



JULY 2010 TEACHING PLANS

## HERE'S THE CHURCH BY SHARON HODDE MILLER

**WHEN IT COMES TO THE CHURCH**, we all bring our own strengths and weaknesses. Our similarities may unify us as members of the body of Christ, but it's our differences that can bring refreshing variety to our lives and to our churches. When we work together, embracing and loving one another, the church functions as God intended.

Paul knew this, and that's one of the reasons he worked so hard to help the Corinthian church overcome its division. The Corinthians weren't divided as the result of disagreement. At its root, the division was caused by sin. The Corinthians had let the world seep in, and eventually their sin ate away at the core of their unity.

First and 2 Corinthians teach us that the way we live our lives is deeply connected to the community around us. We can't hope for unity if we aren't submitting our own lives to God. In 1 Corinthians Paul addressed the sin that infiltrated the church and explained how to squelch it. In 2 Corinthians Paul focused more on the relational healing that needed to take place as a result of the problems within the Corinthian community.

Corinth wasn't unlike our culture today, so the story of their church is a cautionary tale. As Christians today become more and more convinced that what they do only affects themselves, the story of Corinth warns us otherwise.

### WHAT'S INSIDE ...

The goal of the *Collegiate* online features is to bring you a structured teaching plan with additional helps and relevant questions to equip you to lead a strong discussion-based lesson. Here's a breakdown of what's inside: "Getting Started" helps introduce the topic and get your students engaged in the lesson. "Need to Knows" provide the lesson overview and key verses of each lesson. "Explore the Bible" leads your students through the Scripture passages of the lesson, helping them understand the text, its historical and cultural context, and what it means to them today. "Apply to Life" gives you ideas for furthering the application of the Scripture, so students can take active steps to process what they're learning and how it impacts their lives. Be sure you also utilize the commentary provided ([threadsmedia.com/collegiate](http://threadsmedia.com/collegiate)) to help with your preparation and personal study of the lessons.

As always, we're here for you. Please send us your questions, thoughts, and suggestions. Let us know what we could do better and how these teaching plans could be even more relevant to your students and your ministry.

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## THIS WEEK YOU'LL NEED

- A COPY OF THIS LEADER GUIDE
- THIS WEEK'S LESSON IS ON PAGE 36 OF THE SUMMER ISSUE OF *COLLEGIATE*.
- IF POSSIBLE, CUE THE INTERNET CLIP FROM "SAVING GOD" AS MENTIONED IN THE APPLICATION SECTION.
- THE SONG "NOTHING BUT THE BLOOD" BY JARS OF CLAY AND THE BLIND BOYS OF ALABAMA, FROM THE ALBUM *DUETS*. (IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY, GO TO [THREADSMEDIA.COM/COLLEGIATE/LEADERS](http://THREADSMEDIA.COM/COLLEGIATE/LEADERS) TO FIND THE LINK FOR THE SUMMER 2010 *COLLEGIATE* PLAYLIST.)

## NEED TO KNOWS

### LESSON OVERVIEW

This lesson is about Christian behavior as it relates to Christian freedom. The emphasis is on criteria for determining whether a behavior is appropriate for a Christian. The lesson encourages college students to exercise appropriate limits on their behavior as Christians.

### FOCAL PASSAGES

1 CORINTHIANS 8:1-3,9-13; 9:19-23; 10:23-24,31-11:1



## MORE THAN BARE MINIMUM CHRISTIANITY

### GETTING STARTED

Have the song "Nothing But the Blood" by Jars of Clay and The Blind Boys of Alabama playing in the background as students arrive.

In his famous book *The Cost of Discipleship*, German theologian and martyr Dietrich Bonhoeffer talks about the importance of combating "cheap grace," which he describes as follows:

"Grace without price; grace without cost! The essence of grace, we suppose, is that the account has been paid in advance; and, because it has been paid, everything can be had for nothing ... Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, ... [it] is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ."<sup>1</sup>

He also adds, "Cheap grace is not the kind of forgiveness of sin which frees us from the toils of sin. Cheap grace is the grace we bestow on ourselves."

- Gather some reactions to the description of sarcasm in Proverbs 26:18-19? Is that a fair description, or does it sound too harsh?
- Can you think of other behaviors that are technically permitted by Scripture, but aren't loving?

1. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (Touchstone: New York, 1995), 43-45.

# EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Have someone read the introduction to the session on page 36 of the Summer 2010 *Collegiate* magazine.

## 1) IS IT BASED ON LOVE? (1 CORINTHIANS 8:1-3)

### READ 1 CORINTHIANS 8:1-3.

<sup>1</sup> About food offered to idols: We know that “we all have knowledge.” Knowledge inflates with pride, but love builds up. <sup>2</sup> If anyone thinks he knows anything, he does not yet know it as he ought to know it. <sup>3</sup> But if anyone loves God, he is known by Him.

Have someone read “Is It Based on Love?” on page 36 of *Collegiate* magazine.

### READ PROVERBS 26:18-19.

<sup>18</sup> Like a madman who throws flaming darts and deadly arrows, <sup>19</sup> so is the man who deceives his neighbor and says, “I was only joking!”

- Is that a fair description of sarcasm, or does it sound too harsh? Why?
- Can you think of other behaviors that are technically permitted by Scripture, but aren’t loving?

### READ 1 CORINTHIANS 13:2.

<sup>2</sup> If I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so that I can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.

- In both of these passages Paul contrasts knowledge and love. Why does he make this distinction? (To shed light on the distinction, you might also consider the difference between wisdom and knowledge).

## 2) WILL IT HARM OTHERS? (1 CORINTHIANS 8:9-13; 10:23-24)

### READ 1 CORINTHIANS 8:9-13; 10:23-24.

<sup>9</sup> But be careful that this right of yours in no way becomes a stumbling block to the weak. <sup>10</sup> For if somebody sees you, the one who has this knowledge, dining in an idol’s temple, won’t his weak conscience be encouraged to eat food offered to idols? <sup>11</sup> Then the weak person, the brother for whom Christ died, is ruined by your knowledge. <sup>12</sup> Now when you sin like this against the brothers and wound their weak conscience, you are sinning against Christ. <sup>13</sup> Therefore, if food causes my brother to fall, I will never again eat meat, so that I won’t cause my brother to fall.

.....  
<sup>23</sup> “Everything is permissible,” but not everything is helpful. “Everything is permissible,” but not everything builds up. <sup>24</sup> No one should seek his own good, but the good of the other person.

In the city of Corinth, it was a common pagan practice to offer meat to idols. It was also assumed that if you ate the meat offered to an idol, you ascribed to the pagan superstitions of the culture. If Christians did this, they faced two key problems:

- 1. False Witness** — Even though they knew the idols didn’t exist, their practice of eating the meat could lead others to believe that Christians can follow Jesus and other gods as well.
- 2. Personal Temptation** — Although the Corinthians knew in their heads that the idols weren’t real, superstitions can be tough to crack. Eating the meat sacrificed to idols may have tempted them to fall back into their past idolatrous ways.

Have someone read “Will It Harm Others?” on page 36 of *Collegiate* magazine.

- The most common application of this teaching is applied to alcohol. What are some less obvious applications? (Examples from the lesson: eating

disorders and lust, materialism, bad language, sketchy movies and music, and legalism.

- Paul summarizes his point by urging us to be mindful of the “weaker brother.” How do we avoid becoming legalistic about this teaching by becoming enslaved to the struggles of those around us?

## 3) IS IT EVANGELISTIC? (1 CORINTHIANS 9:19-23)

### READ 1 CORINTHIANS 9:19-23.

<sup>19</sup> For although I am free from all people, I have made myself a slave to all, in order to win more people. <sup>20</sup> To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win Jews; to those under the law, like one under the law — though I myself am not under the law — to win those under the law. <sup>21</sup> To those who are outside the law, like one outside the law — not being outside God’s law, but under the law of Christ — to win those outside the law. <sup>22</sup> To the weak I became weak, in order to win the weak. I have become all things to all people, so that I may by all means save some. <sup>23</sup> Now I do all this because of the gospel, that I may become a partner in its benefits

Have someone read “Is It Evangelistic?” on pages 36-37 of *Collegiate* magazine.

Spend some time reflecting on Paul’s teaching to “be all things to all people.”

- How can we, as Christians, do this on a college campus? More specifically, how can we be weak to those who are weak?
- How can we be under the law to those under the law? Who in our culture is under the law?
- Are there limits to becoming all things to all people? How do we become all things to all people without compromising ourselves?

#### 4) WILL IT GLORIFY GOD? (1 CORINTHIANS 10:31—11:1)

##### READ 1 CORINTHIANS 10:31—11:1.

<sup>31</sup> Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for God's glory. <sup>32</sup> Give no offense to the Jews or the Greeks or the church of God, <sup>33</sup> just as I also try to please all people in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

.....  
<sup>1</sup> Be imitators of me, as I also am of Christ.

Have someone read "Will It Glorify God" on page 37 of *Collegiate* magazine.

Paul reminds us that every moment and every decision of every day is a chance to glorify God.

- Is there any action that's too small to be used for God's glory? (For example: tying your shoe, eating a piece of pizza, etc.)
- How can you glorify God, even in these small things?
- If you seek to glorify God in the small things, will that impact the bigger things? How?
- How do you think Paul would respond to the question, "How far is too far?"



## THIS WEEK YOU'LL NEED

- A COPY OF THIS LEADER GUIDE
- THIS WEEK'S LESSON IS ON PAGE 38 OF THE SUMMER ISSUE OF *COLLEGIATE*.
- SPIRITUAL GIFTS INVENTORY (1 COPY FOR EACH GROUP MEMBER)
- THE SONG "GIVE YOURSELF AWAY" BY NEWSONG, FROM THE ALBUM *GIVE YOURSELF AWAY*.

## NEED TO KNOWS

### LESSON OVERVIEW

This lesson is about spiritual gifts and using them appropriately. The emphasis is on recognizing, developing, and employing spiritual gifts. The lesson encourages college students to use their spiritual gifts as God intends.

### FOCAL PASSAGES

1 CORINTHIANS 12:4-13,18-19,27-31; 14:1,39-40



## SPIRITUAL GIFTS THE WHAT AND THE WHY

### GETTING STARTED

Have the song "Give Yourself Away" by NewSong playing in the background as students arrive.

When Paul talks about spiritual gifts he uses an analogy of the human body. Begin by reflecting on how this analogy applies to college students as a whole.

- Why did Paul choose the analogy of a body?
- In what ways are college students a unique part of the body of Christ?
- How would your church body be handicapped if college students were no longer there?

In this chapter, Paul not only wants us to know that we have gifts, but that they are crucial to the church. Your gifts aren't simply icing on the cake of an already complete church. If the church is a car, then your gifts are the transmission — the church can't run without you!

### DIG DEEPER

Refer to "Dig Deeper" on page 38 in the Summer 2010 issue of *Collegiate* magazine for additional verses to check out, a recommended read, and some good advice on finding balance.

# EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Have someone read the introduction to the session on page 38 of the Summer 2010 *Collegiate* magazine.

## 1) FEELING GIFT-LESS? (1 CORINTHIANS 12:4-10)

### READ 1 CORINTHIANS 12:4-10.

<sup>4</sup>Now there are different gifts, but the same Spirit.

<sup>5</sup>There are different ministries, but the same Lord.

<sup>6</sup>And there are different activities, but the same God is active in everyone and everything.

<sup>7</sup>A manifestation of the Spirit is given to each person to produce what is beneficial: <sup>8</sup>to one is given a message of wisdom through the Spirit, to another, a message of knowledge by the same Spirit, <sup>9</sup>to another, faith by the same Spirit, to another, gifts of healing by the one Spirit, <sup>10</sup>to another, the performing of miracles, to another, prophecy, to another, distinguishing between spirits, to another, different kinds of languages, to another, interpretation of languages.

Have someone read “Feeling Gift-less?” on page 38 of *Collegiate* magazine.

In order to discern whether or not you have the gifts that Paul describes, it’s first important to know what they all mean. Reflect on the following definitions. As you read, consider how you’ve seen these gifts displayed? Can you think of anyone present who may possess them?

**“Message or word of knowledge”** — John MacArthur explains this gift saying, “It’s the Spirit-given ability to observe ... biblical facts and make conclusions. In other words, it’s the ability to understand the Bible.”<sup>1</sup>

- Do you think everyone has this gift? Why does it seem like some people understand the Bible more easily than others?

**“Message or word of wisdom”** — In contrast with knowledge, this gift focuses on the skill of application. It is the ability to take information gathered by knowledge and apply it to the Christian life. A good example of this gift in action is a counselor.

- Where else have you seen this gift exercised?

**“Prophecy”** — To understand this gift, John MacArthur also offers a helpful explanation by looking at the root meaning of the word. In Greek, this word literally means “to speak before,” in terms of an audience. Put simply, it is the gift of communication. We must be careful to not misunderstand this gift because God will not use a prophet to add to Scripture. He will only use a prophet to preach or clarify Scripture in revelatory ways.

- Knowing this, who might you consider to be a prophet today?
- Have you witnessed any of the other gifts listed in this passage? Have you seen any of these gifts exercised by anyone in the group who is present today?

## 2) OUR GIFTS ARE IMPORTANT TO THE CHURCH (1 CORINTHIANS 12:11-13,18-19)

### READ 1 CORINTHIANS 12:11-13,18-19.

<sup>11</sup>But one and the same Spirit is active in all these, distributing to each one as He wills. <sup>12</sup>For as the body is one and has many parts, and all the parts of that body, though many, are one body — so also is Christ. <sup>13</sup>For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body — whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free — and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

.....  
<sup>18</sup>But now God has placed the parts, each one of them, in the body just as He wanted. <sup>19</sup>And if they were all the same part, where would the body be?

Have someone read “Our Gifts Are Important” on page 38 of *Collegiate* magazine.

At the time Paul wrote this letter, slaves had little power and Greek Christians were often considered to be less devout. With that in mind, it’s significant that Paul mentions both slaves and Greeks as important members of the body of Christ.

- How do we “rank” spiritual gifts or a person’s value to the church today?
- Why do we think some gifts are better than others?
- Describe how less-celebrated gifts — like hospitality, faith, mercy, and wisdom — are equally important to more valued gifts such as preaching and evangelism.

## 3) OUR GIFTS ARE FOR THE CHURCH (1 CORINTHIANS 12:27-30)

### READ 1 CORINTHIANS 12:27-30.

<sup>27</sup>Now you are the body of Christ, and individual members of it. <sup>28</sup>And God has placed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, next, miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, managing, various kinds of languages. <sup>29</sup>Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all do miracles? <sup>30</sup>Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in languages? Do all interpret?

Have someone read “Our Gifts Are for the Church” on pages 38-39 of *Collegiate* magazine.

- What’s the answer to Paul’s question in verses 29-30?
- Why didn’t God give every spiritual gift to every Christian?
- How does our diversity of gifts impact the church’s witness to the world? OR, What kind of witness would we have if everyone in the church had the same gifts?

#### 4) WE ARE TO USE GIFTS UNSELFISHLY (1 CORINTHIANS 12:31; 14:1,39-40)

##### READ 1 CORINTHIANS 12:31; 14:1,39-40.

*<sup>31</sup> But desire the greater gifts. And I will show you an even better way.*

.....  
*<sup>1</sup> Pursue love and desire spiritual gifts, and above all that you may prophesy.*

.....  
*<sup>39</sup> Therefore, my brothers, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in other languages. <sup>40</sup> But everything must be done decently and in order.*

Have someone read “Use Gifts Unselfishly” on page 39 of *Collegiate* magazine.

- According to the definition of “prophecy” provided above, why do you think Paul wants all Christians to pursue this gift?
- We typically think of spiritual gifts as something you’re born with, yet here, Paul instructs us to pursue the gift of prophecy. What does this tell us about how we acquire spiritual gifts?

1. John MacArthur, “The Permanent Edifying Gifts, Part 1.” Available from the Internet: [gty.org](http://gty.org).



## THIS WEEK YOU'LL NEED

- A COPY OF THIS LEADER GUIDE
- THIS WEEK'S LESSON IS ON PAGE 40 OF THE SUMMER ISSUE OF *COLLEGIATE*.
- CRAFT SUPPLIES FOR MAKING CARDS
- THE SONG "ONLY LOVE REMAINS" BY JJ HELLER, FROM THE ALBUM *ONLY LOVE REMAINS*.

## NEED TO KNOWS

### LESSON OVERVIEW

This lesson is about love as the guiding principle of all spiritual gifts. The emphasis is on expressing Christian love in the church. The lesson encourages college students to express Christian love in all they do in their churches.

### FOCAL PASSAGES

1 CORINTHIANS 13:1-13



BIBLE STUDY

1 CORINTHIANS 13:1-13 //  
WEEK OF JULY 18

## ALL YOU NEED IS LOVE

### GETTING STARTED

Have the song "Only Love Remains" by JJ Heller playing in the background as students arrive.

Have someone read the introduction to the session on page 40 of the Summer 2010 *Collegiate* magazine.

- Are college students more likely to pursue love without rules or love defined by rules? How so?
- What about Christians who are in college? Do they pursue love in the same way as their non-Christian friends, or are they different?
- What are some godly ways to display love on your college campus?

### DIG DEEPER

Refer to "Dig Deeper" on page 40 in the Summer 2010 issue of *Collegiate* magazine for a great quote to check out and a recommended read.

# EXPLORE THE BIBLE

## 1) AUTHENTIC LOVE (1 CORINTHIANS 13:1-3)

### READ 1 CORINTHIANS 13:1-3.

<sup>1</sup>If I speak the languages of men and of angels, but do not have love, I am a sounding gong or a clanging cymbal. <sup>2</sup>If I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so that I can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. <sup>3</sup>And if I donate all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Have someone read “Authentic Love” on page 40 of *Collegiate* magazine.

- Why are Christians so often criticized for being fake when they’re trying to be nice to others?
- Do you think their critics are right? Why or why not?

### ALSO READ LUKE 7:36-47.

- What does this verse tell us about the source of authentic love?
- What do Jesus’ words reveal about why Christians have trouble showing authentic love?
- What should we then do to make sure we are “loving much” like the sinful woman?

This passage reveals a truly important point about the nature of love: It can’t be forced. Many Christians try to will a love for people that simply isn’t there because they haven’t taken time to ponder their forgiveness. Love is not something you can create or force — it has to be an overflow of a heart consumed with gratitude to God. The best way to love others is to first learn just how much God loved us.

## 2) HOLY LOVE (1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-7)

### READ 1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-7

<sup>4</sup>Love is patient; love is kind. Love does not envy; is not boastful; is not conceited; <sup>5</sup>does not act improperly; is not selfish; is not provoked; does not keep a record of wrongs; <sup>6</sup>finds no joy in unrighteousness, but rejoices in the truth; <sup>7</sup>bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Have someone read “Holy Love” on page 40 of *Collegiate* magazine.

First John 3:16 tells us, “This is how we have come to know love: He laid down His life for us. We should also lay down our lives for our brothers.” Notice that there’s nothing here about emotion or how you feel about people. According to this verse, the goal of love is to be holy and more like Jesus.

- How does this understanding of love shape the way we show love to the following people? Give specific examples that contrast with the world’s way of loving.
- How can we *be like Jesus* to the following people?
  1. Boyfriend or girlfriend
  2. Husband or wife
    - What does this definition of love imply about the purpose of marriage?)
  3. Your closest friends
    - This may seem like a no-brainer, but how often do your friends seek to be Jesus to one another in a way that makes your friendship stand out from the world’s friendships?)
  4. A homeless man begging on the side of the road
  5. Your restaurant waiter

When we consider love to be about emotion and how someone makes us feel, we end up using people to make ourselves happy. This is one of the main reasons marriages fail and churches divide. The goal of love is to conform us into Christ’s likeness, not to serve our own wants and desires.

## 3) UNCONDITIONAL LOVE (1 CORINTHIANS 13:8-13)

### READ 1 CORINTHIANS 13:8-13.

<sup>8</sup>Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for languages, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. <sup>9</sup>For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. <sup>10</sup>But when the perfect comes, the partial will come to an end. <sup>11</sup>When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put aside childish things. <sup>12</sup>For now we see indistinctly, as in a mirror, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I will know fully, as I am fully known. <sup>13</sup>Now these three remain: faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love.

Have someone read “Unconditional Love” on pages 40-41 of *Collegiate* magazine.

Verses 11 seems to stick out a bit from the rest of the chapter. Spend some time discussing what Paul meant.

- According to this passage, what are the “childish” things that will pass away? What lasts?
- Why do you think Paul classifies prophecy, tongues, and even knowledge as “childish things”? Are Christians not meant to pursue them?
- As Paul describes it, what distinguishes spiritual maturity from immaturity?

Paul is not dismissing spiritual gifts as though they are pointless and undesirable. Instead, he’s making sure they are used correctly. It’s one thing to be known for your knowledge of Scripture, but it’s more important to be known by love. To be known by your love is not as glamorous or attention-getting as some of the other gifts, so we must be careful about neglecting love in pursuit of our own glory.



## THIS WEEK YOU'LL NEED

- A COPY OF THIS LEADER GUIDE
- THIS WEEK'S LESSON IS ON PAGE 42 OF THE SUMMER ISSUE OF *COLLEGIATE*.
- FOUR COPIES OF LEE STROBEL'S *THE CASE FOR CHRIST* (IF USING OPTION 2 IN "APPLY TO LIFE")
- THE SONG "HEAVEN SONG" BY PHIL WICKHAM, FROM THE ALBUM *HEAVEN & EARTH*.

## NEED TO KNOWS

### LESSON OVERVIEW

This lesson is about the certainty of the resurrection, both of Jesus Christ and of believers. The emphasis is on the reality of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and of believers. The lesson encourages college students to declare their belief in the resurrection.

### FOCAL PASSAGES

1 CORINTHIANS 15:1-6,12-18,50-52,54B-57



## RESURRECTION THE REASON THE CHURCH EXISTS

### GETTING STARTED

Have the song "Heaven Song" by Phil Wickham playing in the background as students arrive.

- Would Christianity be essentially the same if Jesus were simply a good man or a wise teacher, but He didn't rise from the dead?
- Can the Christian faith exist without the resurrection?

### DIG DEEPER

Refer to "Dig Deeper" on page 42 in the Summer 2010 issue of *Collegiate* magazine for related verses to check out, stats on college grads' beliefs, a recommended read, and a word study.

# EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Have someone read the introduction to the session on page 42 of the Summer 2010 *Collegiate* magazine.

## 1) IT /S THE GOSPEL (1 CORINTHIANS 15:1-6)

### READ 1 CORINTHIANS 15:1-6.

<sup>1</sup> Now brothers, I want to clarify for you the gospel I proclaimed to you; you received it and have taken your stand on it. <sup>2</sup> You are also saved by it, if you hold to the message I proclaimed to you—unless you believed to no purpose. <sup>3</sup> For I passed on to you as most important what I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup> that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, <sup>5</sup> and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the Twelve. <sup>6</sup> Then He appeared to over 500 brothers at one time, most of whom remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep.

Have someone read “It Is the Gospel” on page 42 of *Collegiate* magazine.

- When Christians witness, what do they typically emphasize first and foremost?
- What does Paul emphasize as first and foremost?
- Sometimes Christian evangelism focuses more on sin and condemnation than on the hope of resurrection. Why is it important to place the most emphasis on resurrection?

While it is certainly important for people to understand the seriousness of their sin, we should be careful of blending into a culture defined by soapboxes. Blogs, TV shows, and newspapers are full of people judging one another, mud-slinging, name-calling, and refusing to give each other the benefit of the doubt. When we emphasize resurrection, we set ourselves apart. We can be a people known by hope and not self-righteous condemnation.

## 2) IT’S REASONABLE (1 CORINTHIANS 15:12-18)

### READ 1 CORINTHIANS 15:12-18.

<sup>12</sup> Now if Christ is preached as raised from the dead, how can some of you say, “There is no resurrection of the dead”? <sup>13</sup> But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; <sup>14</sup> and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is without foundation, and so is your faith. <sup>15</sup> In addition, we are found to be false witnesses about God, because we have testified about God that He raised up Christ — whom He did not raise up if in fact the dead are not raised. <sup>16</sup> For if the dead are not raised, Christ has not been raised. <sup>17</sup> And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins. <sup>18</sup> Therefore those who have fallen asleep in Christ have also perished.

Have someone read “It’s Reasonable” on page 42 of *Collegiate* magazine.

- If you knew that it was impossible for you to die, what kinds of things would you do? What are the first things that come to your mind?
- In Christ, we have everlasting life. We will never die. Given this knowledge, why don’t you do any of the things you just named?
- What do your fears say about your belief in the resurrection? Do you doubt your resurrection? Do you value life on earth more than life in heaven?
- For some people, a life without fear of death would allow them to take insane risks. They would try death-defying stunts without any fear and live with fewer inhibitions. In contrast, what do you think life without fear of death looks like when it is lived for Christ?

## 3) IT’S CERTAIN (1 CORINTHIANS 15:50-52, 54B-57)

### READ 1 CORINTHIANS 15:50-52, 54B-57.

<sup>50</sup> Brothers, I tell you this: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, and corruption cannot inherit incorruption. <sup>51</sup> Listen! I am telling you a mystery: We will not all fall asleep, but we will all be changed, <sup>52</sup> in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we will be changed. ....  
<sup>54b</sup> Death has been swallowed up in victory. <sup>55</sup> O Death, where is your victory? O Death, where is your sting?  
<sup>56</sup> Now the sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. <sup>57</sup> But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!

Have someone read “It’s Certain” on page 43 of *Collegiate* magazine.

- In light of what you just read, how does our certainty of resurrection distinguish us from other religions?
- Since the certainty of our salvation gives us an assurance that other religions don’t have, how can we demonstrate this certainty with our lives?
- How does certainty of resurrection impact our relationship with God?

Our certainty of resurrection has so many implications in a world where love is often temporary and promises are frequently broken. As Christians, we don’t have to fear death so we can live courageously. We don’t have to fear that God will forsake us, which means we don’t have to center our lives around desperately trying to earn His favor. Because His love and promises are never-ending and unchanging, we can live confidently and without shame. We’re not subject to the judgments and pressures of this world. Our resurrection is certain.

