

#2 THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RESURRECTION

(1Corinthians 15:1-19)

1. REMEMBERING What are a few of the more memorable condition-consequence statements—or *if...then* statements—you have heard or spoken yourself over the years?
2. REFLECTING What about the situation in which you heard it made the *conditions* so important and the *consequences* so drastic?
3. DISCOVERING Read 1Corinthians 15:1-19 and answer the questions that follow.
 - What is the essence of *the gospel* and its important elements, according to 1-5?
 - What is the importance of Christ's appearances cited in 5-8?
 - What impact did Christ's resurrection and appearance to him have on Paul personally (9-11)?
 - What belief was being denied in Corinth and what was the consequence of that denial (12)?
 - List the consequences of that consequence—*Christ has not been raised*—found in 13-19.
4. CONNECTING Which of the consequences you listed are most important and meaningful to you at this point in your life and why?
5. RESPONDING This week—to assure yourself of the importance of the resurrection—read and reflect on John Updike's *Seven Stanzas at Easter* and 1Corinthians 15:1-19 daily.

SEVEN STANZAS AT EASTER

John Updike

Make no mistake: if He rose at all
 It was as His body;
 If the cell's dissolution did not reverse, the molecule reknit,
 The amino acids rekindle,
 The Church will fall.

It was not as the flowers,
 Each soft spring recurrent;
 It was not as His Spirit in the mouths and fuddled eyes of the
 Eleven apostles;
 It was as His flesh; ours.

The same hinged thumbs and toes
 The same valved heart
 That—pierced—died, withered, paused, and then
 regathered
 Out of enduring Might
 New strength to enclose.

Let us not mock God with metaphor,
 Analogy, sidestepping transcendence,
 Making of the event a parable, a sign painted in the faded
 Credulity of earlier ages:
 Let us walk through the door.

The stone is rolled back, not papier-mâché,
 Not a stone in a story,
 But the vast rock of materiality that in the slow
 grinding of
 Time will eclipse for each of us
 The wide light of day.
 And if we have an angel at the tomb,
 Make it a real angel,
 Weighty with Max Planck's quanta, vivid with hair,
 opaque in
 The dawn light, robed in real linen
 Spun on a definite loom.

Let us not seek to make it less monstrous,
 For our own convenience, our own sense of beauty,
 Lest, awakened in one unthinkable hour, we are
 embarrassed
 By the miracle,
 And crushed by remonstrance.

Max Planck: German physicist and Nobel laureate for advances in quantum physics; **quanta**; plural of quantum, a fundamental unit of physical magnitude; **opaque**: impenetrable to light, not transparent; **remonstrance**: reproof