

1 Corinthians

Chapter 15:35-58

July 28, 1996

- **1 Corinthians Outline:**

- Chapter 1 Ungodly divisions result from man's wisdom
- Chapter 2 Carnal man cannot understand our Spiritual God
- Chapter 3 All Christians will have their labors tried by fire
- Chapter 4 Boasting in our leaders puffs up and destroys fellowship
- Chapter 5 Maintain the purity of the Church
- Chapter 6 Do not dispute before the world and do not partake in sexual immorality
- Chapter 7 Principles of marriage
- Chapter 8 The responsibility of liberty
- Chapter 9 Those who preach the Gospel should live from the Gospel
- Chapter 10 You cannot partake of the Lord's table and the table of demons
- Chapter 11 Propriety in corporate worship and communion
- Chapter 12 The body of Christ is unified around a diversity of spiritual gifts
- Chapter 13 Some spiritual gifts are temporary but love never fails
- Chapter 14 The spiritual gifts are to be administered in such a way that the entire body is edified
- Chapter 15 The resurrection of Christ ensures the future resurrection of our bodies

- **Introduction & Review**

Paul concludes the progression he has been making in this chapter by answering questions about our future bodies. He has gone from the gospel to the resurrection of Christ and then to our resurrection. Here he will describe the type of body that we will have after our resurrection.

- **Exposition**

1 Corinthians 15:35-58

³⁵ *But someone will say, "How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?"* ³⁶ *Foolish one, what you sow is not made alive unless it dies.* ³⁷ *And what you sow, you do not sow that body that shall be, but mere grain—perhaps wheat or some other grain.* ³⁸ *But God gives it a body as He pleases, and to each seed its own body.* ³⁹ *All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of animals, another of fish, and another of birds.* ⁴⁰ *There are also celestial bodies and terrestrial bodies; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.* ⁴¹ *There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory.*

- After having established that the dead will indeed raise up, Paul anticipates the objections to his instruction from those who taught against the resurrection. Paul's response is that their questions reveal their foolishness of thinking. It is an absolutely incredible thing to think of God taking our bodies which are now subject to corruption, and after having rotted away, or after they have been consumed by fire will not merely entirely restore them, but resurrect them in a much greater condition. Yet, if we don't believe this then we don't believe that Christ rose from the dead and we are back to the situation that Paul wrote of just verses earlier. Although these seems incomprehensible to us, it is nothing for God. Hence, we must not here form our own judgment according to our own understanding, but we must reckon to God His infinite wisdom and power to efficaciously accomplish that which seems impossible to our senses.
- Instead of dwelling on what an amazing or impossible thing the resurrection of the dead truly is (which might just add to their lack of faith), Paul goes to work in proving to them that even nature reveals very clearly what will happen to us. The first analogy that Paul uses is that of planting seeds, the second is the diversity of flesh among humans and animals and the third is the various forms of heavenly and earthly bodies.
- The point of the first analogy is to show that in nature, it is nothing for bodies to raise up from things that have passed away. When we plant seeds the body of the seed perishes and is replaced by a much more glorious plant.

- As there are various kinds of flesh evident to us now, why is it so great a thing to think that we will receive a new kind of flesh at the redemption of our bodies? In the third analogy, Paul compares the glory of the heavenly bodies with the glory of the earthly bodies and from this comparison he concludes that our earthly body is of a different (less) glory than our new body.
- From Paul's teaching we can surmise that he believed that this teaching on the new glorified body should be clear and natural to us. There should be no hesitancy in accepting the teaching when there are many things around us telling us similar things.

⁴² So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption.⁴³ It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power.⁴⁴ It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.⁴⁵ And so it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.⁴⁶ However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual.⁴⁷ The first man was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is the Lord from heaven.⁴⁸ As was the man of dust, so also are those who are made of dust; and as is the heavenly Man, so also are those who are heavenly.⁴⁹ And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man.

- Here Paul makes direct application of the analogies to the subject at hand; the resurrection of our bodies from the dead. He makes four remarks about the manner in which our bodies are sown and in each remark sets it against how our bodies are raised. Notice the transformation of our bodies: corruption to incorruption; dishonor to glory; weakness to power and then natural to spiritual.
- Paul states that we will become like the heavenly Man, that is, Christ. There is good Biblical evidence to support that our bodies will be similar in nature to the body which Christ revealed after His resurrection.

⁵⁰ Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption.⁵¹ Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-⁵² 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 shall be changed.⁵³ For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

- Given that our bodies are sown in corruption, they cannot exist in the presence of the Lord in His heaven where there is no corruption. Therefore, the body is transformed in to an incorruptible body.
- The mystery is something that was once unknown but is now revealed. The saints of old surely wondered about the resurrection from the dead. But now we can know that we will rise at Christ's return.

⁵⁴ So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

⁵⁵ "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?"

⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.⁵⁸ Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. NKJV

- At the resurrection of the dead, death is rendered powerless and has no influence on the living. Where death once reigned and could not be overcome, death is now dealt the final blow and is quenched.