

#5

RESURRECTION ILLUSTRATIONS

(1Corinthians 15:29-44)

1. **REMEMBERING** What was a personal example of when you heard nature “speaking to you” or illustrating a truth you’ve come to know?
2. **REFLECTING** Compare the NIV translation of Psalm 19:1-4a to the Eugene Petersen paraphrase listed beside it below. What do you think he was trying to convey by rendering it that way?

NIV

The heavens declare the glory of God;
 the skies proclaim the work of his hands.
 Day after day they pour forth speech;
 night after night they reveal knowledge.
 They have no speech, they use no words;
 no sound is heard from them.
 Yet their voice goes out into all the earth,
 their words to the ends of the world.

The Message

*God’s glory is on tour in the skies,
 God-craft on exhibit across the horizon.
 Madame Day holds classes every morning,
 Professor Night lectures each evening.
 Their words aren’t heard,
 their voices aren’t recorded,
 But their silence fills the earth:
 unspoken truth is spoken everywhere.*

3. **DISCOVERING** Read aloud 1Cor 15:29-34, where Paul is still arguing for the **FACT** of the resurrection.

- What arguments does he put forth? Complete the following statements:
 - 29—If the dead are not raised, then why _____.
 - 30-31—If the dead are not raised, then why _____.
 - 32—If the dead are not raised, then why _____.
- What two points is he trying to make in 33-34?

Read aloud 1Cor 15:35-44.

- In 35-44, Paul uses nature to answer what two questions about the resurrection body?
- How does he answer in 36-38 using *plant life*?
- How does he answer in 39 using *animal life*?
- How does he answer in 40-41 using *astronomy*?
- In your own words—based on 42-43—what does he conclude?
- What point does he make about God in 38 that is key to his whole argument and all illustrations from nature?

4. **CONNECTING** Which of these illustrations speaks most memorably to you about the resurrection?
 OR What other illustrations of resurrection in nature might you include?

5. **RESPONDING** Discuss the Willard quote below. What are specific things you will do—outdoors—this week to expose you to “a world in which God is continually at play and over which he constantly rejoices... [where you find] every visible thing and event glorious with his presence?”

This is a God-bathed and God-permeated world. It is a world filled with a glorious reality, where every component is within the range of God’s direct knowledge and control—though he obviously permits some of it, for good reasons, to be for a while otherwise than as he wishes. It is a world that is inconceivably beautiful and good because of God and because God is always in it. It is a world in which God is continually at play and over which he constantly rejoices. Until our thoughts of God have found every visible thing and event glorious with his presence, the word of Jesus has not yet fully seized us. (Dallas Willard, *The Divine Conspiracy*)