, makes it all the more important to present the truth of Christ in a positive manner. The world calls good bad (heterosexual marriage, or “put others ahead of yourself”, as examples), and bad good (same sex marriage, or “if it feels good do it”, as examples), and yet all the while knows that something is not right. The only hope they have is that we, as God's children of light, let our light shine in such a way that our good works point them to Christ. In fact we are to do more than just live positively before them; we are to present, or hold forth, the word of life to them. This message of Jesus Christ, who is life Himself, becomes their light as well, and they can be rescued from their darkness and despair. Yet all of this requires that we forget our difficulties, and focus on their need for

*(Continued on page 2)*

### Philippians 2:14-30 (continued from pg 1)

Christ. It was important to Paul that the Philippians did just that, because his measure of success in life was whether those he led to Christ lived in such a way that others would be led to Christ. The same should be true for us. Paul was so committed to their success that he was willing to just be a drink offering poured out over them. This imagery means that their lives of service to God were like a sacrifice of worship to Him, and Paul was humbly willing to be used to simply make this service more acceptable to God. Similarly, when we allow God to use us to build others up, we pour out our lives to make their sacrifice of service more pleasing to God. The promise we have as we make this sacrifice corresponds to Paul's experience—we will receive joy as we do it, and be able to share in the joy of those we have helped to serve God better. When we do, we, like Paul, should urge them to share this joy with us. In other words we should all be encouraging each other to have joy, and share each other's joy. We should all be one big happy family, which leads to a great witness for Christ before the world. Following this thought, Paul then told the Philippians of his desire—to send Timothy to them shortly so he could find out that

they were doing well. He only wanted to send him, though, "in the Lord", or if it was according to God's will. We should always express our desire to God in prayer, but be willing for God to make the final decision. Timothy was the 2nd example of sacrifice. He was a kindred spirit with Paul—he had sacrificed everything so that the work of Christ in the lives of others could expand. He had also served Paul like a child does his father, so he had proven his value to the work of Christ. These are the type of people who can carry on the work of Christ in our absence—people of compassion and integrity. Paul then shared that he himself wanted to travel to them shortly, but again, only according to God's desire.



**"We should all be one big happy family, which leads to a great witness for Christ before the world."**

Finally, he talked about the 3rd example of sacrifice in these verses: Epaphroditus. This man, described as a brother, fellow worker, fellow soldier, messenger, and minister, had been all of these things to Paul. He had ministered to Paul in behalf of the Philippian church that he had come from so he could fulfill their service to Paul. In fact his ministry had been so intense that he had nearly lost his life through an illness, leading Paul to say he had "risked his life" for their sakes. Since his name meant "favored by Aphrodite" and was said when gamblers threw dice, asking for her favor, Paul was probably employing a play on words to get his point across. But, as close as Paul was to Epaphroditus, he sacrificially sent him back to Philippi because Epaphroditus longed to see them so badly. Again, this brought joy to Paul because of their joy. We see in this passages many sacrifices—the willingness to not grumble or dispute over difficulties; the sacrifice of focusing on others' success, rather than our own; the sacrifice of our service to God, and of putting others' interests over our own; sometimes the sacrifice our very lives, and sometimes releasing those we love to those who need them more. But in all of these sacrifices joy is the result.

### Study Questions for 1 Corinthians 15:1-58

*It is the fact of Christ's resurrection that gives us genuine hope in life.*

1. Read 1 Corinthians 15:1-11. From 1-4 what are the 3 basic elements of the gospel that Paul preached (v3-4), and why are each of these elements necessary for the gospel to truly be "good news"?
2. From 15:5-11, list those to whom Christ appeared. Why does this provide good "evidence" for the fact of the resurrection (v6, 8 especially)? What further evidence does v11 provide?
3. Look at 15:12-19. Why is it important that we believe that the resurrection of dead people really is possible (v13, 15, 18)?

**"We should be encouraging each other to have joy, and share each other's joy."**

4. What difference would it make, from 15:14-19, if there was no such thing as resurrection, and Christ has not been raised? Why?

5. In 15:20-28 it says Christ is "the first fruits" of the resurrection. If He is the "first" fruits, what does this imply about our resurrection (v20-23), and when will ours occur (v23)?

6. From 15:24-28 what happens after our resurrection (v24), and for what purpose (v25-26)? What clue do these verses give us about the purpose of God's "plan of redemption" (v25-26, 28)?

7. Read 15:29-34. What activities would be foolish if the resurrection really wasn't going to happen (v30-32)? What would be a better course if none of God's Word was true (v32) and why?

8. Apparently how had the Corinthians come to believe the resurrection hadn't occurred (v33)? What was the practical result of failing to believe in it (v33-34)? Why do wrong beliefs lead to wrong behavior?

9. According to 15:35-49 how does our earthly body that dies contrast with our resurrection body (v42, 43, 44)? What do you think each of these means?

10. In 15:45-49 who is the first Adam, and what was he like, and who is the last Adam (see 15:22) and what is He like? Who will those who are resurrected be like (v49)?

11. Looking at 15:50-58 will all people die (v51)? Why or why not? What will all Christians experience (v52-53), when will it happen (v52), and what will be the ultimate result (v54)?

12. According to 15:55-58 what is the cause of death (v56), and what has been done about it (v57)? What difference should this make in our everyday lives (v58)?

#### Memory Verse

**"But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."**

**1 Corinthians 15:57**