

**Series: 1 Corinthians - "Advancing the Gospel together"**

**Title: "The Resurrected Body"**

**Text: 1 Corinthians 15:35-49 (page 961)**

**Date: April 5, 2015**

## **Intro:**

## **Read Scripture / Pray**

### **1 Corinthians 15:35-49**

35 But someone will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?” 36 You foolish person! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. 37 And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. 38 But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. 39 For not all flesh is the same, but there is one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish. 40 There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is of one kind, and the glory of the earthly is of another. 41 There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory.

42 So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. 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. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. 45 Thus it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being”; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. 46 But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual. 47 The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. 48 As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. 49 Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven.

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## **Background**

1. Written by the Apostle Paul to the church at Corinth. He wrote it from the city of Ephesus, near the end of his three years of ministry there. Paul planted this church with the help of Priscilla and Aquilla, two fellow tent-makers. They spent 18 months working there together to establish this work.
2. Paul wanted to see this church reach a spot of unity where they would partner together to advance the gospel of Jesus Christ in the midst of their decadent culture. At the time, however, there were a variety of things that were getting in the way of them accomplishing that.
3. This letter is interesting for a variety of reasons, but one of the interesting features we find in this book is its clear explanation of foundational theology. And in addition, we're shown how these truths are supposed to be lived out by followers of Christ.
4. In this section of the book, Paul gives the Corinthians a description of what the resurrected body will look like and how it will resemble Christ.

## I. A body of a different glory (v. 35-41)

*35 But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?" 36 You foolish person! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. 37 And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. 38 But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. 39 For not all flesh is the same, but there is one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish. 40 There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is of one kind, and the glory of the earthly is of another. 41 There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory.*

1. Each year, we plant a small garden along the side of our house. Several years ago, one of the crafts that our Kid Zone group engaged in was to make small seed beds that could be planted in household gardens. By the time our children got their projects home, we had no idea what was planted in their seed beds, but we placed them in the ground alongside the house anyway. We were amazed after a short while, two very tall sunflower plants began to grow. The seed that was planted in the ground looked one way, but what became of it looked different and much more impressive.

2. Paul uses the analogy of a seed in this passage to help explain how resurrection works. The skeptical Corinthians who were now doubting that resurrection was part of God's plan for believers were wondering about what kind of body a resurrected person would have. And Paul clarifies that the kind of body that they would have would be the kind that God has chosen - one of a heavenly glory, not an earthly glory.

3. When a seed is placed in the ground, it disintegrates, but then goes on to produce a living plant. Our natural bodies are very similar to seeds. When we die, our spirit goes to be with the Lord, but our natural body decays and disintegrates. In time, however, at the moment of God's choosing, our spirit is going to be reunited with our body and our body is going to be raised up in a new glorified state.

4. Our current body is fit for an earthly existence not for a heavenly existence. Our current body is subject to sin and can be harmed. Our current body testifies in a visible way to the effects of sin. *On my right hand, I have scars that are a visible reminder of several times when I rebelled against the authority of my parents as a child by doing things I wasn't supposed to do - things that harmed me. As I age, I have to be more careful with my body because it is becoming more fragile and doesn't heal as quickly. My bones makes noises they didn't used to make. My arteries clog. My hearing and sight diminish.* This is a body that is of an earthly or fleshly kind of glory.

5. But at the resurrection of the dead, believers will be fitted with a body that is of a greater glory. It is a body of a heavenly and permanent glory (v. 40). *Clearly this is something we're told in God's word to produce a sense of hope and delight as we think about our future.*

## II. A body that is imperishable (v. 42-44)

*42 So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. 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. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.*

1. About a year or so ago, I walked into my house, set my things down and noticed that something didn't smell right. Normally I arrive home to the smell of a candle or whatever is cooking for dinner. This particular evening, that's not the scent that hit my nose. We tracked down the scent by pulling everything out of the hall closet and when we examined it all, we discovered that one of the kids had an old bottle of chocolate milk in their backpack. When I asked how long it had been there, they said, "I have no idea. Probably a while." Quite literally, the scent it gave off was the scent of death and decay.
2. That's what we're used to seeing and experiencing in this world. We've become quite accustomed to it. Such was the case for the Corinthians as well and as they pondered the condition of the human body, they struggled to understand how natural bodies that are subject to sickness, death and decay could live eternally.
3. This truly illustrates just how difficult it is for us as people to live by faith. When we're told something in Scripture that doesn't resemble something we've ever seen before, we question it and may struggle to believe it.
4. I have never seen a glorified body before, but this Scripture calls us to believe that such a thing is real and it's a better bodily experience than what we currently experience. Paul contrasts it with our natural body to make clear to us just how much better it will be. Our natural body is perishable. Our glorified body will be imperishable. Our natural body is sown in dishonor. Our new body will be glorified. Our natural body is weak. Our glorified body is powerful. Our current body is limited to functioning in this natural world. Our glorified body is still physical, but is able to operate in the spiritual realm.
5. So since our Lord has promised us all these good things, why then do we allow ourselves to become overly consumed with temporary things in the sense that we treat them like they are permanent in nature? What we're experiencing now in this natural realm in our natural bodies is light and momentary compared to what the Lord has in store for us. **(2 Cor. 4:17)**
  - a. **Personal setbacks and discouragement:** Light and momentary, not forever.
  - b. **Relational struggles:** Light and momentary, not forever.
  - c. **Physical disabilities and health concerns:** Light and momentary, not forever.
  - d. **The trials of those we love:** Light and momentary, not forever.
6. The glory the Lord has in store for those who believe in Jesus Christ is beyond comparison. It far outshines the temporary things of this age that feel so permanent in nature. It is part of our imperishable hope as children of God.

### III. A body in the image of Jesus (v. 45-49)

*45 Thus it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. 46 But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual. 47 The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. 48 As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. 49 Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven.*

1. Paul makes an additional contrast in this passage. He contrasts the first man, Adam with Jesus who is referred to here as the "last Adam." Adam was formed by God from the dust of the earth and we bear his image by nature. Jesus is the life-giving spirit. He is from heaven, not from the dust of the earth. Those who believe in Him are referred to here as bearing His image and our new body will be in the image of Jesus.

2. That means that if you want to get an accurate picture of what your glorified body is going to be like, you need to look to Jesus (**1 John 3:2**). You need to see what was true of Him after He rose from the grave.

- a. He could be physically touched. (Luke 24:39)
- b. He ate food (Luke 24:42-43)
- c. He could pass through walls (John 20:19)
- d. He looked different (Mark 16:12)
- e. He could appear out of nowhere (Luke 24:36)
- f. He could ascend into Heaven without being impacted by the atmosphere (Acts 1:9)

source: <http://www.gty.org/blog/B130701/a-glorified-body-the-necessity-of-our-resurrection>

3. There is one difference between Christ's glorified body and ours. Our glorified body won't bear the scars of our earthly life, but His body retains the scars of His crucifixion (**John 20:27**). Those scars on His hands and side are the only man made thing in Heaven and they serve as an eternal testimony to all He did to secure our salvation.

4. Jesus delights to free us from the bondage of our earthly tents and share the glory of a transformed, glorified body with us. That's something that He eagerly desires that we experience. It was for our salvation that He came to earth, was crucified and resurrected in the first place. If we believe in Him, He wants us to delight in what He has in store. If we don't yet believe in Him, He wants us to trust in Him and receive new life in Him.

5. In one of his lighter moments, Benjamin Franklin penned his own epitaph. It seems he must have been influenced by Paul's teaching of the resurrection of the body. Here's what he wrote:

The Body of B. Franklin, Printer	Like the Cover of an old Book
Its contents torn out,	And stript of its Lettering and Guilding,
Lies here, Food for Worms,	But the Work shall not be wholly lost:
For it will, as he believ'd,	Appear once more
In a new & more perfect Edition,	Corrected and amended by the Author. -Bible.org

**Through faith in Jesus who rose from death, we will be blessed with a body of heavenly glory, imperishable and alive in His image forever. Today we celebrate His resurrection while also looking forward to our own.**

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**II. A body that is imperishable (v. 42-44)**

**2 Corinthians 4:17** - For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison,

**III. A body in the image of Jesus (v. 45-49)**

**1 John 3:2** - Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.

**John 20:27** - Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe."