

# 1 Corinthians 15 Commentary

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1 CORINTHIANS - PROBLEMS OF A LOCAL CHURCH  
 Click chart to enlarge  
 Charts from [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission

**1 Corinthians 15:1** Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, ([NASB 1995 - Lockman](#))

- **Now I make known** 1Co 15:3-11 1:23,24 2:2-7 Ac 18:4,5 Ga 1:6-12
- **which also you received** 1Co 1:4-8 Mk 4:16-20 Joh 12:48 Ac 2:41 11:1 1Th 1:6 2:13 4:1 2Th 3:6
- **in which also you stand:** Ro 5:2 2Co 1:24 1Pe 5:12
- See also The Resurrection of Christ
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## LET'S REVIEW THE GOSPEL YOU RECEIVED

**For in depth commentary see [1 Corinthians 15:1](#)** (For the most part the notes below are not duplicated on the in depth commentary).

**Robertson and Plummer** - Having treated of various social, moral, ecclesiastical, and liturgical questions, the Apostle now takes up a doctrinal one, which he has kept to the last because of its vital importance. Calvin suggests that St Paul did not wish to treat of so momentous a subject until, by the rebukes and exhortations of the previous chapters, he had brought the Corinthians to a proper state of mind. There is here no trace of a question asked by the Corinthians: this subject St Paul starts himself, in consequence of information which has reached him. Thus the letter begins and ends in a similar way. At the outset he treated of a subject which had been reported to him (1 Cor 1:11), and he closes with one which again was suggested by what he had heard (1 Cor 15:12),—that there were certain people at Corinth who denied the doctrine of the Resurrection. Who these persons were we do not know. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Stevenson** - The resurrection is both hard to believe and yet is the central truth of Christianity. We believe that a man died and was placed into the ground and that He rose again from the dead. Because we believe that, we believe a lot of other things.

Because he rose, we know that He was really who He said He was.

Because he rose, we believe that our sins are forgiven.

Because he rose, we have a reason for living.

Because he rose, we know that we are going to grow when they plant us in the ground.

There once was a woman who was planing to move to another city. She had already packed her furniture and she had only her dog left, a brown cocker spaniel. She placed her dog into a cage, had it crated, and instructed the movers to transport it to her new home. When the movers had arrived at the new city, they opened the cage and found that the dog was dead. This through them into something of a panic until one of them had an idea. "We can go out and find another dog to replace this one and she will never know the difference." With this plan, the men scoured every pet store in the city until they found a dog that looked exactly like the one that had died. They purchased him and placed him in the cage and closed it up to await the coming of the woman. When she arrived, they opened the cage for her and, as her eyes saw the

dog jumping and barking in the cage, her jaw dropped and her eyes became as wide as saucers. "Is anything wrong," they asked. Still staring at the barking dog, she replied, "Yes there is. When I put that dog in there, it was dead."

The Greeks had a problem in believing the resurrection. They believed in the immortality of the soul, but they never conceived in a resurrection of the body. The Greek philosophers taught that the body was evil while the soul was good. In this light, death was considered to be the final release of the soul from the body. The body was considered to be a prison. The soul was the prisoner. They held that if a man was to be free from sin, then his soul must be free from its prison house - the body. This philosophy was reflected in the reaction of the men of Athens when Paul preached to them on the Areopagus (Acts 17:22-32). It was when Paul mentioned the truth of the resurrection of the dead that they began to turn away and to mock. "Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some began to sneer, but others said, "We shall hear you again concerning this." (Acts 17:32+). The preaching of the resurrection was a stumbling block to the Greeks in the same way that the preaching of the cross was a stumbling block to the Jews.

#### **Jack Arnold** ([1 Corinthians 15:1-11 The Resurrection And The Gospel](#)) -

Most of the Corinthian Christians were heavily influenced by Greek philosophy which taught that the body was a prison for the soul and at death the soul was set free from the body and passed on into eternal oblivion. Therefore, there were some who were questioning whether Christians would be raised bodily from the dead. The fact of Christ's resurrection, while questioned by some, was generally assumed, for He was a unique case. In some ways we can be thankful for this serious doctrinal error, for had it not happened we would have never had this marvelous chapter on the resurrection. There are three basic points about this chapter that must be understood. First, as we have said, it is speaking about the resurrection of the body and not the immortality of the soul, for any Greek would admit the soul survived after death. The resurrection of the body is unique and peculiar to Christianity. Second, this chapter is dealing with the resurrection of Christians and not unbelievers. The Bible teaches that all men will get a resurrected body but some will be raised to eternal bliss and others to eternal destruction.

John 5:28-29 "Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, 29 and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a **resurrection** of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a **resurrection of judgment**."

Third, the Apostle Paul is describing an event that will take place at the Second Advent at which time Christ will make a personal appearance on this earth. This chapter says nothing about the experience of believers between death and resurrection. Yet, the Bible seems to imply that the God-spirit of the Christian at death will go directly to be with Christ, waiting the final resurrection.

2 Cor 5:8+ we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.

Php 1:23+ But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better;

**Now I** (present tense - continually) **make known** ([gnorizo](#) - remind, clarify, make clear) **to you, brethren** ([adelphos](#) affectionate address, as fellow believers), **the gospel** (Good News - [euaggelion](#)) **which I preached** ([euaggelizo/euangelizo](#)) **to you** (in the past), **which also you received** ([paralambano](#) - took to your side, received with favor, "welcomed"), **in which also you stand** (perfect tense - took a stand and continue now in a state of standing) - Note that Paul does not say "a Gospel" but **THE Gospel**," the specific, definitive Gospel. Why "THE Gospel? In 2 Cor 11:4 Paul warned "For if one comes and preaches **another Jesus** whom we have not preached, or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a **different gospel** which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully." While he is being sarcastic, the warning is serious to be alert for a counterfeit gospel, which is not THE gospel. That is why 1 Cor 15:1-8 is absolutely critical to understand and receive. Make known can be translated remind, indicating this is not new revelation to the Corinthians. It makes a good point that since we are still human, we have a tendency to forget things, so it is important to be reminded, especially if the truth and implications regarding eternal life as does THE Gospel! **Received** is to formally accept favorably authoritative teaching. Note in what they are now "standing." This is their abiding condition. The Gospel! The Gospel is surely firm ground on which to **stand** and to base our entire life, in this life and the life to come.

**Richard Pratt on in which you stand** - In Paul's day being a Christian was more than intellectual assent to a group of doctrines. The social price that followers of Christ paid forced them to take a stand in a hostile world. ([Holman NT Commentary](#))

**Barnett** on **in which you stand** - That church – and every other church – 'stands *in* it', that is, exists *by means of* it. The gospel is the very 'means' of a church's existence. It may have a noticeboard bearing the word 'church', but unless that assembly is founded on the gospel it is a church in name only. ([Focus on the Bible Commentary – 1 Corinthians: Holiness and Hope of a Rescued People](#))

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## Still New

I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you. —1 Corinthians 15:1

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:1-8

Did you ever notice how quickly things get old or outdated?

I thought about this the other day as I taught my class at a Christian college. They're on the cutting edge by providing a laptop computer for each student. It wasn't too long ago when it was innovative for a college to have computers for students in the library. Then it was cutting edge to provide them for dorm rooms. But someday even personal laptops will become obsolete as well.

Everything man creates will eventually go out of date. Everything gets old. Everything, that is, but the gospel. The gospel is over 2,000 years old. And though there have been a lot of updated Bible translations, the gospel is still as relevant today as it was when it was written.

The gospel is this: Jesus Christ came to earth, lived a perfect life, gave up His life by being sacrificed on a cross, was buried in a borrowed tomb, and was raised from the dead 3 days later (1 Cor. 15:1-4). Because He took our punishment for sin on Himself, He can forgive our sins and make us children of God if we put our faith and trust in Him (Acts 13:38-39).

Let the greatest story ever told make you brand-new—forever. It's the story that never grows old. By: Dave Branon [Our Daily Bread](#). [Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

O cleansing Word, O precious Word,  
Thy promises are true;  
They are the "Amen" in my life;  
Thy truths are ever new. —Anon.

The gospel never grows old.

**1 Corinthians 15:2 by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. ([NASB 1995 - Lockman](#))**

- **by which also you are saved** 1Co 1:18,21 Ac 2:47 \*Gr: Ro 1:16 2Co 2:15 Eph 2:8 2Ti 1:9
- **if you hold fast the word**, 1Co 15:11,12 Pr 3:1 4:13 6:20-23 23:23 Col 1:23 2Th 2:15 Heb 2:1 Heb 3:6,14 4:14 10:23
- **unless you believed in vain**: 1Co 15:14 Ps 106:12,13 Lu 8:13 Joh 8:31,32, 44 Ac 8:13 2Co 6:1 Ga 3:4 Jas 2:14,17,26
- See also The Resurrection of Christ
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## Related Passages:

1 Corinthians 1:18+ For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved (progressive sanctification) it is the power of God.

2 Thessalonians 2:15+ So then, brethren, **stand firm and hold to** the traditions which you were taught, whether by word of mouth or by letter from us.

Hebrews 3:6+ but Christ was faithful as a Son over His house—whose house we are, **if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end.** (aka [Perseverance](#)),

Hebrews 3:14+ For we have become partakers of Christ, **if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end** (aka [Perseverance](#)),

**COMMENT** - We hold fast to the end because the Spirit holds us fast, enabling us to hold fast. This shows that this person has the indwelling Spirit.

John 8:31-32, 44-45, 58-59 (**EXAMPLE OF THOSE WHO DID NOT HOLD FAST!**) So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had **believed** Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."....44 "**You are of your father the devil**, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies. 45 "But because I speak the truth, **you do not believe Me.**"....58 Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, **I am.**"(JESUS' CLAIM HE WAS YAHWEH, GOD!) 59 Therefore **they picked up stones to throw at Him**, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple.

Acts 8:13-24+ Even Simon himself **believed**; and **after being baptized**, he continued on with Philip, and as he observed signs and great miracles taking place, he was constantly amazed. 14 Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent them Peter and John, 15 who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. 16 For He had not yet fallen upon any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 17 Then they began laying their hands on them, and they were receiving the Holy Spirit. 18 Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was bestowed through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money, 19 saying, "**Give this authority to me as well, so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit.**" 20 But Peter said to him, "**May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money!** 21 "**You have no part or portion in this matter, for your heart is not right before God.** 22 "**Therefore repent of this wickedness of yours, and pray the Lord that, if possible, the intention of your heart may be forgiven you.** 23 "**For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bondage of iniquity.**" 24 But Simon answered and said, "Pray to the Lord for me yourselves, so that nothing of what you have said may come upon me."

James 2:14-26+ - What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has **faith** but he has **no works**? **Can that faith save him?** 15 If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and be filled," and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? 17 Even so **faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself.** 18 But someone may well say, "You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works." 19 You believe that God is one. **You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder.**20 But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that **faith without works is useless?** 21 Was not Abraham our father justified (IN THIS CONTEXT, NOT DECLARED RIGHTEOUS BUT SHOWN TO BE RIGHTEOUS) by works when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? 22 You see that **faith was working with his works**, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected; 23 and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "AND ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS," and he was called the friend of God. 24 You see that a man is justified (SHOWN TO BE RIGHTEOUS) by works and not by faith alone. 25 In the same way, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? 26 For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.

## **THOSE TRULY SAVED WILL HOLD FAST TO THE END**

**For in depth commentary** see [1 Corinthians 15:2](#) (For the most part the notes below are not duplicated on the in depth commentary).

**By which also you are saved** ([sozo](#)) - **By which** is by the Gospel. **Are saved** is present tense, passive voice (= divine passive) and thus could be rendered "you are being saved." Yes, salvation in respect to [justification](#) ("positional") is a once and for all completed divine transaction ("past tense salvation" - cf Eph 2:8+ has "have been saved" - perfect tense - past completed action with continuing effect), but believers are being saved daily, even moment by moment, and this ongoing salvation is the equivalent of progressive sanctification or so-called "present tense salvation." (See [Three Tenses of Salvation](#)) How are we being saved daily? By the Gospel! Earlier Paul alluded to progressive sanctification in 1 Cor 1:18+ writing "the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who **are being saved** (present tense, divine passive) it is the power of God."

As **Arnold** says "Through every trial, every difficulty, every hurt and every blessing, God is presently saving the Christian, conforming him more and more to the image of Christ. He is saving us so that our time on this earth will be meaningful and profitable. The gospel does save us and is saving us right now. We need the gospel today as much as we needed it the day we were first saved. As Christians we must be constantly going back to the truths of the Cross - forgiveness, acceptance, righteousness,

grace, love and mercy." ([1 Corinthians 15:1-11 The Resurrection And The Gospel](#))

**if you** (present tense - continually) **hold fast** (*katecho* = "continue to believe") **the word** (*logos* - in context the Gospel) **which I preached** (*euaggelizo/ euangelizo*) **to you, unless you believed** (*pisteuo*) **in vain** (*eike* - without effect, all for naught, thoughtlessly, without proper consideration) - They continue to **hold fast** to the end (of their life or this present evil age) because they have a supernatural power, the Spirit, within them, and it is He Who enables them to do supernaturally what they could never do naturally in reliance on their fallen flesh.

How important is the resurrection in salvation? Paul includes belief in the resurrection as part of the confession of a genuine believer

that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that **God raised Him from the dead**, you will be saved; 10 for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. (Ro 10:9-10+)

**Utley** says the "IF" is "a FIRST CLASS CONDITIONAL sentence, which implies that they would "hold fast" to the truth of the gospel, which he preached to them, but it adds a note of contingency by a second "ei" (unless). This seems to parallel Jesus' Parable of the Soils (cf. Mt. 13:3-9+, Mt 13:18-23+ esp vv 20-22) and John's discussion in 1 John 2:19+ of those who were in the fellowship, but left. There were those factions in Corinth who by their actions, attitudes, and theology showed they were never believers! ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Arnold** - Notice Paul adds a condition. He says, **'If you hold firmly.'** It seems he is saying it is possible to believe in vain. A person can have an emotional or intellectual superficial human faith that accepts the words of the gospel as a kind of insurance policy against going to hell, but the gospel has not penetrated into and changed that person's life so there are new desires for Christ, new striving for righteousness, new patterns for living. There can be a mechanical conformity to Christianity that never sees any need for faith, for change, for dynamic, for discipline, for Bible study, for prayer, for evangelism or for fellowship. This is believing in vain. Why? If a person has really met the resurrected Christ by faith, his or her life will be changed. Christianity is not facts, head knowledge, ritual or religion. Christianity is knowing and loving the resurrected Christ. It is holding fast to the truths about the death and resurrection of Christ. What then is Paul's point? There is no gospel, there is no salvation apart from the resurrected Christ whom Paul will write about in the next nine verses and show how He appeared and changed people's lives when they met Him. ([1 Corinthians 15:1-11 The Resurrection And The Gospel](#))

**Barnett** - 'Drifting' from the gospel is a continuing concern (cf. Heb. 2:1). Clearly Paul is urging them to *continue* to hold tenaciously and purposefully to the gospel. (ED: OF COURSE THEY ARE ENABLED TO CONTINUALLY HOLD ON BY THE SPIRIT) ([Focus on the Bible Commentary – 1 Corinthians: Holiness and Hope of a Rescued People](#))

**Pratt** explains saying: "Anticipating the importance of what he would say about the resurrection, Paul made it clear that anyone who did not hold to the gospel he had preached could not be saved. Only by this gospel could they be saved from God's judgment. Salvation comes through belief in the good news of Christ's death and resurrection. Yet, Paul added an important qualification. They are saved, if they hold firmly to the word. As he indicated throughout this epistle, Paul believed that saving faith would set itself apart from insincerity through time. **True believers persevere in their commitments to Christ.** Paul did not mean that truly regenerate people could lose their salvation, nor that truly regenerate people were without sin and failure. He understood, as the entire Bible teaches, that saving faith proves itself over a lifetime. **Paul warned that if the Corinthians had once trusted the gospel of Christ but did not hold fast to that gospel, then they believed in vain. In other words, their temporary commitments to Christ would not benefit them as they had hoped. Anyone who turns away from belief in the resurrection of Christ puts himself in a precarious position. He or she stands in line for God's judgment, not for his eternal salvation.** ([Holman NT Commentary](#)) (Bold added)

#### Related Resources:

- [Perseverance of the Saints - is it biblical? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [The Need to Persevere](#) - Bob Utley
- [Can a Christian lose salvation? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Can a person believe in some sense but not be saved? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What are some of the signs of genuine saving faith? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What is the relationship of faith, works, and security in salvation? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Is it possible for a believer to unbelieve? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What are some of the signs of genuine saving faith? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [The Almost Christian](#) - John Wesley
- [Was Simon the Sorcerer a Saved Man? \(Acts 8:9-24\)](#)

**1 Corinthians 15:3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,**

**(NASB 1995 - Lockman)**

- **I delivered** : 1Co 4:1,2 11:2,23 Eze 3:17 Mt 20:18,19 Mk 16:15,16 Lu 24:46,47 Ga 1:12
- **Christ** : Mt 26:28 Ro 3:25 4:25 2Co 5:21 Ga 1:4 3:13 Eph 1:7 5:2 Heb 10:11,12 1Pe 2:24 3:18 1Jn 2:2 Rev 1:5
- **according** : Ge 3:15 Ps 22:1-31 Ps 69:1-36 Isa 53:1-12 Da 9:24-26 Zec 13:7 Lu 24:26,27,46 Ac 3:18 26:22,23 1Pe 1:11 2:24
- See also The Resurrection of Christ
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### **Related Passages:**

Galatians 1:11-12 For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. 12 For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

### **SPECIAL DELIVERY "HIGH PRIORITY"**

**For in depth commentary** see [1 Corinthians 15:3](#) (For the most part the notes below are not duplicated on the in depth commentary).

**For** (gar) is a term of explanation. What is Paul explaining? He had just warned about believing in vain. Now he wants to explain what must be believed so that one does not believe in vain and he will now explain that belief in the resurrection of Christ is central to the Gospel message.

**I delivered** ([paradidomi](#)) **to you as of first importance what I also received** ([paralambano](#)) - The Good News was "sent" by special delivery and was/is of special importance, in fact there was nothing more important in the teaching of the Gospel then the points he now records.

**Pratt** - In rabbinic Judaism this terminology described the transmission of authoritative religious teachings. Paul told the Corinthians to maintain the gospel as he had given it to them because it was a sacred tradition, not a human tradition. ([Holman NT Commentary](#))

**Jack Arnold** - The gospel Paul declared to these Corinthians was not based on superstition, or on evolution of religious ideas, nor did it spring up from unusual emotional circumstances. Neither did Paul get it from the other Apostles, but the gospel was given to him by the resurrected Christ Himself. ([1 Corinthians 15:1-11 The Resurrection And The Gospel](#))

Notice that Paul emphasizes three primary truths regarding the Gospel and all are substantiated in the Old Testament - Christ's death, burial and resurrection.

**That Christ** ([Christos](#)) **died** ([apothnesko](#)) **for our sins** ([hamartia](#)) **according to the Scriptures** ([graphe](#)) - Don't miss the centerpiece of the Gospel -- **CHRIST**. According to the Scriptures is mentioned twice in this section and is as if Paul is calling the Old Testament to the witness stand to attest to these crucial truths of the Gospel. It is as if Paul is saying this witness is believable and trustworthy because it is the holy Word of God spoken through men and recorded for our examination. If you don't believe Paul, go back to the original source in the Old Testament and you will find that it was foretold the Messiah would die, be buried and be resurrected. (e.g., Ge 3:15 Ps 22:1-31 Ps 69:1-36 Isa 53:1-12 Da 9:24-26 Zec 13:7 Ps 2:7 Ps 16:10-11 Jonah 1:17 > Mt 12:39-40)

O the love that drew salvation's plan!

O the grace that brought it down to man!

O the mighty gulf that God did span

At Calvary! -- Newell

**Barnett on Christ** - Here "**Christ**" is Jesus' title, the Greek form of the Hebrew "[Messiah](#)". The coming of the Messiah/Christ was a great hope of the Old Testament, focused on a new David, his "son" who will reign from his throne forever, the Lord's "anointed", "Immanuel", "born of a virgin", called "mighty God prince of peace", "the shoot from the stump of Jesse" on whom "the Spirit of God will rest". Jesus was confessed by Peter to be "the Christ", addressed by Bartimaeus as "son of David", and inquired of by the High Priest as to whether he was "the Christ", to which Jesus replied, "I am" (Mark 8:29; 10:47-48; 14:61-62). The New Testament throbs with Christology, the conviction that Jesus was the One "anointed of the Lord", "his Christ." The death of Christ "for our sins" fulfils

another hope of the Old Testament, the advent of the Servant of the Lord who was to die "for" the sins of others (Isa. 53:8). Isaiah connects the new "David" or "Christ" and the Suffering Servant; both are anointed with the Spirit of God (Isa. 11:2; 42:1). Thus the coming of a Spirit-anointed "David" and the suffering for the sins of others of the Spirit-anointed Servant are both "according to the Scriptures". These great and central promises of the Old Testament converge on the "Christ who died for our sins". ([1 Corinthians](#))

Note the beautiful little phrase **FOR our sins** where "for" is the preposition [huper](#) which in this context signifies in your place, as your Substitute as in 1 Cor 11:24 "This is My body, which is **FOR** [\[huper\]](#) you". Christ "stood in" for us, suffering in our stead the condemnation that should have befallen us because of manifold sins! We see this same "substitutionary" thought in Gal 1:4+ Paul writes the Lord Jesus Christ "gave Himself **FOR** [\(huper\)](#) our sins so that He might rescue us from this present evil age." (See also Eph 5:2+ Jesus "gave Himself up **FOR** [\[huper\]](#) us.", cf 2 Cor 5:14+ "One died **FOR** [\[huper\]](#) all", 2 Cor 5:15+ "He died **FOR** [\[huper\]](#) all." 2 Cor 5:21+ = "to be sin **on our behalf** [\[huper\]](#).) In short, Jesus is alluding to His [substitutionary atonement](#), His death in our place bearing our sins for us! Amazing grace indeed!

**Hunter & McShane** on the phrase **FOR our sins**- it was a substitutionary death: He died on our behalf. It was too an atoning death: it was on account of our sins with a view to their expiation; it was a sin offering, a propitiatory sacrifice for sin. He took the sinner's place and died the sinner's death, bearing the sinner's judgment. ([What the Bible teaches – 1 and 2 Corinthians](#))

**Jack Arnold** - He died **for sin**. He died as a substitution for our sins. Christ bore in His body our sins, our curse, our hell and our unbelief. He died in the sinner's place. Multiple thousands of men have died as martyrs for good causes, but only one man, Jesus Christ, died for sin and sinners. At the Cross, Christ died for our failures, our weaknesses, our rebellion and our sinful lifestyles. He did it that we might be brought to God. Almost every humanistic philosophy or religion today accepts the fact that Christ lived and died as a mere man, but there is no good news in that the gospel is good news—the good news that Christ's death accomplished something for us. It changed us. It delivered us. It set us free. ([1 Corinthians 15:1-11 The Resurrection And The Gospel](#))

The phrase **according to the Scriptures** speaks of the many Messianic Prophecies in the Scriptures (term which almost always speaks of the OT Scriptures which is all that were written at this time.)

#### Related Resources:

- [What is the gospel? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**1 Corinthians 15:4 and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, ([NASB 1995 - Lockman](#))**

- **He was buried** Isa 53:9 Mt 27:57-60 Mk 15:43-46 Lu 23:50-53 Joh 19:38-42 Ac 13:29 Ro 6:4 Col 2:12
- **was raised** : 1Co 15:16-21 Mt 20:19 27:63,64 28:1-6 Mk 9:31 10:33,34 16:2-7 Lu 9:22 Lu 18:32,33 24:5-7 Joh 2:19-21 20:1-9 Ac 1:3 2:23,24,32 13:30 Acts 17:31 Heb 13:20
- **according** Ps 2:7 Ps 16:10-11 Isa 53:10-12 Ho 6:2 Jon 1:17 Mt 12:40 Lu 24:26,46 Ac 2:25-33 13:30-37 26:22,23 1Pe 1:11
- See also The Resurrection of Christ
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Psalm 16:10-11+ **For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; Nor will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.** 11 You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.

Acts 2:29-32+ Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. 30 "And so, because he was a prophet and knew that GOD HAD SWORN TO HIM WITH AN OATH TO SEAT one OF HIS DESCENDANTS ON HIS THRONE, 31 he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that **HE WAS NEITHER ABANDONED TO HADES, NOR DID His flesh SUFFER DECAY.** 32 "This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses.

Acts 13:32-38+ "And we preach to you the good news of the promise made to the fathers, 33 that God has fulfilled this promise to our children in that **He raised up Jesus**, as it is also written in the second Psalm, 'YOU ARE MY SON; TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU.' 34 "As for the fact that He raised Him up from the dead, no longer to return to decay, He has spoken in this way: 'I WILL GIVE YOU THE HOLY and SURE blessings OF DAVID.' 35 "Therefore He also says in another Psalm, '**YOU WILL NOT ALLOW YOUR HOLY ONE TO UNDERGO DECAY.**' 36 "For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep,



and was laid among his fathers and underwent decay; 37 but **He whom God raised did not undergo decay.** 38 "Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through Him forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you,

Isaiah 53:9+ His grave was assigned with wicked men, Yet He was with a rich man in His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was there any deceit in His mouth.

Jonah 1:17 And the LORD appointed a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the stomach of the fish **three days and three nights.**

Acts 17:1-4+ Now when they had traveled through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. 2 And according to Paul's custom, he went to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned ([dialegomai](#)) with them from the Scriptures, 3 explaining ([dianoigo](#) = "opening up" to their hearts truths that had been obscure before - THE RESURRECTION WAS IN THE OT BUT MOST JEWS HAD MISSED IT) and giving evidence ([paratithemi](#)) that the Christ (MESSIAH) **had to suffer and rise again from the dead**, and saying, "This Jesus Whom I am proclaiming to you is the Christ (MESSIAH)" 4 And some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, along with a large number of the God-fearing Greeks and a number of the leading women.

Matthew 12:40+ for just as JONAH WAS **THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS** IN THE BELLY OF THE SEA MONSTER, so will the Son of Man be **three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.** (See Mt. 12:38-40; 16:21; 17:9,22, 23; 20:18-19; 26:32; 27:63)

Mark 8:31+ And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed, and after **three days rise again.**

Mark 10:34+ "They will mock Him and spit on Him, and scourge Him and kill Him, and **three days later He will rise again.**" (See Mark 8:31; 9:1-10,31; 14:28,58)

Luke 24:46+ and He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and **rise again from the dead the third day,** (See Luke 9:22-27)

John 2:19-22+ Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." 20 The Jews then said, "It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" 21 But He was speaking of the temple of His body. 22 So **when He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken.**

Acts 10:40+ "God **raised Him up on the third day** and granted that He become visible,

## UP FROM THE GRAVE HE AROSE

**For in depth commentary** see [1 Corinthians 15:4](#) (For the most part the notes below are not duplicated on the in depth commentary).

**And that He was buried** (Isaiah 53:9+) - This emphasizes the truth that Christ truly died (that He did not just **"Swoon"** - for more detail see [John MacArthur's sermon](#) refutation of theories of the resurrection). He was not buried alive, but dead! Note that each gospel refers to fact that Jesus was buried (Mt. 27:57-61; Mk 15:42-47; Lk 23:50-56; Jn 19:38-42).

**Arnold** - Perhaps Paul mentioned the burial also as a challenge to the unsaved world to explain the empty tomb. For two thousand years, infidels and atheists have been trying to explain the empty tomb, and none of their explanations hold water. You could have never convinced anyone who saw the death of Christ that He merely fainted in a swoon or fell into a deep coma. No, they knew Christ was dead, and without that death, the resurrection has no meaning. ([1 Corinthians 15:1-11 The Resurrection And The Gospel](#))

**Buried** ([2290](#))(**thapto**) describes putting a corpse into a grave or tomb (to entomb) and encompasses all that has to do with burying a body. Virtually all the NT uses describe literal burial. **Liddell-Scott** - "to pay the last dues to a corpse, to honour with funeral rites, i.e. in early times by burning the body, Hom.: then, simply, to bury, inter, Hdt., Att." **Thapto** - 11x/11v - buried(7), bury(4). Matt. 8:21; Matt. 8:22; Matt. 14:12; Lk. 9:59; Lk. 9:60; Lk. 16:22; Acts 2:29; Acts 5:6; Acts 5:9; Acts 5:10; 1 Co. 15:4

**Gilbrant** - is used in classical Greek for all the activities involved in "burying someone," including funeral rites, expenses, and even cremation. There are several examples in the papyri that connect thaptō with specific instructions for how a body must be buried (cf. Moulton-Milligan). **Thaptō** is used similarly in the Septuagint

over 140 times (See below). Genesis 50:25,26 and Exodus 13:19 record how Joseph's burial wishes included both Egyptian and Israelite rites. ([Complete Biblical Library - Incredible Resource](#))

THAPTO in the Septuagint - Gen. 15:15; Gen. 23:4; Gen. 23:6; Gen. 23:8; Gen. 23:11; Gen. 23:13; Gen. 23:15; Gen. 23:19; Gen. 25:9; Gen. 25:10; Gen. 35:19; Gen. 35:29; Gen. 47:29; Gen. 47:30; Gen. 49:29; Gen. 49:31; Gen. 50:5; Gen. 50:6; Gen. 50:7; Gen. 50:12; Gen. 50:13; Gen. 50:14; Gen. 50:26; Num. 11:34; Num. 20:1; Num. 33:4; Deut. 10:6; Deut. 21:23; Deut. 34:6; Jos. 24:30; Jos. 24:33; Jdg. 2:9; Jdg. 8:32; Jdg. 10:2; Jdg. 10:5; Jdg. 12:7; Jdg. 12:10; Jdg. 12:12; Jdg. 12:15; Jdg. 16:31; Ruth 1:17; 1 Sam. 25:1; 1 Sam. 28:3; 1 Sam. 31:13; 2 Sam. 2:4; 2 Sam. 2:5; 2 Sam. 2:32; 2 Sam. 3:32; 2 Sam. 4:12; 2 Sam. 17:23; 2 Sam. 21:14; 1 Ki. 2:10; 1 Ki. 2:29; 1 Ki. 2:31; 1 Ki. 2:34; 1 Ki. 11:15; 1 Ki. 11:43; 1 Ki. 12:24; 1 Ki. 13:29; 1 Ki. 13:31; 1 Ki. 14:31; 1 Ki. 15:8; 1 Ki. 15:24; 1 Ki. 16:6; 1 Ki. 16:28; 1 Ki. 22:37; 1 Ki. 22:50; 2 Ki. 8:24; 2 Ki. 9:10; 2 Ki. 9:28; 2 Ki. 9:34; 2 Ki. 9:35; 2 Ki. 10:35; 2 Ki. 12:21; 2 Ki. 13:9; 2 Ki. 13:20; 2 Ki. 13:21; 2 Ki. 14:16; 2 Ki. 14:20; 2 Ki. 15:7; 2 Ki. 15:38; 2 Ki. 16:20; 2 Ki. 20:21; 2 Ki. 21:18; 2 Ki. 21:26; 2 Ki. 23:30; 1 Chr. 10:12; 2 Chr. 9:31; 2 Chr. 12:16; 2 Chr. 14:1; 2 Chr. 16:14; 2 Chr. 21:1; 2 Chr. 21:20; 2 Chr. 22:9; 2 Chr. 24:16; 2 Chr. 24:25; 2 Chr. 25:28; 2 Chr. 26:23; 2 Chr. 27:9; 2 Chr. 28:27; 2 Chr. 32:33; 2 Chr. 33:20; 2 Chr. 35:24; 2 Chr. 36:8; Ps. 79:3; Jer. 7:32; Jer. 8:2; Jer. 14:16; Jer. 16:4; Jer. 20:6; Jer. 22:19; Ezek. 39:14; Ezek. 39:15; Hos. 9:6;

#### Related Resource:

- Utley's topic - [Burial Practices](#)

#### [Crown Him the Lord of life,](#)

Who triumphed o'er the grave,

Who rose victorious to the strife

For those He came to save.

—Thring

**And that He was raised ([egeiro](#)) on the third day according to the Scriptures ([graphe](#))** - God promised it and He kept His promise. He always does. As Joshua said "not one word of all the good words which the LORD your God spoke concerning you has failed; all have been fulfilled for you, not one of them has failed." (Josh 23:14) It is important to note that **raised** is in the **perfect tense** which describes a past completed action (Christ's resurrection on the third day) with the continuing state of His resurrection. Note also that **was raised** is passive voice indicating the divine passive (Acts 2:24, 32+, Acts 3:15+, Acts 10:40, 41+, Acts 13:30, 34+, etc). This action by God the Father asserts His approval of Jesus' life, teachings, and sacrificial, substitutionary death (cf Ro 4:25+).

The resurrection was the Father's approving "Amen" to His Son's "It is Finished (Paid in Full)!"

#### [HALLELUJAH!](#)

**Utley** - The NT often attributes the works of redemption to all three persons of the Godhead: **(1) God the Father raised Jesus** (cf. Acts 2:24; 3:15; 4:10; 5:30; 10:40; 13:30, 33, 34, 37; 17:31; Rom. 6:4, 9; 10:9; 1 Cor. 6:14; 2 Cor. 4:14; Gal. 1:1; Eph. 1:20; Col. 2:12; 1 Thess. 1:10); **(2) God the Son raised Himself** (cf. John 2:19–22; 10:17–18); **(3) God the Spirit raised Jesus** (cf. Ro 8:11 = the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead).

**Barnett on the third day** - Christ died on Friday afternoon and 'was raised' sometime on the Saturday evening, so how are we to understand the words 'he was raised on the *third* day'? The tradition Paul quotes does not say, 'He was raised three days later', that is, seventy two hours later, but rather 'he was raised *on* the third day'. The Jewish day began at sunset. Thus Christ died and was buried on Friday afternoon (day one); he remained in the tomb Friday sunset to Saturday sunset (day two); he was raised alive sometime during Saturday night before the arrival of the women on Sunday morning (day 3). ([1 Corinthians](#))

What has that empty sepulcher to say to you and me?

It tells us that the Savior's death has set His people free;

He died, our sins upon Him laid;

He rose, because the debt was paid.

—Reich

The resurrection assures what Calvary secures.

**Richard Pratt** - By including both Christ's death and resurrection as essential elements of the gospel, Paul precluded those who denied the resurrection from claiming salvation in Christ. ([Holman NT Commentary](#))

Who raised Jesus from the dead? The Trinity raised Jesus from the dead.

Acts 2:24 God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it.

Acts 5:30 The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree.

John 10:17-18 For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father."

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live

Romans 1:4 and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord

Romans 8:11 If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

#### **Related Resource:**

- The Resurrection of Christ

[Ray Stedman](#) - That is the story of the gospel--three basic facts. These are not doctrines; these are not philosophies; these are not ideas that men have had about what God should be like. These are simple, hard-nose facts that occurred in history that cannot be eliminated or evaded. There they are. These facts have changed the history of the world. Our faith does not rest upon mere philosophy but upon facts that have occurred and cannot be taken away from us ([1 Corinthians 15:1-4 Of First Importance](#)).

#### **UP FROM THE GRAVE HE AROSE**

Daniel Thornton

Low in the grave He lay  
Jesus my Savior!  
Waiting the coming day  
Jesus my Lord!

Up from the grave He arose  
With a mighty triumph o'er His foes  
He arose a Victor from the dark domain  
And He lives forever with His saints to reign  
He arose! (He arose)  
He arose! (He arose)  
Hallelujah! Christ arose!

Vainly they watch His bed  
Jesus, my Savior!  
Vainly they seal the dead  
Jesus my Lord!

Up from the grave He arose  
With a mighty triumph o'er His foes  
He arose a Victor from the dark domain  
And He lives forever with His saints to reign  
He arose! (He arose)  
He arose! (He arose)  
Hallelujah! Christ arose!

Death cannot keep his prey  
Jesus, my Savior!  
He tore the bars away  
Jesus my Lord!

Up from the grave He arose  
With a mighty triumph o'er His foes  
He arose a Victor from the dark domain  
And He lives forever with His saints to reign  
He arose! (He arose)  
He arose! (He arose)  
Hallelujah! Christ arose!

Up from the grave He arose

With a mighty triumph o'er His foes  
He arose a Victor from the dark domain  
And He lives forever with His saints to reign  
He arose! (He arose)  
He arose! (He arose)  
Hallelujah! Christ arose!

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**Question:** [What was the significance of Jesus being dead for three days?](#)

**Answer:** There are several reasons it is significant Jesus was dead for three days before His resurrection. First, resurrection after three days of death proved to Jesus' opponents that He truly rose from the dead. Why? According to Jewish tradition, a person's soul/spirit remained with his/her dead body for three days. After three days, the soul/spirit departed. If Jesus' resurrection had occurred on the same day or even the next day, it would have been easier for His enemies to argue He had never truly died. Significantly, Jesus waited several days after Lazarus had died before He came to resurrect Lazarus so that no one could deny the miracle (John 11:38–44).

A second reason it was important for Jesus to be dead for three days was to fulfill biblical prophecy. Jesus personally claimed He would be dead three days (Matthew 12:40; 16:21; 27:63; John 2:19). Also, some point to Hosea 6:1–3 as a prophecy of the Messiah's resurrection after three days: "Come, let us return to the LORD. He has torn us to pieces but he will heal us; he has injured us but he will bind up our wounds. After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will restore us, that we may live in his presence. Let us acknowledge the LORD; let us press on to acknowledge him. As surely as the sun rises, he will appear; he will come to us like the winter rains, like the spring rains that water the earth." This may also be the passage Paul refers to in 1 Corinthians 15:4 that Jesus "was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures."

The three days were significant in other ways as well. Jesus died on a Friday, Nisan 14, the day when the Passover lamb was sacrificed. His death represents the death of a perfect, unblemished sacrifice on our behalf. His resurrection on the third day took place on the first day of the week, illustrating a new beginning and new life to all who trust in Him.

So, why was it important for Jesus to be dead for three days before His resurrection? (1) So the unbelieving Jews could not deny that Jesus had truly been dead. (2) Because three days is what Jesus Himself prophesied. Aside from these two reasons, the Word of God does not explicitly state the reason for the necessity of three days between Jesus' death and resurrection. [GotQuestions.org](#)

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## Rescued

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved. —Acts 16:31

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, 20-25

Manuel Gonzalez was the first rescue worker to reach the 33 miners trapped for 69 days in a Chilean mine explosion in 2010. At great risk to his own life, he went underground more than 2,000 feet to bring the trapped men back to the surface. The world watched in amazement as one by one each miner was rescued and transported to freedom.

The Bible tells us of an even more amazing rescue. Because of Adam and Eve's disobedience, all of mankind is trapped in sin (Gen. 2:17; 3:6,19; Rom. 5:12). Unable to break free, everyone faces certain death—physically and eternally. But God has provided a Rescuer—Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Everyone who accepts the free gift of salvation offered through His death and resurrection is freed from sin's grip and its resulting death penalty (Rom. 5:8-11; 10:9-11; Eph. 2:1-10).

Jesus Christ is the "firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep" (1 Cor. 15:20). He was the first to be raised from the dead, never to die again. Likewise, all will be given life who put their faith in Christ (Rom. 8:11).

Are you still trapped in your sins? Accept Jesus' gift of salvation and enjoy the freedom of life in Christ and eternity with Him (Acts 16:31; Eph. 2:1; Col. 2:13). By: C. P. Hia ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Thinking It Over

What keeps you from calling out to God for spiritual rescue? Do you fear that you are too bad for God's grace? Read and think about Romans 3:23-26.

Through His cross, Jesus rescues and redeems.

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## Would Or Did?

Christ died for our sins . . . , was buried, and . . . rose again the third day according to the Scriptures. —1 Corinthians 15:3-4

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

Not many years ago, we watched as the “WWJD” craze swept through the Christian community. The bracelet-emblazoned theme “What Would Jesus Do?” was a valuable reminder to many people that we should consider the heart and mind of Jesus when making choices. As we seek to live in a way that honors the Savior, it is appropriate to measure our attitudes and decisions against the example our Lord set for us.

Recently, however, I was in a church where I saw a slightly different message. This church's sign read, “WDJD—What Did Jesus Do?” That is indeed the more important question, because our salvation depends on it. Paramount among the remarkable deeds of the Son of God are the events described in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, “For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.”

What did Jesus do? He took the suffering and guilt for our wrongdoing and paid our penalty. He died and conquered death so we could live. And the fact is, we will never be able to fully consider what Jesus would do until we have embraced what He did do for us on the cross. By: Bill Crowder ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

To follow Christ in all we do  
Can be a worthy goal  
If first we've put our trust in Him  
To save our sinful soul. —Sper

We are saved not by what we do but by trusting what Christ has done.

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## Resurrection And Life

I am the resurrection and the life. —John 11:25

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life!” It's one thing to make such a bold assertion; it's another to back it up—and back it up Jesus did by rising from the dead.

“If you believe that the Son of God died and rose again,” writes George MacDonald, “your whole future is full of the dawn of eternal morning, coming up beyond the hills of life, and full of such hope as the highest imagination for the poet has not a glimmer yet.”

The Son of God died and rose again, and His resurrection is the guarantee that God will bring us up and out of the ground: A thinking, feeling, remembering, recognizable person will live forever.

Living forever means living out the thought of eternity that God has placed in our hearts; meeting again one's believing loved ones lost through separating death; living in a world without sorrow; seeing our Lord who loves us and gave everything to unite us to Him forever.

But I see another meaning. Since we have this life and the next, we don't have to “have it all” now. We can live in broken and ruined bodies for a time; we can endure poverty and hardship for a while; we can face loneliness, heartache, and pain for a season. Why? There is a second birth—life in heaven forever. By: David H. Roper ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Yes, Christ the Lord is risen,  
Has come forth from the grave;  
He breaks the chains of death for you  
And now has power to save. —Woodruff

The resurrection is the foundation of our faith.

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## He Paid The Toll

Having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. —Romans 5:9

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:1-8

My daughter Ann and her family were about to cross the Mackinac Bridge into Michigan's Upper Peninsula when a wild storm hit. High winds forced authorities to close the world's longest suspension bridge. When it finally opened, a long string of cars crossed over.

Ann and her family drove up to the booth to pay the toll, but the attendant said, "You don't need to pay. The guy in front of you paid your toll for you." As they watched the taillights of the minivan in front of them disappear, they knew they had no chance to thank the generous driver.

This reminded me of the enormous price that was required for our entrance into heaven—a price we could never pay. But as that driver ahead paid the toll for my daughter, so One has paid the price for our safe entrance into heaven. Jesus paid the full "toll." He shed His blood on the cross to satisfy the demands of a holy God (1 Cor. 15:3-4). Christ redeemed us by His death, and now by faith we can be freed of the penalty of our sin and be allowed to enter heaven.

If you are not a believer in Jesus Christ, accept the payment He made for you on the cross. There is no other way to be reconciled to God. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

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### **Empty Proof**

He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures. —1 Corinthians 15:4

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:1-8

In the days after the French Revolution, a man tried to start a new religion that he believed was superior to Christianity. But he was disappointed at his lack of success. He revealed his frustration to a clergyman and asked what he could do.

The clergyman replied that it was no easy task to begin a new religion—so difficult that he had nothing to suggest. But after a moment's reflection, he said, "There's one plan that you might want to consider. Why don't you get yourself crucified and rise again the third day?"

The firm foundation of the Christian faith is an empty tomb. The New Testament declares that the death of Jesus paid the penalty for our sin. But how can anyone know for sure that Christ's crucifixion was acceptable to God? It doesn't matter much what we think of the death of Jesus; what matters is what God thinks about it.

God's approval of Christ's sacrifice is proven by the resurrection. It stands as God's signed receipt that He is completely satisfied. Without the resurrection, Christianity has nothing much to offer the world. But the fact that Christ died and then rose from the grave "is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes" (Rom. 1:16). By: Haddon W. Robinson ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

When Jesus Christ was crucified,  
He paid sin's penalty;  
His rising from the grave revealed  
His death's sufficiency. —Sper

The resurrection is the Father's "amen" to the Son's "it is finished."

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### **A Dead Man Cannot Save**

Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and . . . rose again the third day. —1 Corinthians 15:3-4

Today's Scripture: Acts 2:22-36

A young boy stood outside an art store looking intently at a painting of Jesus on the cross. A man approached and asked, "Do you know who that is?"

The boy answered, "Yes, sir, that is Jesus the Savior who died on the cross to save me. Those people around Him are the soldiers who killed Him. And that woman who is crying was His mother."

The man patted the boy on the head and walked away. He had not gone far when he felt a tug on his sleeve. The same little fellow he had spoken to moments before said, "Please, sir, I forgot to tell you something else. Jesus is not on that cross anymore. He is

alive because He rose again. He is in heaven today.”

That youngster knew the living Savior who died and rose and lives today. He knew the truth of the gospel.

The climax of the gospel is the resurrection. Every sermon preached by the apostles included the news that Jesus is not dead. Today, no matter how eloquent a sermon may be, it is not the gospel if it leaves Jesus on the cross or in the tomb. A dead man can save no one.

Do you personally know and boldly proclaim the living Savior? By: M.R. DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

I will sing of my Redeemer  
And His heavenly love for me;  
He from death to life has brought me,  
Son of God, with Him to be. —Bliss

The good news is not that Jesus lived and died, but that He died and lives.

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## **The Cross Speaks**

Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and . . . rose again the third day. —1 Corinthians 15:3-4

Today's Scripture: Acts 2:22-39

Crosses decorate church steeples and designate burial places. Sometimes they mark the spot where people died in highway accidents. And they are often worn as jewelry.

Crosses remind people of Jesus Christ. I was made aware of this when a businessman, seeing a small gold cross on the lapel of my jacket, asked me, “Why are you a believer in Christ?” I was glad for the opportunity to share my faith with him.

Jesus died on the cross for us, but we don't worship a dead Savior. Our Lord's body was taken down from the cross and placed in a tomb, and then on the third day He emerged in a glorified body.

The cross speaks to us of the total picture—our Lord's atoning death to pay the price for our sins, as well as His glorious resurrection to deliver us from the power of death.

If it were not for what Christ did on the cross, we would all stand guilty before God and hopeless in the face of death. But through faith in Him, we receive the forgiveness of all our sins and the assurance that death cannot hold us.

Have you looked at the cross and placed your trust in the One who died there? It's the only sure and perfect remedy for guilt and fear. By: Herbert Vander Lugt ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

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## **The Real Deal**

[Christ] rose again the third day . . . [and] was seen by over five hundred brethren. —1 Corinthians 15:4-6

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:1-21

Sometimes cleaning out Grandpa's attic pays off. For an Ohio man, it paid off in the discovery of a more than 100-year-old set of mint-condition baseball cards. Appraisers placed the cards' value at \$3 million.

One key to the high value of those cards was the fact that they were well-preserved. But beyond that, the true worth of the cards rested in the fact that they were authentic. If they had been fakes or counterfeits—no matter how good they looked—they wouldn't have been worth the cardboard they were printed on.

The apostle Paul had something similar to say about Christianity. He said that our faith would be completely worthless and counterfeit if Jesus' resurrection were not the real deal. It took bravery and confidence in God's plan for Paul to say, “If Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty” (1 Cor. 15:14) and “If Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!” (v.17).

The Christian faith rests on the authenticity of this story: Jesus died on the cross and was raised from the dead. Praise God for the clear evidence of Jesus' death and resurrection (vv.3-8). It's the real deal, and we can stake our eternity and our total dependence

on God on its truth. By: Dave Branon ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Lord, we're eternally thankful for the truth  
confirmed in Your Word and in our hearts that  
You died and rose again for us. We love You, Lord,  
and lift our voices in praise!

God is the only true God.

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### **An Instructed Faith**

Christ died for our sins . . . , He was buried, and . . . He rose again the third day. —1 Corinthians 15:3-4

Today's Scripture: Ecclesiastes 3:16-4:3

When I witness to people about Christ, I often hear this response: "I'm all right, I have a strong faith." But our discussions soon reveal that all they have is faith in faith. Genuine saving faith, though, is based on the truth of God's Word.

Billy Graham made this clear during an interview on a TV talk show. He said he eagerly anticipates death because he expects to be with Jesus. He went on to explain that his confidence rests on what the Bible says about Christ's sacrificial death and resurrection. The interviewer, an agnostic who admits his fear of death, respectfully said, "You're not afraid because you know something I don't know."

Ecclesiastes 3:16-4:3 reveals the need for a God-instructed faith. It depicts the unpleasant side of life: injustice everywhere and the inevitability of death (3:16,18-21). It expresses that nonbelievers, seeing no reason for hope, must conclude that nonexistence is better than life (3:22-4:3). But it also shows the believer's confidence that God will ultimately make all things right (3:17).

A Bible-instructed faith focuses on Christ—His death, burial, and resurrection (1 Cor. 15:3-4). Only that kind of faith can bring salvation and comfort. And it gives us confidence that we will spend eternity in heaven. By: Herbert Vander Lugt ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

The godless ponder death with fear—  
For what's ahead they cannot see;  
But those who put their faith in Christ  
Look forward to eternity. —Sper

To put your fears to rest, put your faith in Christ.

---

### **Not A Myth**

Read: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11 | Bible in a Year: Isaiah 7-9

After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. —1 Corinthians 15:6

I'm fascinated with history, so I eagerly watched a television special on England's great King Arthur. A theme surfaced as each historian acknowledged that there were no eyewitness accounts nor historical evidence to support the story of King Arthur, his knights, and their Round Table. Repeatedly, the story was referred to as "legend" or "mythology." It appears that the story is merely a legend woven together over centuries from fragments of other stories.

The good news of the gospel, however, is not rooted in mythology or legend but in verified fact, and it's the greatest story ever told. Paul wrote that the most important event in human history—the resurrection of Jesus Christ—is supported by actual eyewitnesses. While listing disciples who had seen the risen Christ, Paul punctuated the list of eyewitnesses by writing, "After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep" (1 Cor. 15:6). At the time of Paul's writing, many of those witnesses were still alive and available for questioning.

The resurrection of Christ is not a myth. It is the factual pivot-point of history. By Bill Crowder ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

### **Up from the grave He arose,**

With a mighty triumph o'er His foes;



He arose a Victor from the dark domain,  
And He lives forever with His saints to reign.

—Lowry

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the best attested fact of ancient history. —Arnold

#### Related Resources:

- [What Good Is a Dead Messiah? and Can You Keep a Good Man Down?](#) - Josh McDowell
- [Where was Jesus for the three days between His death and resurrection? GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What is the sign of Jonah? GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Why should I believe in Christ's resurrection? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Why is the resurrection of Jesus Christ important? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Why is the truth of the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ so important?](#)
- [Is the resurrection of Jesus Christ true? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Why does it matter that Jesus rose from the dead? | GotQuestions.org](#)

#### 1 Corinthians 15:5 and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. [\(NASB 1995 - Lockman\)](#)

- **that** : Lu 24:34,35
- **Cephas** : 1Co 1:12 3:22 9:5 John 1:42
- **then** : Mk 16:14 Lu 24:36-49 Joh 20:19-26 Ac 1:2-14 Acts 10:41
- See also The Resurrection of Christ
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Luke 24:34-35+ saying, "The Lord has really risen and has appeared to Simon." 35 They began to relate their experiences on the road and how He was recognized by them in the breaking of the bread

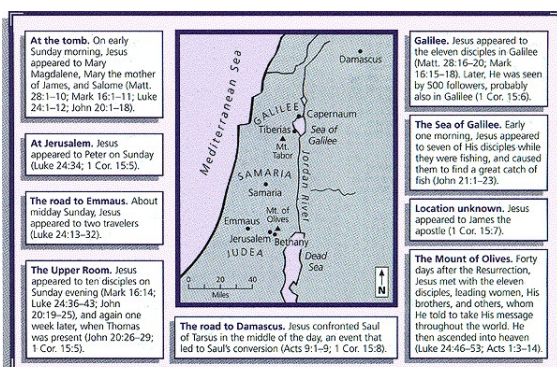
Luke 24:36+ While they were telling these things, He Himself stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be to you."

John 20:19 So when it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, **Jesus came and stood in their midst** (OF THE DISCIPLES) and \*said to them, "Peace be with you." 20 And when He had said this, He showed them both His hands and His side (OF HIS RESURRECTED BODY). The disciples then rejoiced when they saw the Lord. 21 So Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you.

Acts 1:3+ To these (THE DISCIPLES) He also presented Himself alive after His suffering, **by many convincing proofs**, appearing to them over a period of forty days and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God.

Acts 10:41+ not to all the people, but to **witnesses who were chosen beforehand by God**, that is, to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead.

Acts 13:31+ and for many days **He appeared to those who came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem** the very ones who are now His witnesses to the people.



## AN "AMAZING GRACE" APPEARANCE

**For in depth commentary** see [1 Corinthians 15:5](#) (For the most part the notes below are not duplicated on the in depth commentary).

**Stevenson** - Paul gives six groups of witnesses of the resurrection of Jesus. They are given in the order of their occurrence. At the same time, we should recognize that this is not an exhaustive list. There are no women mentioned in this list. There is a reason for this. In the ancient world, a woman was not considered to be a legal witness. Paul is giving a legal presentation of the evidence for the resurrection. He is giving the kind of evidence that would stand up in a court of law.

Note Paul's pristine logic - the burial underscores the fact that Christ truly died and the appearances confirm the fact that Christ truly rose from the dead.

**Barnett** makes an interesting observation regarding Paul's presentation - The word **and**' (kai) joins the lines together forming one complete statement: Christ died **and** was buried **and** was raised **and** appeared. No part of this garment can be cut out otherwise the whole robe unravels....There are omissions from Paul's list (OF APPEARANCES) – the various women witnesses (John 20:14-18; Mt. 28:9), the two men going to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35), the disciples apart from Thomas (John 20:19-23), the seven disciples at the lakeside (John 21:2) and the Twelve in Jerusalem before his ascension (Acts 1:4-8). If the various accounts in the Gospels and in the pre-Pauline tradition are set side by side it appears there were at least twelve separate occasions when the risen Lord appeared to many hundreds of people over a thirty seven day period between the resurrection and the ascension (Acts 1:3, 13:31). ([1 Corinthians](#))

**And that He appeared to Cephas (Kēphás), then to the twelve** - Note absence of preceding refrain **according to the Scriptures** because there is apparently no OT passage prophesying of these appearances. Peter's restoration to full usefulness for his Kingdom work. Peter denied Jesus three times. If it had been baseball, Peter would be on the bench! But praise God it was "real life" and where sin abounded (times 3), God's mercy and grace abounded all the more! And when all is said and done the same [epitaph](#) could be written on all of our tombstones beloved!

**Vine** writes that "**The twelve** had become a technical or official phrase for the complete apostolic company, though **Judas Iscariot** was not present, and on the first occasion **Thomas** was absent. Hence the number is used in a conventional way. There is, therefore, no discrepancy. The great point is the double confirmation of the fact of the Resurrection. ([Vine, W. Collected writings of W. E. Vine. Nashville: Thomas Nelson](#))

**Hodge** agrees writing that "The apostles collectively, after the apostasy of Judas, are spoken of as **the Twelve** according to a common custom, although at the time there were only **eleven**. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Ray Stedman** reminds us that "According to the Gospel record the actual first appearance of our Lord was not to Peter but to Mary Magdalene. As the Gospel accounts tell us, she was first at the tomb and she mistook him for the gardener on that Easter Sunday morning. It was only when he spoke to her that she realized that this was the Lord, and she held him by the feet and worshipped him. Then he sent her away to find the disciples. But in the chauvinistic mentality of that 1st century, a woman's testimony did not count. Paul, therefore, is conceding a point here, perhaps to the age in which he lived, by listing the Apostle Peter as the one who first bore witness to the resurrection of Christ. ([1 Corinthians 15:5-11 They Saw Him Alive](#))

**Jack Arnold** - Paul in verses 5-8 gives eyewitness evidence the resurrection of Christ actually happened. He makes it clear that Christ appeared to Peter who was the leader of the apostolic band. Surely, Peter needed the resurrected Christ to appear to him. He was deeply hurting because he had denied his Lord three times and even cursed Him. Peter went out and wept bitterly when he realized what he had done. For he was suffering the pangs of guilt and self-anger. Perhaps it was for this reason Christ sought Peter out first. Christ healed his pains, his brokenness and his hatred of himself. Wouldn't you have liked to have been there when Christ said, "Peter, it is I, your Lord, and I forgive you and love you and want you to continue to lead my apostolic band." Certainly, the resurrected Christ changed a depressed and discouraged Peter to a forgiven, courageous and dynamic witness for Christ. ([1 Corinthians 15:1-11 The Resurrection And The Gospel](#))

**Ray Stedman** writes that "Everyone here who is a Christian knows that the fundamental question upon which Christianity ultimately rests is, "Did Jesus Christ actually, literally, and physically, rise from the dead?" Everything hangs on that question. Well, that is the theme of this chapter, and this section of First Corinthians is one of the most significant passages in the Word of God that states that question most profoundly. As you read it, you see that there is a whole chorus of voices from the 1st century that say loudly and clearly, "Yes, he did rise from the dead. We saw him; we talked with him; we handled him." (John says that in his letter {cf, 1 Jn 1:1}.)

"We ate and drank with him, {cf, Acts 10:41}. It was unmistakably Jesus. We recognized him by the marks of crucifixion still in his body, in his hands and in his feet. Our encounters with him were so frequent, so full and so satisfying that we have never been the same since. When he rose from the dead it completely changed our lives." Christianity has always rested, therefore, on that powerful evidence of eye witnesses who saw him alive from the dead. ([1 Corinthians 15:5-11 They Saw Him Alive](#))

**Charles Hodge** gives an excellent synopsis of the significance of the witnesses writing that...

As the resurrection of Christ is a historical fact, it is to be proved by historical evidence. The apostle therefore appeals to the testimony of competent witnesses. All human laws assume that the testimony of two witnesses, when uncontradicted, and especially when confirmed by collateral evidence, produces such conviction of the truth of the fact asserted as to justify even taking the life of a fellow-creature. Confidence in such testimony is not based on experience, but on the constitution of our nature. We are so constituted that we cannot refuse assent to the testimony of good men to a fact fairly within their knowledge. To make such testimony irresistible it is necessary:

1. That the fact to be proved should be of a nature to admit of being certainly known.
2. That adequate opportunity be afforded to the witnesses to ascertain its nature and to be satisfied of its verity.
3. That the witnesses be of sound mind and discretion.
4. That they be men of integrity.

If these conditions are fulfilled, human testimony establishes the truth of a fact beyond reasonable doubt. If, however, in addition to these grounds of confidence the witnesses give their testimony at the expense of great personal sacrifice or confirm it with their blood; if, moreover, the occurrence had been predicted centuries before; if it had produced effects not otherwise to be accounted for, effects extending to all ages and nations; if people's reason and conscience find the system of doctrine implied in that fact to be true; and if God's Spirit confirms the testimony of the original witnesses and the truth of the doctrines based on that fact, then it is insanity and wickedness to doubt it. All these considerations combine to prove the resurrection of Christ and make it the best authenticated event in the history of the world. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**A T Robertson** observes that "There are ten appearances given besides the one to Paul. Nine are in the Gospels (Mary Magdalene in John and Mark, the other women in Matthew, the two going to Emmaus in Luke, Simon Peter in Luke and 1 Corinthians, the ten apostles and others in Luke and John and Mark, the eleven and others in John, the seven by the sea in John, to over five hundred in Galilee in Matthew and Paul and Mark, to the apostles in Jerusalem in Luke and Mark and Acts and 1 Corinthians) and one in 1 Corinthians above (to James). It will be seen that Paul mentions only five of the ten, one, that to James, not given elsewhere. What he gives is conclusive evidence of the fact, particularly when re-enforced by his own experience (the sixth appearance mentioned by Paul). The way to prove this great fact is to start with Paul's own witness given in this undoubted Epistle. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**John MacArthur** quotes a lawyer and a historian regarding the certainty of the resurrection of Christ...

Throughout history the testimony of responsible and honest eyewitnesses has been considered one of the most reliable forms of evidence in a court of law. Paul's third evidence for Christ's resurrection is in that form.

**Lawyer Sir Edward Clarke** said, "As a lawyer I have made a prolonged study of the evidences for the events of the first Easter day. For me, the evidence is conclusive, and over and over again in the high court I have secured the verdict on evidence not nearly so compelling. Inference follows on evidence, and a truthful witness is always artless and disdains effect; the gospel evidence for the resurrection is of this class, and as a lawyer I accept it unreservedly as the testimony of truthful men to facts they were able to substantiate."

The **historian Thomas Arnold of Oxford** has written. -- The evidence for our Lord's life and death and resurrection may be and often has been shown to be satisfactory. It is good according to the common rules for distinguishing good evidence from bad. Thousands and tens of thousands of persons have gone through it piece by piece as carefully as every judge summing tip on an important case. I have myself done it many times over, not to persuade others but to satisfy myself. I have been used for many years to study the history of other times, and to examine and weigh the evidence of those who have written about them, and **I know of no one fact in the history of mankind which is better proved by fuller evidence than the great sign that God has given as that Christ died and rose again from the dead.** ([1 Corinthians. Chicago: Moody Press](#))

**Related Resources:**

- [The Evidence of the Principal Fisherman](#) - chapter 10 from Frank Morrison's classic apologetic on the resurrection - [Who Moved the Stone?](#)
- [Who was Cephas/Peter in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Who were the twelve \(12\) disciples / apostles of Jesus Christ? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**DEFEAT** - Thinking about the muddled mess of mankind, Gordon DePree lamented in his book A Time to Grow, "People sometimes disappoint me, and there are times when I disappoint others. This hurts. Ideals fall. Dreams fade. The concepts of life I was carefully constructing suddenly crumble into a rubble-heap at my feet ... and I sit in the ruins, wondering if there is anything right about life, or if I even care."

After Peter had denied Jesus three times, He knew that nothing was right about life. He had become a blunder mouth beyond belief. With a few foolish words he had wrecked his life, becoming a heap of twisted metal at the feet of his fellow disciples. He had failed Jesus.

How Jesus dealt with Peter afterward is an example straight from God's body shop. Following the resurrection, Jesus reaffirmed His love for Peter. He evidently met with Peter alone (1 Corinthians 15:5) and later reminded him that He had a job for him—caring for God's children (John 21:17). No wonder Peter would later write that we can cast our cares upon Him because He really cares for us (1 Peter 5:7).

Even though we may be abandoned at the junkyard, Jesus is calling for a wrecker. He will lovingly restore us to mint condition.

**1 Corinthians 15:6 After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep. (NASB 1995 - Lockman)**

- **He appeared** Mt 28:10,16,17 Mk 16:7
- **fallen asleep** 1Co 15:18 Ac 7:60 Acts 13:36 1Th 4:13,15 2Pe 3:4
- See detailed notes on The Resurrection of Christ
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**For in depth commentary** see [1 Corinthians 15:6](#) (For the most part the notes below are not duplicated on the in depth commentary).

## CHRIST'S GRAND APPEARANCE

**After that** - ([1899](#)) (**epeita** from **epi** = upon, at + **eita** = then) means then, afterwards, next. Expression of time.

**He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now** (about 55-56 AD), **but some have fallen asleep** (euphemism for death of believers -[koimao](#) as with Stephen Acts 7:60+). - **At one time** indicates they were gathered together. Most of these witnesses had been alive and active witnesses for about 25 years to testify to the authenticity of the resurrection.

These **five hundred brethren** would be part of the "many infallible proofs" (Acts 1:3+) that make this the greatest event in history since the creation.

[Stevenson](#) - You might get two or three people to admit to a lie and even have them die for it. It is perhaps believable that twelve people might die for a lie that they know to be a lie. But here we have over 500 witnesses. Paul says that most of these 500 witnesses to the resurrection are still alive. The implication is obvious. If you have any doubts about the truth of the resurrection, you can go to Jerusalem and ask them.

**MacArthur** comments that "The quality of specific witnesses is represented by the apostles, all of whom were known by name and could easily be questioned. The quantity of witnesses is seen in the five hundred brethren who all saw the risen Christ at one time. Scripture gives no indication of who those people were, or where Jesus appeared to them, but they were surely well known in the early church, and, like the twelve, would often have been questioned about seeing the risen Savior. ([MacArthur, J: 1Corinthians. Chicago: Moody Press](#))

**F F Bruce** "The testimony of the women, of which much is made in the resurrection narratives of the Gospels, is not mentioned here, probably because it was not formally admissible as public evidence and, if so used, would in the minds of many have discredited the

resurrection."

**Ray Stedman** notes that "Every generation, the theory is propounded that Jesus really did not rise from the dead physically, that the disciples were so caught up in the wonder of his personality, that they so wanted him back they actually hallucinated and imagined they saw him. But this event, of course, can hardly fit that category, for here there were over five hundred individuals. Now it is hard enough to get one person to hallucinate, but to get five hundred people from various backgrounds and attitudes, etc., to do so all at once is simply incredible. I think this occurred up on a mountainside in Galilee, for even before his crucifixion the Lord had said that he would meet his disciples in Galilee after the resurrection. The first message he sent by the women at the tomb was, "go and tell my brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see me," {cf, Matt 28:10}. Now you can imagine that word of that spread rapidly throughout the whole believing community and everybody who could get away headed for Galilee. Who would have wanted to miss that most exciting of all Christian meetings? So it is no wonder there were five hundred or more waiting for him on the mountainside, and to them he appeared. ([1 Corinthians 15:5-11 They Saw Him Alive](#))

**Appeared (3708) (horao)** means to see or perceive with the eye, to pay attention to, to understand or to experience. **Horao** is used a number of times in the NT referring to seeing visions but Paul here is clearly not speaking of a vision but the actual bodily appearance of our Lord. It is not certain when this event occurred. The most likely possibility is Matthew 28:16-20. Since Jesus had previously announced this meeting (cf. Mt 26:32; 28:10, 16) it is unlikely that anyone would have intentionally missed it.

**One time (2178) (ephapax** from **epi** = upon, at + **hapax** = once, a compound of "**ha-**" [= "heis" in compounds] and "**pax**" [pegnumi = make firm, bring together] = giving **hapax** the fundamental meaning of numerical singularity and completeness which needs no additions) means once and for all or all at once. At the same time (all together) as here in 1Co 15:6. **Friberg** says that **ephapax** is used "as a religious technical term for the uniqueness and singularity of the Christ's death and the resultant redemption once (and) for all (Heb 10:10) ([Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament. Baker Academic](#))

**Ephapax** - 5x in 5v = once for all(4), one time(1). - Ro 6:10; 1Co 15:6; Heb 7:27; 9:12; 10:10. As you observe these passages below, notice that all except for 1Co 15:6 relate to the sacrificial death of Christ. There are no uses in the Septuagint.

#### Related Resource:

- [Why didn't Jesus appear to more people after His resurrection? | GotQuestions.org](#)

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#### Proof Positive

Jesus our Lord . . . was raised because of our justification. —Romans 4:24-25

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is one of the most well-established events in history. Paul cited as irrefutable evidence the more than 500 eyewitnesses who saw Jesus after He arose, most of whom were still alive when the apostle wrote to the Corinthians.

Just as certain is the fact that Christ's sacrifice on the cross of Calvary fully paid the penalty for the sin of all mankind, so that everyone who trusts Him as Savior receives forgiveness. And it is Christ's resurrection that guarantees this. If just one sin had been unatoned for, Jesus would not have come out of the tomb.

In his book *The Resurrection of Jesus the Christ*, Fred John Meldau underscores the significance of Jesus' resurrection by describing Israel's annual Day of Atonement ritual. Meldau writes, "If [the High Priest] offered correctly, he came forth in due time; but . . . if he failed to offer correctly, he died there behind the veil. In like manner, the coming forth of Jesus the Christ, in His resurrection, after His atonement for our sins on the cross, shows that His offering was accepted. The empty tomb is God's 'Amen' to Christ's 'It is finished.'"

When Christ emerged from the tomb, our sin was completely paid for. His resurrection was proof positive! By: Richard DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Jesus rose, and proved His power  
By that rising glorious;  
From the mighty grasp of death  
He came forth victorious. —Anon.

Christ's empty tomb guarantees our full salvation.

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**C H Spurgeon** writes that...The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is one of the best attested facts on record. There were so many witnesses to behold it, that if we do in the least degree receive the credibility of men's testimonies, we cannot and we dare not doubt that Jesus rose from the dead. It is all very easy for infidels to say that these persons were deceived, but it is equally foolish, for these persons could not every one of them have been so positively deceived as to say that they had seen this man, whom they knew to have been dead, afterwards alive; they could not all, surely, have agreed together to help on this imposture: if they did, it is the most marvellous thing we have on record, that not one of them ever broke faith with the others, but that the whole mass of them remained firm. We believe it to be quite impossible that so many rogues should have agreed for ever. They were men who had nothing to gain by it; they subjected themselves to persecution by affirming the very fact; they were ready to die for it, and did die for it. Five hundred or a thousand persons who had seen him at different times, declared that they did see him, and that he rose from the dead; the fact of his death having been attested beforehand. How, then, dare any man say that the Christian religion is not true, when we know for a certainty that Christ died and rose again from the dead? And knowing that, who shall deny the divinity of the Saviour? Who shall say that he is not mighty to save? Our faith hath a solid basis, for it hath all these witnesses on which to rest, and the more sure witness of the Holy Spirit witnessing in our hearts. "And last of all," says the apostle, "he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time: for I am the least of the apostles." We should not have thought Paul proud if he had said, "I am the greatest of the apostles," for he occupies the largest portion of the sacred Scriptures with his writings; and he preached more abundantly than they all. There was not one who could exceed Paul, or even come near him in his arduous labours.

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### **Not A Myth**

Read: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11 | Bible in a Year: Isaiah 7-9

After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. —1 Corinthians 15:6

I'm fascinated with history, so I eagerly watched a television special on England's great King Arthur. A theme surfaced as each historian acknowledged that there were no eyewitness accounts nor historical evidence to support the story of King Arthur, his knights, and their Round Table. Repeatedly, the story was referred to as "legend" or "mythology." It appears that the story is merely a legend woven together over centuries from fragments of other stories.

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The resurrection of Christ is not a myth. It is the factual pivot-point of history. By Bill Crowder ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

### **Up from the grave He arose,**

With a mighty triumph o'er His foes;  
He arose a Victor from the dark domain,  
And He lives forever with His saints to reign.  
—Lowry

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the best attested fact of ancient history. —Arnold

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**1 Corinthians 15:7 then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles; ([NASB 1995 - Lockman](#))**

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- **then** Lu 24:50 Ac 1:2-12
- See detailed notes on The Resurrection of Christ
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **Related Passages:**

Acts 1:21-22+ (Peter delineates the necessary qualifications of the apostles) - Therefore it is necessary that of the men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us--beginning with the baptism of John until the day that He was taken up from us--one of these must become a witness with us

of His resurrection.

**For in depth commentary** see [1 Corinthians 15:7](#) (For the most part the notes below are not duplicated on the in depth commentary).

## JESUS AND JAMES

**Then** - Expression of time. Marks sequence.

**He appeared to James, then to all the apostles** ([apostole](#)) - Most writers feel this James was the half-brother of Jesus. The witness of James is especially significant because it is the witness of a skeptic. The brothers of Jesus had grown up with Him and they knew Him to be a good man, but they rejected His teaching. John 7:5 says "not even His brothers were believing in Him." Later Luke records the presence of the brothers of Jesus in the upper room (Acts 1:14+ "these all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.") Why did these skeptical brothers become believers? The clear implication is they saw Him alive after His crucifixion. As the old saying goes "Seeing is believing."

**Ray Stedman** adds that Jesus' "brothers did not believe in him until the resurrection. It was that phenomenal event, that magnificent recovery, that finally convinced James that Jesus was the Son of God ([They Saw Him Alive](#))

**Jack Arnold** - The James mentioned here is most likely the half brother of Jesus, who was the oldest remaining son of the family that grew up in Nazareth. John tells us that Christ's brothers did not believe Jesus was the Messiah. It must have been difficult to see Jesus was the Messiah because these brothers were so close to Him. While they must have seen Him as an exceptional person, they played games together, did chores together, played pranks on Him or whatever. It took some tall convincing for them to believe that He was the Son of God, the Creator of the universe. None of Christ's brothers were truly converted until after the resurrection. That was when they became convinced Jesus was the Son of God. James must have had a fantastic conversion and in the Epistle of James he calls Christ "our glorious Lord" (Jms. 2:1). The resurrected Christ changed a skeptical blood brother to a believing, dynamic spiritual leader. ([1 Corinthians 15:1-11 The Resurrection And The Gospel](#))

**Apostles** ([652](#)) (**apostolos** from **apo** = from + **stello** = send forth) (Click discussion of apostle) means one sent forth from by another, often with a special commission to represent another and to accomplish his work. It can be a delegate, commissioner, ambassador sent out on a mission or orders or commission and with the authority of the one who sent him. In the ancient world a **apostle** was the personal representatives of the king, functioning as an ambassador with the king's authority and provided with credentials to prove he was the king's envoy. Cargo ships were sometimes called *apostolic*, because they were dispatched with a specific shipment for a specific destination. In its broadest sense, **apostle** can refer to all believers, because every believer is sent into the world as a witness for Christ. But the term is primarily used as a specific and unique title for the thirteen men (the Twelve, with Matthias replacing Judas, and Paul) whom Christ personally chose and commissioned to authoritatively proclaim the gospel and lead the early church. The thirteen apostles not only were all called directly by Jesus but all were witnesses of His resurrection, Paul having encountered Him on the Damascus Road after His ascension. Those thirteen apostles were given direct revelation of God's Word to proclaim authoritatively, the gift of healing, and the power to cast out demons (Mt 10:1). By these signs their teaching authority was verified (cf. 2Co 12:12). Their teachings became the foundation of the church (Eph 2:20), and their authority extended beyond local bodies of believers to the entire believing world. In the present context Peter uses **apostle** in its more common specialized or restricted meaning. The authority of Peter's message did not derive from the messenger but from the Sender.

### Related Resource:

- [The Evidence of the Prisoner's Brother](#) - chapter 11 from Frank Morrison's classic apologetic on the resurrection - [Who Moved the Stone?](#)

**1 Corinthians 15:8 and last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also. ([NASB 1995 - Lockman](#))**

- 1Co 9:1 Ac 9:3-5,17 18:9 22:14,18 26:16 2Co 12:1-6
- See also The Resurrection of Christ
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## Related Passages:

Acts 9:1-15+ Now Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest, 2 and asked for letters from him to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, both men and women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. 3 And it came about that as he journeyed, he was approaching Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him; 4 and he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?"

5 And he said, "Who art Thou, Lord?" And He said, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting, 6 but rise, and enter the city, and it shall be told you what you must do." 7 And the men who traveled with him stood speechless, hearing the voice, but seeing no one. 8 And Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; and leading him by the hand, they brought him into Damascus. 9 And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

10 Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and the Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Behold, here am I, Lord." 11 And the Lord said to him, "Arise and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for behold, he is praying, 12 and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him, so that he might regain his sight." 13 But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he did to Thy saints at Jerusalem; 14 and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call upon Thy name." 15 But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel; 16 for I will show him how much he must suffer for My name's sake."

## A "DIVINE MISCARRIAGE"

**For in depth commentary** see [1 Corinthians 15:8](#) (For the most part the notes below are not duplicated on the in depth commentary).

**And last (eschatos) of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also - Untimely born** means "**abnormally born** which really means a miscarriage or an untimely birth. What he means is that he did not come to spiritual birth in the usual, proper way. His salvation was unexpected, violent and abnormal. When the other apostles heard the Word they began to believe it. Gradually it developed in their minds and hearts until at last they laid hold of it by faith. In this way, their spiritual birth followed a normal pregnancy that could be observed developing. But Paul's conversion was a miscarriage. It was abnormal, unexpected, sudden and definitely supernatural. This may be the reason Paul writes so much on the sovereign purposes of God in salvation, for he, more than any other apostle, had a conversion surrounded by supernatural phenomena." ([Jack Arnold](#))

**David Lowery** comments that "Paul considered himself abnormally born because he lacked the "gestation" period of having been with Christ during His earthly ministry ([Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., et al: The Bible Knowledge Commentary. 1985. Victor](#))

**Stedman** quips that "Had Paul written his spiritual biography, the title would have not been *Born Again*, it would have been *The Miscarriage*, *The Abortion*, or something like that. This is what he thought of himself, largely because of the way he came to birth. He is thinking of the twelve apostles as being born in a very normal way. When they heard the word of the Lord, they began to believe it. Gradually it developed in their minds and hearts until they came to the place where they believed it totally. In this way their spiritual birth followed a normal pregnancy that could be observed developing. But Paul's experience was not like that. It was abnormal; it was sudden; it was very precipitous and unexpected. That may account for the fact that Paul had a difficult time in his early Christian life. When somebody is prematurely born he does not just leap out and handle life like a normal baby. He is cared for specially; he is nurtured in private; he is protected from exposure to danger and germs and it is a long time before he begins to function normally. And this was the case with Paul. He was born again on the Damascus road, but it was such a sudden, precipitous thing it took a long time for him to adjust his thinking and get it in line with this fantastic event that had occurred. That is why he spent three years in Damascus and Arabia and another seven years in his home town of Tarsus before he got it all together and felt he was ready to begin his great ministry of teaching and preaching all around the world. The Spirit of God led Barnabus to go down to Tarsus and find him ten years later ([1 Corinthians 15:5-11 They Saw Him Alive](#))

**Untimely born** ([1626](#)) ([ektroma](#) from **ek** = out + **titrosko** = to wound thus to cut or excise out, to cause or suffer abortion, to miscarry) refers to an abortion, miscarriage, or one born prematurely, the picture of each being that of a life that was unable to sustain itself. The term implies an untimely, early birth. **Thayer** explains Paul's use writing "that he is as inferior to the rest of the apostles as an immature birth comes short of a



mature one, and is no more worthy of the name of an apostle than an abortion is of the name of a child. **Ektroma** is only used three times in the Septuagint (LXX) (Nu 12:12; Job 3:16; and Eccl. 6:3) for a miscarriage.

#### Related Resource:

- [Did You Hear What Happened to Saul?](#) - chapter 7 from [Josh McDowell's classic "More than a Carpenter"](#)
- [The Evidence of the Man From Tarsus](#) - chapter 12 from Frank Morrison's classic apologetic on the resurrection - [Who Moved the Stone?](#)

**1 Corinthians 15:9 For I am the least of the apostles, and not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. (NASB 1995 - Lockman)**

- **the least** 2Co 11:5 12:11 Eph 3:7,8
- **because** Ac 8:3 Acts 9:1-19 22:4,5 26:9-11 Ga 1:13,23 Php 3:6 1Ti 1:13,14
- See also The Resurrection of Christ
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Acts 9:1-19+ Now Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest, 2 and asked for letters from him to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, both men and women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. 3As he was traveling, it happened that he was approaching Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him; 4 and he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" 5 And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" And He said, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting, 6 but get up and enter the city, and it will be told you what you must do." 7The men who traveled with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one. 8Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; and leading him by the hand, they brought him into Damascus. 9 And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank. 10Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias; and the Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am, Lord." 11 And the Lord said to him, "Get up and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying, 12 and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him, so that he might regain his sight." 13 But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he did to Your saints at Jerusalem; 14 and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name." 15 But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel; 16for I will show him how much he must suffer for My name's sake." 17So Ananias departed and entered the house, and after laying his hands on him said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road by which you were coming, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." 18 And immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he regained his sight, and he got up and was baptized; 19 and he took food and was strengthened. Now for several days he was with the disciples who were at Damascus,

### PAUL THE LEAST BUT THE GREATEST

**For in depth commentary** see [1 Corinthians 15:9](#) (For the most part the notes below are not duplicated on the in depth commentary).

**For I am the least** ([elachistos](#)) **of the apostles, and not fit** ([hikanos](#)) **to be called an apostle** ([apostole](#)), **because I persecuted** ([dioko](#) - zealously and hostilely pursued) **the church of God - Least** reflects his genuine humility that God would have saved such a wretch as himself! We are all in that same category -- "least!" We all deserved hell, but God gave us Heaven! Amazing grace indeed! Paul's radical transformation from persecutor of the Gospel to proclaimer of the Gospel is clear evidence that the Gospel is authentic and the resurrection was real and relevant.

**Jack Arnold** - If there was ever a dynamic conversion, Paul had it. This appearance of the Lord to him changed his whole life—from Saul of Tarsus to Paul the preacher, from religious profession to personal regeneration. He came hating and went away loving. He

began that day the greatest Jewish evangelist and ended it the greatest Christian evangelist. Contact with the resurrected Christ changed his life, and this, in itself, is proof the resurrection happened. ([1 Corinthians 15:1-11 The Resurrection And The Gospel](#))

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## James Smith - TRANSFORMING GRACE 1 CORINTHIANS 15:9, 10

1. His Past: "I persecuted the Church of God."
2. His Present: "An Apostle."
3. How this great change was wrought: "By the grace of God."

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### Responsibility

I am . . . not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. —1 Corinthians 15:9

Today's Scripture: Acts: 26:1-23

When God confronted Adam for eating from the forbidden tree, Adam blamed Eve (Gen. 3:12). Ever since then, people have tried to avoid taking responsibility for their actions by shifting the blame to others or to circumstances beyond their control.

Today the art of blaming others has reached new levels. In a television interview a high-ranking government official said that pro-life advocates are ultimately responsible for the 1.6 million abortions that occur annually in the United States. He argued that if those who oppose abortion would simply volunteer to take the babies into their homes, mothers wouldn't have to abort them.

If you follow this line of reasoning, the woman who chooses to have an abortion because a baby would inconvenience her life is not responsible for the death of her child. The unwritten rule seems to be: "Never blame offenders for their wrongs. Those responsible are the people who want to punish them for their crimes." How contrary to the Scriptures, which teach that God holds each of us accountable for what we do!

The apostle Paul showed us how we should respond. He admitted the awfulness of his sin, and he recognized how gracious God had been to him (1 Cor. 15:9-10).

Thank You, Lord, for giving us a mind and the ability to choose between right and wrong, truth and falsehood. Help us to accept responsibility and seek Your forgiveness when we make the wrong choices. By: Herbert Vander Lugt ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

If you make an excuse for sin, your sin will not be excused.

**1 Corinethian 15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me. ([NASB 1995 - Lockman](#))**

- **by** 1Co 4:7 Ro 11:1,5,6 Eph 2:7,8 3:7,8 1Ti 1:15,16
- **his grace** 1Co 15:2 2Co 6:1
- **but** I Ro 15:17-20 2Co 10:12-16 11:23-30 12:11
- **yet** Mt 10:20 2Co 3:5 Ga 2:8 Eph 3:7 Php 2:12-13 Phil 4:13 Col 1:28-29
- See also The Resurrection of Christ
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

2 Corinthians 3:5-6+ Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but **our adequacy is from God**, Who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

Col 1:28-29+ We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. 29 For this purpose also I (present tense - continually) labor ([kopiao](#)), (present tense - continually) striving ([agonizomai](#)) according to His power ([dunamis](#)), which mightily works within me.

Philippians 2:12-13+ So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out ([present imperative](#)) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to](#)

[obey](#)) your salvation (AKA - progressive sanctification) with fear and trembling; 13+ for (GOD'S SOVEREIGN PROVISION) it is God Who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

Philippians 4:13+ I can do all things (MY RESPONSIBILITY) through Him Who strengthens me (GOD'S SOVEREIGN PROVISION).

Colossians 1:28-29+ We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. For this purpose also I labor, striving (MY RESPONSIBILITY) according to His power, which mightily works within me (GOD'S SOVEREIGN PROVISION)..

## GRACE PILED UPON GRACE

**For in depth commentary** see [1 Corinthians 15:10](#) (For the most part the notes below are not duplicated on the in depth commentary).

**But (de)** is a term of contrast which speaks of a "change of direction," which could not be more apropos than the change of direction is Saul the persecutor who was supernaturally transformed into Paul the proclaimer of the Gospel!

**By the grace (charis) of God** ("divine grace") **I am what I am, and His grace (charis) toward me did not prove vain (kenos** - empty, without success, futile, not without results); **but I labored (kopiao** - to the point of exhaustion, weariness following straining of all his human powers to utmost) **even more (perissos) than all of them, yet not I, but the grace (charis) of God with (sun/syn** = intimate union with) **me** - God provided the grace, but Paul labored diligently.

In 1 Corinthians 15 Paul uses three different terms for **vain** or **worthless** - [eike](#) in 1 Cor 15:2, [kenos](#) in 1 Cor 15:10, 14, 48, [mataios](#) (worthless) in 1 Cor 15:17

**THOUGHT** - This passage is a clear example of the powerful principle I call "**100/100**". You say what is that? The first 100 is 100% my RESPONSIBILITY ("I labored") and the second 100 is 100% God's SOVEREIGNTY, God's provision of supernatural power ("the grace of God with me"). In truth the 100's should be inverted for the fact is that we cannot carry out our responsibility unless God enables us to do so, giving us the **desire** to work and the **power** to work as Paul described in Php 2:13NLT+, "giving you the **desire** and the **power**." So all supernatural works wrought by mere men (and women) begin with God and are enabled by God so that in the end He alone receives the glory! Or as Paul would say in Romans 11:36+ "**For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.**" And all God's men and women said "Amen! Thank You Lord!" See this important principle which is all through the Scripture - The "[Paradoxical Principle of 100% Dependent and 100% Responsible](#)". (See the [passages above](#))

**THOUGHT** - As a physician I would occasionally write out prescriptions in "**triplicate**" - 1Corinthians 15:10 is God's "prescription in triplicate" to assure "spiritual health" in your life and ministry (cp Jn 10:10b)! **Take one dose of the truth of this passage "qd"** ("once per day"). **Refills:** Eternal. **Cost:** Free (but not cheap!). **Instructions:** Swallow it completely. Give your body time to "assimilate" it, so that it has maximum effect. It will be good (the best) medicine for your soul! It's God's amazing grace!

**Jack Arnold** - Paul clearly understood he did not seek and choose God, but God sought and chose him for salvation and service. He deserved nothing, but God took him and made him the greatest Christian of all time. Why? Grace! Grace! Grace! Everything Paul was or did he attributed to the pure grace of God. Paul's life should greatly encourage every non-Christian and Christian. We may have fouled up our lives and messed up everything to such an extent we may think God could never save us or use us. Paul persecuted the church and gave his consent to murder, yet God used him and He can and will use anyone who truly turns to Christ in humble repentance and faith. There is no sin God cannot forgive.

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**John Stevenson** -

**The Principle of Grace: But by the grace of God I am what I am** (15:10). The word "**grace**" is translated from the Greek word charis. This is an old word in Greek writings, used as early as the days of Homer. It was used by the ancient Greeks to describe a favor that is done for a friend that expects no return. It is a favor that is freely given. It is closely connected to the idea of a gift (charisma) as well as with joy (chara). In nearly all cases, the idea of charis was that it was a favor done for a friend.

Aristotle, defining charis, lays out the whole stress on this very point, that it is conferred freely, with no expectation of return, and finding its only motive in the bounty and free-heartedness of the giver. But in Pagan Greece, this favor was always conferred upon a

friend, not upon an enemy. (Kenneth Wuest).

Here lies the difference between the pagan use of *cariv* versus that which is used by Paul. The Greeks used it to describe the actions of an individual toward his friend. Grace was always directed toward someone who was a friend, never toward an enemy.

This is the complete antithesis of what Paul describes in this passage. Paul describes God's grace as coming to him when he was at enmity with God and when he was persecuting the church of God.

There is an important principle here. God's grace in your life did not become operational because you turned from your sins and began to seek after Him. God saved you when you were in the midst of your sins. God chose you before you ever chose Him.

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 not as a result of works, that no one should boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Just as Paul's salvation was by the grace of God and apart from his own merit or effort, so also his Christian life continues to be lived by grace.

**The Power of Grace:** His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me (15:10).

I have often heard one of the complaints against teaching of the grace of God that say people will not serve the Lord if they find out that everything in Christ has been freely given to them via the grace of God. The argument goes like this: "Why should I labor for Christ if He has given me everything there is to give through faith alone?" Paul does not view this as a logical result of grace. On the contrary, he pictures the grace of God as a motivation for service. As he comes to see the wondrous and undeserving goodness that God has bestowed upon him, he is moved to labor even more greatly.

The story is told of a World War I general who called in his company commander into his tent and pinned a medal on his chest. "Captain," he said, "You are a hero. Now go out and lead your men up that hill." That is what God has done to us. He has chosen us and called us and saved us and sanctified us. Now He says, "Go out and live like people who are chosen and called and saved and sanctified."

How about you? Has the resurrected Christ made a difference in your life? If He has not, then perhaps it is because you have never met Him. You can come to know Him today and you can enter into the life that only He can provide.

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**I Am What I Am** - A few years before John Newton died, a friend was having breakfast with him. Their custom was to read from the Bible after the meal. Because Newton's eyes were growing dim, his friend would read, then Newton would comment briefly on the passage. That day the selection was from 1 Corinthians 15. When the words "**by the grace of God I am what I am**" were read, Newton was silent for several minutes. Then he said,

"I am not what I ought to be. How imperfect and deficient I am! I am not what I wish to be, although I abhor that which is evil and would cleave to what is good. I am not what I hope to be, but soon I shall put off mortality, and with it all sin. Though I am not what I ought to be, nor what I wish to be, nor yet what I hope to be, I can truly say I am not what I once was: a slave to sin and Satan. I can heartily join with the apostle and acknowledge that by the grace of God I am what I am!" (Source unknown)

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**Chambers** - By the grace of God I am what I am His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain. 1 Cor. 15:10.

The way we continually talk about our own inability is an insult to the Creator. The deploring of our own incompetence is a slander against God for having overlooked us. Get into the habit of examining in the sight of God the things that sound humble before men, and you will be amazed at how staggeringly impertinent they are. 'Oh, I shouldn't like to say I am sanctified; I'm not a saint.' Say that before God; and it means—'No, Lord, it is impossible for You to save and sanctify me; there are chances I have not had; so many imperfections in my brain and body; no, Lord, it isn't possible.' That may sound wonderfully humble before men, but before God it is an attitude of defiance.

Again, the things that sound humble before God may sound the opposite before men. To say—'Thank God, I know I am saved and sanctified,' is in the sight of God the acme of humility, it means you have so completely abandoned yourself to God that you know He is true. Never bother your head as to whether what you say sounds humble before men or not, but always be humble before God, and let Him be all in all.

There is only one relationship that matters, and that is your personal relationship to a personal Redeemer and Lord. Let everything else go, but maintain that at all costs, and God will fulfil His purpose through your life. One individual life may be of priceless value to God's purpose, and yours may be that life.

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## Our Image Problem

By the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain. —1 Corinthians 15:10

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

People who clearly understand their own strengths and weaknesses are better able to accept themselves as they are and accomplish more in life. They can identify with the person who said, "I'm only someone, but I am someone. I can't do everything, but I can do something."

The apostle Paul recognized his liabilities, but he took his God-given assets and used them for eternal profit. His self-acceptance was based on God's acceptance of him in Christ. God's grace enabled him to affirm his apostleship while living with the painful memory of persecuting the church (1 Cor. 15:9; 1 Tim. 1:13-15).

Paul didn't have a bad self-image when he called himself the "least of the apostles," nor was it false humility that prompted him to say he was "not worthy to be called an apostle" (1 Cor. 15:9). Neither was it undue pride when he affirmed that he "labored more abundantly" than all of the other apostles (v.10). He was simply recognizing his human frailties while extolling the effectiveness of God's grace. He knew he was able to serve God because he had been forgiven.

Trusting Jesus as Savior and Lord and being honest with ourselves will enable us to say, "By the grace of God I am what I am." That's a mature kind of self-acceptance. By: Dennis J. DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

We all have faults uniquely ours,  
Those flaws that cause self-blame,  
But God accepts us as we are,  
And we must do the same. —DJD

Our value is not in what we do for God but in what Christ has done for us.

**1 Corinthians 15:11 Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed. [NASB 1995 - Lockman](#)**

- 1Co 15:3,4 2:2
- See also The Resurrection of Christ
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

1 Corinthians 15:1-4 Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, 2 by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. 3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that **Christ died** for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was **buried**, and that He was **raised** on the third day according to the Scriptures,

## ALL PREACHED THE SAME GOSPEL

**Whether then** - could be rendered "therefore whether" and most commentators link this back to 1 Cor 15:8 which was the terminus of his description of the Gospel which emphasized Christ was seen alive by many witnesses. Most see 1 Cor 15:9-10 as a sort of brief digression in which he explains his status as it relates to the other disciples, that he may have been last but was not least because of the work of God's grace.

*it was I or they* - He has just stated he had **labored even more than all of them**. Now he says "it matters not whether I was instrumental or they." (MIT) In other words it makes no difference who had preached. They all preached the same Gospel that included the truth of the resurrection of Christ. And so in light of the following passages, Paul is saying they all preached "Christ is risen, risen indeed!" Paul affirms that the Gospel he had received and delivered to the Corinthians was the same Gospel the original apostles had preached. And finally one other point is that Paul did not care who received the credit for the conversion of the

Corinthians.

**Jack Arnold** - It did not make any difference which apostle preached the gospel; it was always the same gospel: "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,.. He was buried, and... He was raised on the third day." The gospel was preached and the Corinthians believed it, and a basic part of that gospel is the resurrection of Christ. What Paul is saying is that no man, woman, boy or girl can really be a true Christian unless he or she believes in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. ([The Resurrection And The Gospel](#))

**Vine** - summing up the argument of the first part of the chapter, he identifies himself with the other apostles in the facts that all continually preached the same gospel with its foundation truth of the resurrection of Christ, and that the Corinthian believers once for all accepted it.

**So we** (present tense - continually) **preach** ([kerusso](#) - clearly proclaim) **and so you believed** ([pisteuo](#) "what you adhered to, trusted in, and relied on") - NLT paraphrase is accurate = "we all preach the same message." Paul says the Gospel (Christ **died** for our sins...was **buried**...was **raised** - 1 Cor 15:3-4) has inherent power and it made no difference who preached it because God's gives the power to believe. **So you believed** is in the [aorist tense](#) which speaks of a past completed act, in turn pointing to the fact that they had believed, Thus Paul is addressing believers in this section, which is significant because we see that some are skeptical about the resurrection.

**Hunter & McShane** - The important thing was not who laboured most, but the sense of unity among the apostles. They all preached the same gospel, the only authentic gospel, which they had all believed. ([What the Bible teaches – 1 and 2 Corinthians](#))

**Hodge** - This verse resumes the subject from which vs. 9, 10 are a digression. 'Christ appeared to the apostles and to me; whether therefore I or they preached, we all proclaimed that fact, and ye all believed it.' The resurrection of Christ was included in the preaching of all ministers, and in the faith of all Christians. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Jack Arnold** - The question for you who are not Christians is not whether you believe Christ lived and died; many non-Christians believe that. Nor is it whether you believe He died for sinners and was raised from the dead, for many phony, professing believers give assent to that truth. The real question is whether you believe Christ died for your sins and that He was raised from the dead so you can share His resurrected life. Only when you, by faith, make this personal, believing Christ died for you individually and personally, will you be saved. You cannot be saved without believing Christ substituted for your sins, and you cannot be saved until you have committed yourself to the resurrected Lord ([The Resurrection And The Gospel](#))

Earlier Paul had told the Corinthians that "we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness," (1 Cor 1:23)

**Preach** (proclaim) ([2784](#))([kerusso](#) from [kerux/keryx](#) = a herald - one who acts as the medium of the authority of one who proclamation he makes; [kerugma](#) = the thing preached or the message) means to proclaim (publicly) or to herald or act as a public crier - the town official who would make a proclamation in a public gathering. They could make no additions or subtractions from the received message (THINK OF THE GOSPEL!). **Kerusso** was used of the official whose duty it was to proclaim loudly and extensively the coming of an earthly king, even as **our gospel** is to clearly announce the coming of the King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev 19:16<sup>±</sup>! The Imperial Herald would enter a town in behalf of the Roman Emperor, and make a public proclamation of the message which his Sovereign ordered him to give, doing so with such formality, gravity, and authority as to emphasize that the message must be heeded! (Think about this in regard to the Gospel of God instead of the decree of a man! Lenski adds a good word that "to preach is not to argue, reason, dispute, or convince by intellectual proof, against all of which a keen intellect may bring counterargument. We simply state in public or testify to all men the truth which God bids us state. No argument can assail the truth presented in this announcement or testimony. Men either believe the truth, as all sane men should, or refuse to believe it, as only fools venture to do" Kerusso in 1-2 Corinthians - 1 Co. 1:23; 1 Co. 9:27; 1 Co. 15:11; 1 Co. 15:12; 2 Co. 1:19; 2 Co. 4:5; 2 Co. 11:4; Gal. 2:2; Gal. 5:11; Phil. 1:15; Col. 1:23; 1 Thess. 2:9; 1 Tim. 3:16; 2 Tim. 4:2; 1 Pet. 3:19; Rev. 5:2

**1 Corinthians 15:12 Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? (NASB 1995 - Lockman)**

- if 1Co 15:4
- how 1Cor 15:15: 1Co 15:13-19 Ac 26:8 2Th 2:17

- See also The Resurrection of Christ
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

Acts 17:18+ And also some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers were conversing with him. Some were saying, "What would this idle babbler wish to say?" Others, "He seems to be a proclaimer of strange deities,"—because he was **preaching Jesus and the resurrection**.

Acts 17:32+ Now when they heard of the **resurrection of the dead**, some began to sneer, but others said, "We shall hear you again concerning **this** (THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD -- SOME BELIEVED - see Acts 17:33-34+)."

Acts 26:8+ "Why is it considered incredible among you people if God does raise the dead?"

1 Corinthians 1:23+ but we (present tense - continually) **preach** ([kerusso](#) - herald, proclaim) Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness,

Hebrews 11:19+ He (ABRAHAM) considered that God is able to **raise people even from the dead**, from which he also received him (ISAAC) back as a type. (See also [Why did God command Abraham to sacrifice Isaac? | GotQuestions.org](#))

### THE DEADLY HERESY CLAIMING "NO RESURRECTION"

The question Paul asks in this verse explains what prompted him to write this chapter on the resurrection.

Paul now proceeds in 1 Cor 15:12-19 to show the logical consequences that would follow if Christ truly had not been raised from the dead. He will clearly demonstrate that such heresy undermines the entire foundation of the Gospel.

**Hunter & McShane** - Paul now proceeds to demonstrate the awful alternative if this false doctrine was true. The grim catalogue outlines how this teaching undermines the foundations of the gospel. Step by step he shows the futility of such a position, the slander on the character of God, the loss of present assurance and future hope, and the ultimate despair it produces. In some way they failed to see that to deny the resurrection of the body was to deny the resurrection of Christ, and if the latter were true the whole gospel was destroyed. This section reveals the pivotal position in christian doctrine that the resurrection of Christ holds in fact and preaching. As a true teacher he not only declares the truth of the gospel (vv. 1-11), but shows also the devastating results that would inevitably flow from the acceptance of such erroneous doctrine (vv. 12-19). Let it be noted that in v. 12 Paul argues from the standpoint of the gospel, "if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead", whereas in v. 13 he is arguing from the standpoint of the error taught, "if there be no resurrection of the dead". He does this for two reasons: firstly, v. 12 states the implication of the teaching of vv. 1-11, viz. that Christ is preached as raised from the dead, and it is, therefore, illogical to hold that there is no such thing as the resurrection of the dead; secondly, in v. 13 the conclusion he reaches is that if this doctrine be true, Christ is not risen; that enables him to advance the grim results that must follow. His reasoning, then, is as follows: if Christ has risen, it must be admitted that others can be raised (v. 12); the denial that others will rise involves denial that Christ is risen (v. 13). He now indicates seven things that would be true if Christ was not alive..([What the Bible teaches – 1 and 2 Corinthians](#))

**James Smith** - THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION. 1 Corinthians 15:12-23 Here the apostle reasons on this great truth from two different standpoints—1. The negative. "If Christ be not risen"—then what? 2. The positive. "But now is Christ risen,"—then what? As if one should say: "If the sun should not rise again, then what would happen?" But now the sun is risen and becomes self-evident.

**Ralph Earle** - After the introductory section on the resurrection of Christ (1 Cor 15:1-11), Paul deals in this chapter with two basic matters: (1) The fact of the resurrection (1 Cor 15:12-34), and (2) The nature of the resurrection (1 Cor 15:35-58). These are the two main divisions of this chapter.

**Now if** (first class condition assumed true that) **Christ is** (present tense - continually) **preached** ([kerusso](#) - heralded like a public crier, proclaimed), **that He has been raised** ([egeiro](#)) **from the dead** - This statement is a "recap" of the Gospel in summary form. Paul just stated in 1 Cor 15:11 that the Corinthians believed the Gospel which had as one of the basic truths the fact that Christ was raised from the dead on the third day after His crucifixion. As he goes on to say it was not they they denied Jesus' resurrection, but more likely that they denied the resurrection of believers.

**NOTE** - Paul repeatedly (6 times) uses "IF" in his rhetorical argument for the resurrection - 1 Cor 15:12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 19. Jack Arnold notes that "What Paul will do in 1 Corinthians 15:12-19 is show the **logical**

**consequences of denying the resurrection of Jesus Christ.** The “what if?” question is not just a twentieth century problem; it was also a first century problem which cropped up in the church at Corinth. In this section of Scripture, Paul’s whole method of reasoning is, “**What do we give up if the resurrection is not true?**” He argues from a negative point of view, assuming certain false presuppositions to prove that Christ did rise from the dead and Christians, too, shall rise from the dead. Paul’s argument demands concentration, but he devastates those who would say they are Christians and deny the literal, bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. ([What If Christ Is Not Risen?](#))

**Utley** - The source of this denial of the resurrection probably had its origin in Greek philosophy, which thought the physical body was the source of evil. It is textually uncertain whether they were denying the resurrection of Christ or the resurrection of all believers.

Note that in this section Paul uses the verb **been raised** ([egeiro](#)) 5 times (1Cor 15:12, 13, 14, 16, 17) to describe Christ’s resurrection and each use is in the [perfect tense](#) describing a past completed action with continuing/ongoing effect. In short it speaks of the permanent “negative” effect of Christ’s not having been raised! Here is the summary of the permanent effects or results if Christ has not been raised...

1. there is no resurrection at all, 1 Cor 15:13, 16
2. our preaching is vain, 1 Cor 15:14
3. your faith is vain, 1 Cor 15:14
4. they are false witnesses, 1 Cor 15:15
5. not even Christ has been raised 1 Cor 15:16
6. your faith is worthless, 1 Cor 15:17
7. you are still in your sins, 1 Cor 15:17
8. those who have died have gone, 1 Cor 15:18
9. we are of all men most to be pitied, 1 Cor 15:19

**Jack Arnold** - These Corinthians had wrongly concluded that there was no general resurrection of Christians at the Second Advent of Christ. It is not hard to understand why they would draw this conclusion if you understand Greek philosophy. The Corinthians had succumbed to the fact there would be no resurrection of Christians at the Second Advent because this is what the unbelieving Greek philosophers taught. They held that the spirit part of man survives after death in some eternal oblivion, but the body goes to the grave and turns to dust, never to be raised. These philosophers taught that the body was essentially evil and that it was a prison for the spirit. When death came, the spirit was freed and liberated from the sinful body which was dead and forgotten. In one respect, a Greek could welcome death because it was the liberation of the spirit from the body. The idea of a literal resurrection of the body was offensive to the natural Greek mind. These Corinthian Christians had bought the reasoning that there was no bodily resurrection. They were not denying life after death but were denying bodily resurrection. Greek philosophers talked of the resurrection of the body as “the hope of swine.” It was ridiculous to think there was no resurrection of Christians even though Christ was raised from the dead. He was proof positive that bodily resurrection is possible. Christ had been seen by the Apostles, individually and collectively, by men and women, singly and in groups, and even by five hundred people at one time. He was obviously raised from the dead, and this, of course, would necessitate a resurrection of all Christians because all share in his death, burial and resurrection. It was totally illogical to deny the resurrection of all Christians if Christ Himself was raised from the dead because He was the “first fruits” of all resurrection. ([1 Corinthians 15:12-19 What If Christ Is Not Risen?](#))

**Ray Pritchard** - Evidently, some of the first-century Christians taught that at death the body is discarded and the soul goes to heaven. Certainly that’s what the Greeks in general believed. To them the body was the “husk” that contained the soul. At death you burn the “husk” and let the soul go free. (That’s one reason why some pagans practiced cremation and why Christians generally have opposed the practice. [Cremation](#) itself is not a sin since the body ends up as dust no matter how you treat it after death, but burial was thought to be a statement of faith in the coming resurrection of the body.) The real problem at Corinth was not philosophical but practical. Experience seems to argue against the resurrection. There are far more funerals than resurrections. As a pastor I am often asked to officiate at a funeral. No one has ever asked me to officiate at a resurrection. And if you judge by the visual evidence, it’s hard to believe that the dead will ever be raised. You can go out to the cemetery with a loaf of bread and a jug of tea and wait for someone to rise from the dead. We haven’t had any verified resurrections in 2000 years. Funerals we have aplenty. Where are the resurrections? ([1 Corinthians 15:35-58 Acorns to Oak Trees: How are Dead Raised?](#))

#### **Related Resources:**

- [What does the Bible say about cremation? Should Christians be cremated? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Is burial the only option a Christian can consider? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**Robertson and Plummer** - Paul has just shown how full and unanimous is the testimony to the fact of the Resurrection of Christ,



and from that solid basis he now passes on (δὲ) to the main question, using a current skeptical assertion as a text. It is one statement against another. On the one hand the declaration of all the Apostles, from the first to the last of them, and of many other eyewitnesses, that Christ has been raised and abides forever as the Risen Lord (this is the force of the perfect tense γήγερται throughout the argument); on the other the a priori dictum of certain cavillers, unsupported by any evidence, that there is no such thing as a resurrection of dead people. The latter position is analogous to the modern one; "Miracles don't happen." Which will the Corinthians, who long ago accepted Apostolic preaching, hold to now? ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Christ** (Anointed One)([5547](#))(**Christos** from **chrío** = to rub or anoint, consecrate to an office) describes one who has been anointed with oil, one who has been consecrated. The majority of the NT uses refer to Jesus. Christos describes one who has been anointed, symbolizing appointment to a task. It is used here as the title "Anointed One" and is the Greek synonym for "Messiah." Christos is used in the [Septuagint](#) describing everyone anointed with the holy oil, especially the priesthood (Lev. 4:5+, Lev 4:16+) and it is also a name applied to those who were acting as redeemers like Cyrus. **BDAG** adds Christos signifies the "Fulfiller of Israelite expectation of a Deliverer" and was used in the [Septuagint](#) of the great messianic Ps 2:2+ describing the future day when "The kings of the earth take their stand And the rulers take counsel together against the LORD and against His **Anointed** (Hebrew = [Mashiach/masiyah](#); [Lxx](#) = Christos)." Daniel 9:26+ gives us the incredible prophecy that after 69 weeks (483 years) "the Messiah (Hebrew = [Mashiach/masiyah](#); [Lxx](#) = Christos) will be cut off," a specific prophecy of *what* would happen to Messiah and *when* it would happen. The Jews could have known and should have known (and some Jews have been saved when they read this prophecy) (See Luke 19:42+)

Christos in 1-2 Corinthians (NOTE 14 USES IN 1 CORINTHIANS 15) - 1 Co. 1:1; 1 Co. 1:2; 1 Co. 1:3; 1 Co. 1:4; 1 Co. 1:6; 1 Co. 1:7; 1 Co. 1:8; 1 Co. 1:9; 1 Co. 1:10; 1 Co. 1:12; 1 Co. 1:13; 1 Co. 1:17; 1 Co. 1:23; 1 Co. 1:24; 1 Co. 1:30; 1 Co. 2:2; 1 Co. 2:16; 1 Co. 3:1; 1 Co. 3:11; 1 Co. 3:23; 1 Co. 4:1; 1 Co. 4:10; 1 Co. 4:15; 1 Co. 4:17; 1 Co. 5:7; 1 Co. 6:11; 1 Co. 6:15; 1 Co. 7:22; 1 Co. 8:6; 1 Co. 8:11; 1 Co. 8:12; 1 Co. 9:12; 1 Co. 9:21; 1 Co. 10:4; 1 Co. 10:16; 1 Co. 11:1; 1 Co. 11:3; 1 Co. 12:12; 1 Co. 12:27; 1 Co. 15:3; 1 Co. 15:12; 1 Co. 15:13; 1 Co. 15:14; 1 Co. 15:15; 1 Co. 15:16; 1 Co. 15:17; 1 Co. 15:18; 1 Co. 15:19; 1 Co. 15:20; 1 Co. 15:22; 1 Co. 15:23; 1 Co. 15:31; 1 Co. 15:57; 1 Co. 16:24; 2 Co. 1:1; 2 Co. 1:2; 2 Co. 1:3; 2 Co. 1:5; 2 Co. 1:19; 2 Co. 1:21; 2 Co. 2:10; 2 Co. 2:12; 2 Co. 2:14; 2 Co. 2:15; 2 Co. 2:17; 2 Co. 3:3; 2 Co. 3:4; 2 Co. 3:14; 2 Co. 4:4; 2 Co. 4:5; 2 Co. 4:6; 2 Co. 5:10; 2 Co. 5:14; 2 Co. 5:16; 2 Co. 5:17; 2 Co. 5:18; 2 Co. 5:19; 2 Co. 5:20; 2 Co. 6:15; 2 Co. 8:9; 2 Co. 8:23; 2 Co. 9:13; 2 Co. 10:1; 2 Co. 10:5; 2 Co. 10:7; 2 Co. 10:14; 2 Co. 11:2; 2 Co. 11:3; 2 Co. 11:10; 2 Co. 11:13; 2 Co. 11:23; 2 Co. 12:2; 2 Co. 12:9; 2 Co. 12:10; 2 Co. 12:19; 2 Co. 13:3; 2 Co. 13:5; 2 Co. 13:14;

**Raised** ([1453](#))(**egeiro**) means to rise (stand up) from a sitting or lying position (Mt 8:26, 9:5), to awaken from sleep (Mt 8:25), figuratively to "awaken" from death (rise up). **Egeiro** was used literally also to raise up or lift up a person either sitting or lying down. Figuratively **egeiro** was used to "raise up" a person from illness, thus restoring them to health. Figuratively as used in Romans 4:24, **egeiro** describes the bringing back of Jesus from the dead and thus raising Him or causing Him to rise. The idea of wake up from death is conveyed by **egeiro** because sleep was used as metaphor of death for believers (there is however no "soul sleep"). To raise up to a position as was David in Acts 13:22 (referring to his "promotion" to king). **Egeiro** is the verb Paul characteristically used when speaking of Jesus being raised from the dead (although his favorite noun for "resurrection" was [anastasis](#)). **Egeiro** in 1-2 Corinthians - 1 Co. 6:14; 1 Co. 15:4; 1 Co. 15:12; 1 Co. 15:13; 1 Co. 15:14; 1 Co. 15:15; 1 Co. 15:16; 1 Co. 15:17; 1 Co. 15:20; 1 Co. 15:29; 1 Co. 15:32; 1 Co. 15:35; 1 Co. 15:42; 1 Co. 15:43; 1 Co. 15:44; 1 Co. 15:52; 2 Co. 1:9; 2 Co. 4:14; 2 Co. 5:15

### **GLORIOUS DAY**

(Casting Crowns)

One day the grave could conceal Him no longer  
One day the stone rolled away from the door  
Then He arose, over death He had conquered  
Now is ascended, my Lord evermore  
Death could not hold Him, the grave could not keep Him  
From rising again  
  
Living, He loved me  
Dying, He saved me  
Buried, He carried my sins far away  
Rising, He justified freely forever  
One day He's coming  
Oh glorious day, oh glorious day

**How do some among you** (present tense - continually) **say that there is no resurrection of the dead**- He is referring to the fact that the church members at Corinth were saying that believers would not be raised from the dead. While we cannot discern from the text (or context) whether they were denying the resurrection of Christ or of all believers, most writers feel it is the latter (believer's) resurrection they were denying. They apparently had been influenced by the Greek philosophers and possibly also the Sadducees

who did not believe in a literal resurrection.

**Guzik** - The Corinthian Christians just did not think carefully. Some of them denied the reality of resurrection, while believing in a resurrected Jesus. Paul shows how the resurrection of Jesus not only proves His own resurrection, but it proves the principle of resurrection. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Craig Keener** has some background on Greek thinking regarding the resurrection - By contrast, this conception was difficult for Greeks to envision. Many Gentile intellectuals affirmed the soul's immortality without a future for the body; some others denied any afterlife at all. Many tomb inscriptions lamented lack of hope for any afterlife. Even traditional Greek mythology viewed the afterlife as a shadowy semi-existence without a body, perhaps similar to the more ambiguous and perhaps figurative depictions of Sheol in the OT. Sadducees in Judea and undoubtedly many Diaspora Jews influenced by Greek thought did not think in terms of a resurrection, but they would clearly understand that the Galilean apostolic claim meant bodily resurrection. ([NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible](#))

**Kittel** - Apart from transmigration, the Greeks speak of resurrection only **a. as an impossibility**, or **b. as an isolated miracle of resuscitation**. They have no concept of a general resurrection; the hearers in Acts 17:18 seem to think **anastasis** is a proper name (cf. 17:31–32). (TDNT- Abridged)

**Steve Lewis** - the Greek way of thinking it would have been inconceivable that a person's earthly body would come back to life after death. When Paul met with the philosophers on Mars Hill in Athens (Acts 17:18-34+), he spoke of Christ's resurrection from the dead and most of the philosophers mocked him. •

1. The Epicurean philosophers taught simple materialism: there is no existence beyond death.
2. The Stoic philosophers taught that at death the soul was merged with Deity, and so there was a loss of individual personality.
3. The Platonist philosophers taught that the soul was immortal, but they denied the idea of a bodily resurrection.

([1 Corinthians 15:1-34 Easter Before Christmas?](#))

**Resurrection** (386) (**anastasis** from **ana** = up, again + **histemi** = to cause to stand) literally means "to stand again" or "to cause to stand again" and most NT uses refer to a physical body rising from the dead or coming back to life after having once died. The **resurrection** is distinguished from belief in **reincarnation**, which usually involves a series of rebirths from which the soul may seek release. Resurrection has primary reference to the body. The resurrection is the central, defining doctrine and claim of the gospel for as Paul wrote "if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain." (1Cor 15:14)

#### Related Resources:

- **John MacArthur's sermon refutation of theories of the resurrection** - (1) swoon theory, (2) no-burial theory (3) Hallucination theory (4) telepathy theory (5) seance theory (6) mistaken identity (imposter) theory (7) the most popular, the theft theory
- **Who Moved the Stone? (ONLINE) by Frank Morrison** - Here is the preface of the book - This study is in some ways so unusual and provocative that the writer thinks it desirable to state here very briefly how the book came to take its present form. In one sense it could have taken no other, for it is essentially a confession, the inner story of a man who originally set out to write one kind of book and found himself compelled by the sheer force of circumstances to write another. It is not that the facts themselves altered, for they are recorded imperishably in the monuments and in the pages of human history. But the interpretation to be put upon the facts underwent a change. Somehow the perspective shifted --not suddenly, as in a flash of insight or inspiration, but slowly, almost imperceptibly, by the very stubbornness of the facts themselves. The book as it was originally planned was left high and dry, like those Thames barges when the great river goes out to meet the incoming sea. The writer discovered one day that not only could he no longer write the book as he had once conceived it, but that he would not if he could. To tell the story of that change, and to give the reasons for it, is the main purpose of the following pages. (Click for [index of the 15 chapters](#))
- **What Good is a Dead Messiah?** (Chapter 6 in [Josh McDowell's classic "More than a Carpenter"](#))
- [Why should I believe in Christ's resurrection? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Why is the resurrection of Jesus Christ important? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Why is the truth of the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ so important? GotQuestions.org](#)
- [How many people were raised from the dead in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Is the resurrection of Jesus Christ true? | GotQuestions.org](#)

- [Why does it matter that Jesus rose from the dead? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [When will the Resurrection take place? GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What is the first resurrection? What is the second resurrection? GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What is more important, the death of Christ or His resurrection?](#)
- [What did Jesus mean when He said, "I am the Resurrection and the Life" \(John 11:25\)? GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Where do the Hebrew Scriptures prophesy the death and resurrection of the Messiah? GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What does it mean that Jesus rose "again"? GotQuestions.org](#)
- American Tract Society • [Resurrection of Christ](#) • [Resurrection of the Dead](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary • [Resurrection](#)
- Baker Evangelical Dictionary • [Resurrection](#)
- Charles Buck Dictionary • [Resurrection](#) • [Resurrection of Christ](#)
- CARM Theological Dictionary • [Resurrection, resurrection bodies](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary • [Resurrection of Christ](#) • [Resurrection of the Dead](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary • [Resurrection](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary • [Resurrection of Jesus Christ](#) • [Resurrection](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible • [Resurrection](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT • [Resurrection](#) • [Resurrection of Christ](#) • [Resurrection of Christ \(2\)](#) • [Resurrection of the Dead](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia • [Resurrection of Jesus Christ, the](#) • [Resurrection](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia • [Resurrection of the body](#) • [Resurrection of christ](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia • [Resurrection](#) • [Resurrection of Christ](#) • [Christ, Resurrection Of](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia • [Resurrection](#)

**Well over three hundred verses are concerned with the subject of Jesus' resurrection in the New Testament.** We are told that this event is a sign for unbelievers (Matt. 12:38–40); cf. John 20:24–29) as well as the answer for the believer's doubt (Luke 24:38–43). It serves as the guarantee that Jesus' teachings are true (Acts 2:22–24; 1 Cor. 15:12–20) and is the center of the gospel itself (Rom. 4:24–25, 10:9; 1 Cor. 15:1–4). Further, the resurrection is the impetus for evangelism (Matt. 28:18–20; Acts 10:39–43), the key indication of the believer's daily power to live the Christian life (Rom. 6:4–14, 8:9–11; Phil. 3:10) and the reason for the total commitment of our lives (Rom. 7:4; 1 Cor. 15:57–58). The resurrection even addresses the fear of death (John 11:25; 1 Cor. 15:54–58; cf. Heb. 2:14–15) and is related to the second coming of Jesus (Acts 1:11; Rev. 1:7). Lastly, this event is a model of the Christian's resurrection from the dead (Acts 4:2; 1 Cor. 6:14; 1 Thess. 4:13–18) and provides a foretaste of heaven for the believer (Phil. 3:20–21; 1 Peter 1:3–5).

#### **D L MOODY - Thank God for the Resurrection!**

At the battle of Inkerman a soldier was just able to crawl to his tent after he was struck down. When found, he was lying upon his face, his open Bible before him, his hand glued fast to the page by his life-blood which covered it. It is said that when his hand was lifted, the letters of the printed page were clearly traced upon it, and with the ever-living promise in and on his hand, they laid him in a soldier's grave. The words were—

"I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

I want a religion that can comfort even in death, that can unite me with my loved ones. Oh, what gloom and darkness would settle upon this world if it were not for the glorious doctrine of the resurrection! Thank God, the glorious morning will soon break. For a little while God asks us to be on the watch-tower, faithful to Him and waiting for the summons. Soon our Lord will come to receive His own, whether they be living or dead.

## **TORREY'S TOPIC RESURRECTION**

- Foretold by the prophets Psalm 16:10; Acts 13:34,35; Isaiah 26:19
- Foretold by Himself Matthew 20:19; Mark 9:9; 14:28; John 2:19-22

#### **WAS NECESSARY TO**

- The fulfilment of Scripture Luke 24:45,46

- Forgiveness of sins 1 Corinthians 15:17
- Justification Romans 4:25; 8:34
- Hope 1 Corinthians 15:19
- The efficacy of preaching 1 Corinthians 15:14
- The efficacy of faith 1 Corinthians 15:14,17
- A proof of his being the Son of God Psalm 2:7; Acts 13:33; Romans 1:4

#### **EFFECTED BY**

- The power of God
- Acts 2:24; 3:15; Romans 8:11; Ephesians 1:20; Colossians 2:12
- His own power John 2:19; 10:18
- The power of the Holy Spirit 1 Peter 3:18

#### **THE TIMING**

- On the first day of the week Mark 16:9
- On the third day after his death Mark 16:9
- On the third day after His death Luke 24:46; Acts 10:40; 1 Corinthians 15:4

#### **THE APOSTLES**

- At first did not understand the predictions respecting Mark 9:10; John 20:9
- Very slow to believe Mark 16:13; Luke 24:9,11,37,38
- Reproved for their unbelief of Mark 16:14

#### **HE APPEARED AFTER TO**

- Mary Magdalene Mark 16:9; John 20:18
- The women Matthew 28:9
- Simon Peter Luke 24:34
- Two disciples Luke 24:13-31
- Apostles, except Thomas John 20:19,24
- Apostles, Thomas being present John 20:26
- Apostles at the sea of Tiberias John 21:1
- Apostles in Galilee Matthew 28:16,17
- About five hundred brethren 1 Corinthians 15:6
- James 1 Corinthians 15:7
- All the Apostles Luke 24:51; Acts 1:9; 1 Corinthians 15:7
- Paul 1 Corinthians 15:8

#### **PROOF**

- Fraud impossible in Matthew 27:63-66
- He gave many infallible proofs of Luke 24:35,39,43; John 20:20,27; Acts 1:3

#### **WAS ATTESTED BY**

- Angels Matthew 28:5-7; Luke 24:4-7,23
- Apostles Acts 1:22; 2:32; 3:15; 4:33
- His enemies Matthew 28:11-15
- Asserted and preached by the Apostles Acts 25:19; 26:23

#### **SAINTS**

- Begotten to a lively hope 1 Peter 1:3,21
- Desire to know the power of Philippians 3:10

- Should keep, in remembrance 2 Timothy 2:8
- Shall rise in the likeness of Romans 6:5; 1 Corinthians 15:49; Philippians 3:21

## SYMBOLIZES

- Is an emblem of the new birth Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12
- The first-fruits of our resurrection Acts 26:23; 1 Corinthians 15:20,23
- The truth of the gospel involved in 1 Corinthians 15:14,15
- Followed by his exaltation Acts 4:10,11; Romans 8:34; Ephesians 1:20; Philippians 2:9,10; Revelation 1:18
- An assurance of the judgment Acts 17:31

## TIPIFIED

- Isaac Genesis 22:13; Hebrews 11:19
- Jonah Jonah 2:10; Matthew 12:40

### James Smith - Handfuls of Purpose - THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION 1 CORINTHIANS 15:12-23

Here the apostle reasons on this great truth from two different standpoints—

1. The NEGATIVE. "If Christ be not risen"—then what?
2. The POSITIVE. "But now is Christ risen,"—then what? As if one should say: "If the sun should not rise again, then what would happen?" But now the sun is risen and becomes self-evident.

#### I. If Christ be Not Risen.

1. THEN CHRIST'S OWN TESTIMONY WAS UNTRUE. He had given His promise: "I will rise again." "Destroy this temple (body) and in three days I will raise it up" (John 2:19). If He failed here, how could He be "the Resurrection and the Life?" (John 11:25).

2. THEN HIS DISCIPLES WERE COMPLETELY DECEIVED. For this was the keynote of their joyful testimony. "They taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead" (Acts 4:2). When their Lord was crucified, the disciples were of all men the most miserable, hiding in shame from their countrymen. But suddenly they became the most joyful and courageous of mortals. What had happened? They had seen their Lord risen from the tomb.

3. THEN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH IS A GIGANTIC FRAUD. It is a majestic structure, without any foundation. If there was no empty grave in Joseph's garden on the third day, then this is the emptiest thing on earth. It is built on the supposition that Christ rose from the dead. If He did not rise from the grave, then how are we to account for its strength and perpetuity all these long ages?

4. THEN CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE IS A GRAND DELUSION. Our assurance of forgiveness, our joy in being justified in the light of God, our peace of heart and mind, our answered prayers, our sweet fellowship with God, our bright hopes for the world to come, are all imaginary; and all the millions in every age who have had these experiences have been fatally betrayed.

5. THEN WE WHO BELIEVE IN IMMORTALITY HAVE BEEN LIVING IN A FOOL'S PARADISE. Instead of "departing to be with Christ," those who have died in this faith have perished like the beast. The joys, hopes, and visions of the dying Christian have all been delusive. Their expectation of seeing Jesus and meeting the loved ones gone before have been but a treacherous empty fancy. Their whole life has been a mere hallucination.

6. THEN WE ARE OF ALL MEN THE MOST MISERABLE. For we, of all men, have stood on the highest pinnacle of expectation, having the brightest outlook and the most confident hopes of any other man. It means for us to be cast down from the high tower of our personal blessedness into the abyss of darkness and despair. If Christ be not risen then the Christian life is but a ghastly mirage, for there will be no resurrection of the dead (v. 12), our preaching has been in vain, and our faith is also vain (v. 14). We have been false witnesses, and we are yet in our sins, and all who have died in the faith are perished (v. 18).

II. But Now is Christ Risen (v. 20). What a joyful ring there is in this shout. It is like the blast of the trumpet of victory. "Now is Christ risen," and the foundations of Hell have been shaken. The sun has arisen in His strength and scattered the darkness, and brought

health and beauty with His healing beams. "Now is Christ risen."

1. THEN OUR PREACHING IS NOT IN VAIN. The great commission still stands good and true: "All power is given unto Me in Heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore" (Matt. 28:18–20). "Lo, I (the Risen One) am with you always." He will not fail you, be not discouraged. The Gospel of the Risen Christ is still the power of God unto salvation to every believer.

2. THEN OUR FAITH IS NOT VAIN. We are not trusting a dead Saviour, but Him who is "the Resurrection and the Life" (John 11:25). It is no vain thing to trust in the Living Lord, who had the power to lay down His life and to take it again. He who conquered death and the grave can easily restore our sickly faith and raise our dying efforts from the tomb of uselessness.

3. THEN WE ARE NOT NOW IN OUR SINS (v. 17). He died for our sins, "but He rose again for our justification." His death was the paying of the price. His resurrection was the evidence that God had accepted the price paid for our redemption. Now we who believe are accepted in Him, being raised together with Him in the purpose of God.

4. THEN THOSE WHO HAVE FALLEN ASLEEP IN CHRIST ARE NOT PERISHED (v. 18). They are with their Lord, who was the firstfruits from the dead (v. 23). "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him" when He comes to be glorified in His saints (1 Thess. 4:14, 15) "Knowing that He which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus" (2 Cor. 4:14).

5. THEN WE ARE NOT OF ALL MEN THE MOST MISERABLE (v. 19). Christians should be the happiest people on the face of the earth. They have the best of all friends in Jesus, the sweetest of all promises in God's Word, the greatest of all treasures in the fulness of Divine Grace. They hold the highest of all earth's positions in being the servants of the Lord, crowned with honour and glory. They enjoy the brightest of all prospects in the Coming Kingdom. They shall reign with Him a thousand years (Rev. 20:6).

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## Fear Or Faith?

Jesus Christ . . . has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. —2 Timothy 1:10

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:12-20

You may have never heard the name of Sir Isaiah Berlin. When he died in 1997, Arthur Schlesinger eulogized him in Newsweek as "very likely the most sparkling man of the 20th century." Born in Latvia, Berlin eventually became an Oxford professor and was noted for his extraordinary academic achievements. He was admired by people from every level of society.

Ironically, in that same issue of Newsweek Sir Isaiah was quoted as saying, "I'm afraid of dying, for it could be painful. But I find death a nuisance. I object to it . . . I'm terribly curious. I'd like to live forever."

In candidly expressing his feelings about death, that famous thinker admitted he was no different from ordinary people. All his learning could not free him from our common abhorrence. Like all of us, he was held in bondage by the fear of death (Heb. 2:14-15).

Simple faith in Jesus Christ can do for us what great learning cannot. When we believe in Him and His death-conquering resurrection, the dread of death vanishes. We can be certain about heaven because our Savior guarantees us eternal life (Jn. 11:25-26). Because He lives, we who trust in Him will live forever in the joy and glory of His fellowship! (Jn. 14:19). By: Vernon Grounds

So when my latest breath  
Shall rend the veil in twain,  
By death I shall escape from death  
And life eternal gain.  
—Montgomery

Only the fear of God can remove the fear of death.

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## Saving Ourselves

If we died with Him, we shall also live with Him. —2 Timothy 2:11+

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:12-20

Inside, music was playing. Outside, leaves were falling. Catching a gust of wind, one of the last leaves of autumn blew briefly

upward as I heard the phrase, "He is risen!" By the end of the song, however, the leaf had reached the ground. Gravity had overcome the breeze.

Later, I overheard three middle-aged women discussing diets, exercise, face-lifts, and other age-defying efforts. Like the leaf, they were trying to keep gravity from pulling them toward the inevitable.

Their conversation reminds me of the good works people do to try to save themselves from spiritual death. But just as leaves cannot keep from falling and people cannot keep from aging, no one can work hard enough to avoid the consequences of sin, which is death (Rom. 6:23).

At the crucifixion, mockers challenged Jesus to save Himself. Instead, He put His life into the hands of God, and God gave back to Him not only His own life but ours as well. To receive salvation, we too must simply put our lives into the hands of God, for if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead lives in us, He will give life to us as well (Rom. 8:11).

The forces of sin outside cannot defeat the life of Christ inside. By: Julie Ackerman Link [Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#)

Thank You, Jesus, for Your willingness  
to surrender to Your Father's will.  
For if You had chosen to save Yourself,  
You could not have saved me. Amen.

Salvation isn't turning over a new leaf; it's receiving a new life.

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## The Resurrection

[Jesus] was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification. —Romans 4:25

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:12-19

The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the keystone of the arch of salvation. Remove it and the whole structure of the plan of salvation crumbles in the dust.

The good news of the gospel is that Christ died for our sins (1 Cor. 15:3), and that He rose again (v.4). The resurrection of Christ is the proof that His death atoned for sin.

The wages of one single sin is death. One sin brought the curse of death upon all mankind (Rom. 5:12-15). If Jesus had paid for all the sins of mankind except one, He could not have risen, for one sin would have been enough to keep Him in the tomb.

When Jesus arose, it was proof that He had completely met redemption's price. When He cried, "It is finished!" (Jn. 19:30), the work was fully done. God was satisfied and then proved the completeness of the work by raising Christ from the dead.

This victory should not only be commemorated on a special day each year but on the first day of every week—even every day! Because Christ did not remain in the tomb but conquered death by rising again, we can live in the joy of the full salvation provided by a risen, living, coming Redeemer. By: M.R. DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

What has that empty sepulcher to say to you and me?  
It tells us that the Savior's death has set His people free;  
He died, our sins upon Him laid;  
He rose, because the debt was paid.  
—Reich

The resurrection assures what Calvary secures.

**1 Corinthians 15:13 But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised; [NASB 1995 - Lockman](#)**

- 1Co 15:20 Joh 11:25,26 Ac 23:8 Ro 4:24,25 8:11,23 2Co 4:10-14 Col 3:1-4 1Th 4:14 2Ti 4:8 Heb 2:14 13:20 1Pe 1:3 Rev 1:18
- See also The Resurrection of Christ
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## LOGIC: NO RESURRECTION IF CHRIST NOT RAISED!

Paul's **first** conclusion (consequence) if Christ's resurrection were not true.

Paul will now proceed (1 Cor 15:13-19) to logically argue that the truth of the resurrection of all believers was absolutely crucial and to deny this foundational truth would have significant consequences.

**But if** (first class condition assumed true for the sake of argument that) **there is no resurrection ([anastasis](#)) of the dead, not even Christ has been raised ([egeiro](#) - see [note on perfect tense](#))** - This is not difficult logic. Paul is saying if there is no resurrection of the dead, neither was there any resurrection for Christ. If Jesus Christ has not been raised from the dead, then there is not the slightest chance the saints will be raised.

**Bob Utley** - **IF** is another FIRST CLASS CONDITIONAL. Grammarians often call it a "simple" or "logical" condition (cf. 1 Cor 15:13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19). **Obviously in this verse Paul is using it to heighten his literary argument, not asserting that Christ has not been raised!** But the logic in these next few verses is powerful. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**James Smith** comments that "then Christ's Own Testimony was Untrue. He had given His promise: "I will rise again." "Destroy this temple (body) and in three days I will raise it up" (John 2:19). If He failed here, how could He be "the Resurrection and the Life?" (John 11:25).

**Explore the Bible** - Paul resorted to a relentless logic to show how unreasonable it is to believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ and at the same time deny the bodily resurrection of believers. For the sake of argument, Paul assumed the false position of those who denied the bodily resurrection of believers. He then showed how following this kind of reasoning leads to impossible conclusions.

**Thomas Edwards** - If their denial of the resurrection of the dead rests on a preconceived notion that it is impossible for dead men to come to life again, then it is impossible that Christ, who certainly died, can have risen from the dead. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Kistemaker** - With the double negative in the two parts of this verse, Paul writes a conditional sentence that is contrary to reality. The clause **if there is no resurrection of the dead** contrasts the fact that there is a resurrection. But if the critics deny this fact, then Paul draws for them the inescapable conclusion that Christ's physical body did not rise from the grave either. ([1 Corinthians Commentary](#))

**Jack Arnold** - If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. To deny a general resurrection of all Christians is to deny the specific resurrection of Christ. If human bodies do not survive death as the Greek philosophers claimed, then Christ's body did not survive death and there is no resurrection of Christ. It is impossible to argue that Christ rose but Christians cannot either -- both will be resurrected or neither will be resurrected. What do we give up if we deny the resurrection of Christ? We give up any hope of any life after death because, for the Christians, there is no life after death apart from the resurrection. The resurrection makes a difference!

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Bob Utley on Paul's use of first class condition here - Obviously in this verse Paul is using it to heighten his literary argument, not asserting that Christ has not been raised! But the logic in these next few verses is powerful.

### **If Christ has not been raised then:**

1. there is no resurrection at all, vv. 13, 16
2. our preaching is vain, v. 14
3. your faith is vain, v. 14
4. they are false witnesses, v. 15
5. your faith is worthless, v. 17
6. you are still in your sins, v. 17
7. those who have died have gone, v. 18
8. we are of all men most to be pitied, v. 19

This theological issue of the resurrection of Christ is no minor issue either! He is alive or Christianity is a lie! This is a watershed doctrine!

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In 1957, Lieutenant David Steeves walked out of California's Sierra Nevada Mountains 54 days after his Air Force trainer jet had



disappeared. He told an unbelievable tale of how he had lived in a snowy wilderness after parachuting from his disabled plane. By the time he showed up alive, he had already been declared officially dead. When further search failed to turn up the wreckage, a hoax was suspected and Steeves was forced to resign under a cloud of doubt. More than 20 years later, however, his story was confirmed when a troop of Boy Scouts discovered the wreckage of his plane.

Another "survival story" from centuries ago is still controversial. A man by the name of Jesus Christ walked out of the Judean wilderness making claims a lot of people found difficult to believe. He was later executed and pronounced dead. But 3 days later He showed up alive. And there have been skeptics ever since.

But consider the facts of Christ's life, death, and resurrection. His integrity is well-founded. Prophets foretold His coming. Miracles supported His deity. Eyewitnesses verified His resurrection. And today the Holy Spirit confirms to anyone who is seeking to know the truth that Jesus is alive.

Yes, you can believe it! Do you?

I know that Jesus lives today,  
No matter what the skeptics say;  
The evidence that we must weigh  
Says, "Jesus is alive!" —Sper

The resurrection of Jesus is a fact of history that demands a response of faith.

**1 Corinthians 15:14 and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain. [NASB 1995 - Lockman](#)**

- 1Co 15:2,17 Ps 73:13 Isa 49:4 Ge 8:8 Mt 15:9 Ac 17:31 Ga 2:2 Jas 1:26 Jas 2:20
- See also The Resurrection of Christ
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE GOOD NEWS WOULD BE BAD NEWS!

Paul's **second** conclusion (consequence) if Christ's resurrection were not true - the good news would be bad news!

**Robertson and Plummer** - The sceptics still persist, and accept the denial of the antecedent: Christ is not risen. St Paul goes on to show what this denial involves, viz. (1) the falsification of Apostolic teaching and of Christian faith (14–17), and (2) the destruction of all Christian hope (18, 19). Thus by a reductio ad impossibile the denial is disproved. In short, the Resurrection of Christ is not an isolated fact or doctrine which can be accepted or rejected independently of other truths: it is the very centre of the Gospel. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Kistemaker** - Paul continues writing a conditional sentence that contrasts incorrect teaching with reality. ([1 Corinthians Commentary](#))

**And if** (first class condition assumed true for the sake of argument that) **Christ** ([Christos](#)) **has not been raised** ([egeiro](#) - see [note on perfect tense](#)), **then** (logical conclusion) **our preaching is vain** (without content, of no purpose, fruitless, void of effect, to no purpose, characterized by "nothingness," absolutely void, imaginary), **your faith also is vain** (useless, empty, without foundation) - Paul's point is that if Christ has not been raised from the dead then the Gospel, with its foundation being Christ's resurrection (1 Cor 15:3-4), is a worthless, totally useless Gospel and to believe in such a Gospel is also worthless. In effect the "Good News" was really "Bad News" if the skeptics reasoning were correct. What folly to preach about a man who is still dead in the grave! The idea is you remove the resurrection, there is nothing left of Christian theology! There is nothing to believe in.

As **MacArthur** says "Apart from the resurrection Jesus could not have conquered sin or death or hell, and those three great evils would forever be man's conquerors....If there were no resurrection, the hall of the faithful in Hebrews 11 would instead be the hall of the foolish. Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Moses, Rahab, David, the prophets, and all the others would have been faithful for nothing. They would have been mocked, scourged, imprisoned, stoned, afflicted, ill-treated, and put to death completely in vain. All believers of all ages would have believed for nothing, lived for nothing, and died for nothing." ([MNTC- 1 Corinthians](#))

**Arnold** - The whole Christian life is a worthless, useless existential superstition and a meaningless deception if Christ be not raised from the dead. Faith would be vain. Christianity would be a religious game. Life would be reduced to grim, stark realities, with no

hope. What do we give up if we deny the resurrection? We give up a living faith based on historical fact. For all practical purposes, we give up Christianity. The resurrection does make a difference! ([What If Christ Is Not Risen?](#))

**Preaching** (2782) (**kerugma** where **-ma** means the result of <> from **kerusso** = to proclaim or announce in public) means not so much the **act** but the **content** or the **result of preaching**, that which is cried by the **herald** (**kerux** - an officer sent by a king or other high official to proclaim a message or announce good news) or public crier. It can have such senses as "news," "declaration," "decree," "announcement," etc. **Kerugma** - 8v - Mt. 12:41; Lk. 11:32; Ro 16:25; 1 Co. 1:21; 1 Co. 2:4; 1 Co. 15:14; 2 Ti 4:17; Titus 1:3

**Vain** (empty, futile, foolish) (2756) **kenos** means literally to be without something material and thus means empty or without content. It was used with this literal meaning (as in Mk 12:3 "they took him and beat him and sent him away **empty handed**"). More often **kenos** is used figuratively referring to things that lack effectiveness and thus are futile, useless, of no purpose or without result. **Kenos** is used to refer to endeavors, labors, acts, which result in nothing and thus are vain, fruitless, without effect and will not succeed. **Kenos** can refer to being devoid of intellectual, moral, or spiritual value.

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#### Thomas Jefferson's Dead Bible

Congress once issued a special edition of Thomas Jefferson's Bible. It was simply a copy of our Bible with all references to the supernatural eliminated. Jefferson, in making his selections from the Bible, confined himself solely to the moral teachings of Jesus. The closing words of Jefferson's Bible are: "There laid they Jesus, and rolled a great stone to the mouth of the sepulchre and departed." If our Bible ended like that, it would mean the impossibility of other resurrections. But thank God our Bible does not end like that. And the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is our "living hope." —Moody Monthly

- [Here is a link to Jefferson's "Dead Bible"](#)

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#### Christ Is Risen—Hallelujah!

Christ is risen! Hallelujah!  
Gladness fills the world today;  
From the tomb that could not hold Him,  
See, the stone is rolled away!  
Christ hath risen! Hallelujah!  
Blessed morn of life and light!  
Lo, the grave is rent asunder,  
Death is conquered through His might.  
Christ hath risen! Hallelujah!  
Friends of Jesus, dry your tears;  
Through the veil of gloom and darkness,  
Lo, the Son of God appears!  
Christ hath risen! Hallelujah!  
He hath risen, as He said;  
He is now the King of Glory,  
And our great, exalted Head.

—Fanny J. Crosby

**1 Corinthians 15:15** Moreover we are even found to be false witnesses of God, because we testified against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised. ([NASB 1995 - Lockman](#))

- faults, Ex 23:3 Job 13:7-10 Ro 3:7,8
- we have Ac 2:24,32 4:10,33 10:39-42 13:30-33 20:21
- whom 1Co 15:13,20
- See also The Resurrection of Christ
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**APOSTLES WOULD HAVE BEEN LIARS  
MISREPRESENTING GOD!**

Paul's **third** conclusion (consequence) if Christ's resurrection were not true.

**Moreover** ("more than that", "in addition", "what i smore") **we are even** (present tense - continually) **found** ([heurisko](#) - discovered, "exposed") **to be false witnesses** ("lying about," "misrepresenting") **of God, because** (explains why they would have been misrepresenting God) **we testified against God that He raised** ([egeiro](#)) **Christ** ([Christos](#)), **Whom He did not raise** ([egeiro](#)), **if** (first class condition assumed true for the sake of argument that) **in fact the dead are not raised** ([egeiro](#)) - Note his main premise is their belief that **the dead are not raised**. **Found** is [heurisko](#) which was often used of moral judgments respecting character and here conveys the idea of discovering or detecting in essence that Christianity was all a big hoax! If there were no resurrection (as the skeptics proposed) the apostles would have in effect been lying about the Good News that sin and death were defeated by Christ's death (1 Cor 15:55-57<sup>±</sup>), burial and resurrection. The apostles would have been deliberate liars and deceivers! And furthermore the entire group of witnesses in 1 Cor 15:5-8 would have been "pseudo" witnesses! They would all have need to corroborate their stories about the resurrection of Christ and would have all been liars and deliberate deceivers. That is the conclusion one would have to arrive at if there is no resurrection from the dead. What a difference the resurrection makes!

**Schlatter on false witnesses of God** - Such a false witness would make his message a myth, a human composition which arises from human wishes; at the same time he would be claiming that his message was the word of God

**MacArthur** reasons that "If the apostles, the prophets, and the New Testament writers lied about the heart of the gospel why should they be believed about anything else? Why should their moral teachings be considered inspired and lofty if they so blatantly falsified their teaching about Jesus' resurrection? All New Testament truth stands or falls together based on the resurrection. Not only that, but those witnesses would have testified, preached, and taught a lie for which they were maligned, beaten, imprisoned, and often martyred. Such self-sacrifice, however, is not the stuff of which charlatans are made. People do not die to preserve a lie. ([MNTC- 1 Corinthians](#))

**Arnold** - If the resurrection is not true, then Christianity is a pipe dream, a hoax, a mirage and a bunch of wishful thinking by deluded people. Take out the resurrection of Jesus, and there is nothing left on which to rest faith - only the decomposing corpse of an itinerant Jewish carpenter-turned rabbi (Prior, 1 Corinthians)..... In the Book of Acts, the Apostles declared the resurrection of Christ with great authority and power. Acts makes mention of the resurrection 145 times. it was the focal point of early church preaching. The message was, "He has risen; we have seen Him; He is Lord and Savior!" If the resurrection is not true, then the Apostles were the world's greatest liars. If there is no resurrection, they cannot be considered trustworthy, honorable and sincere men, but deceivers. They are hypocrites who have led multiple millions into gross darkness and great error. God declared the resurrection to be truth and apart of His plan for this world. But if it did not occur, the Apostles were preaching against God's plans and purposes. However, the Bible says God has declared the resurrection of Christ from the dead and the Apostles and all Christians are in accord with His plan and purpose in declaring to men the resurrected Christ. This was the apostolic message. Isn't it odd that many local churches call themselves St. Thomas, or St. Andrew or St. Mark, using apostolic names, and yet many who make up these churches deny the bodily resurrection of Christ? This is real irony. ([What If Christ Is Not Risen?](#))

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The main content of the eyewitness testimonies concerned the resurrection. The apostles were **witnesses** of his resurrected life:

- Luke 24:48
- Acts 3:15
- John 15:27
- Acts 4:33
- Acts 1:8
- Acts 5:52
- Acts 2:24,32
- Acts 10:59
- Acts 10:41
- 1 John 1:2
- Acts 13:31
- Acts 22:15
- 1 Corinthians 15:4-9
- Acts 23:11
- 1 Corinthians 15:15
- Acts 26:16

- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## PREPARATION FOR PERSONAL TRUTH IN VERSE 17

Paul's **fourth** conclusion (consequence) (vv 16-17) if Christ's resurrection were not true.

**For if the dead are not**(present tense - continually, divine passive) **raised** ([egeiro](#)), **not even Christ** ([Christos](#)) **has been raised** ([egeiro](#) - see [note on perfect tense](#)) - It is so critical that Paul repeats what he said earlier in 1 Cor 15:13 **not even Christ has been raised**. In the next two verses Paul brings the consequences of their no resurrection skepticism "up close and personal." **If Christ has not been raised**, then it means He is still dead! It reminds me of **Josh McDowell's** chapter entitled [What Good is a Dead Messiah?](#) (Chapter 6 in [Josh McDowell's classic "More than a Carpenter"](#)) Of course the answer is absolutely nothing, because a dead savior is not really a savior because He could not give life that he himself did not possess. This shows how far afield was the reasoning of the Corinthians!

The empty tomb is the foundation on which our faith is built.

### Related Resource:

- [Is Jesus dead? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**1 Corinthians 15:17 and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins. [NASB 1995 - Lockman](#)**

- **your** 1Co 15:2,14 Ro 4:25
- **you are** Eze 33:10 Joh 8:21-24 Ac 5:31 Acts 13:38,39 Ro 5:10 8:33,34 Heb 7:23-28 9:22-28 10:4-12 1Pe 1:3,21
- See also The Resurrection of Christ
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passage:

John 8:21-24 Then He said again to them, "I go away, and you will seek Me, and will die in your sin; where I am going, you cannot come." 22 So the Jews were saying, "Surely He will not kill Himself, will He, since He says, 'Where I am going, you cannot come'?" 23 And He was saying to them, "You are from below, I am from above; you are of this world, I am not of this world. 24 "Therefore I said to you that you will die **in your sins**; for unless you believe that I am He, you will die **in your sins**."

Acts 13:38-39+ "Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through Him forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, 39 and through Him everyone who believes is freed from all things, from which you could not be freed through the Law of Moses.

## SINNERS STILL DEAD IN THEIR SINS

Paul's **fourth** conclusion (consequence) (vv 16-17) if Christ's resurrection were not true.

**And if** (first class condition assumed true that) **Christ** ([Christos](#)) **has not been raised** ([egeiro](#) - see [note on perfect tense](#)), **your faith is worthless** ("a mere delusion," useless, futile, pointless); **you are still** (yet, even now, at this time) **in your sins** - **In your sins** is locative of sphere (cf Jn 8:24), so that they would still be under the control or dominance of their sinful nature (see [Sin as a Principle](#)) (cf 1 Cor 15:56+) and responsible to personally pay the penalty of eternal death (Ro 6:23+) for their manifold sins! Not good news! Paul had earlier stated that the Gospel was the good news that **Christ died for** ([huper](#) - as the [Substitute Who atoned for](#)) **our sins** (1 Cor 15:3+), but their skeptical beliefs concerning the resurrection would have negated that glorious truth. **Worthless** ([mataios](#)) conveys a sense of aimlessness, leading to no object or end! That's a good picture of our life if there were no resurrection!

Arnold quotes Prior - If he was not raised from the dead, he is not Lord of anything. If life here on this earth is all there is, it makes no sense to base our hope on the groundless promises of one who made empty assertions about eternity. If the Christian faith is thus

based on an empty gospel and a fraudulent savior, “anybody is better off than the Christian.” ([What If Christ Is Not Risen?](#))

**Worthless** (3152) **mataios** from **maten** = groundless, invalid) (see related [logomacheo](#)) means vain, empty, devoid of force, lacking in content, nonproductive, useless, dead, fruitless, aimless, of no real or lasting value. **Robertson** says **mataios** is a stronger word than **kenos** in 1 Cor 15:14. This adjective describes an ineffectual attempt to do something or an unsuccessful effort to attain something. **Mataios** emphasizes aimlessness or the leading to no object or end and thus is used to describe false gods or idols in contrast to the true God (see below). 6v - Acts 14:15; 1 Co. 3:20; 1 Co. 15:17; Tit. 3:9; Jas. 1:26; 1 Pet. 1:18

**Sins** (266) **hamartia** literally conveys the idea of missing the mark as when hunting with a bow and arrow (in Homer some hundred times of a warrior hurling his spear but missing his foe). Later **hamartia** came to mean missing or falling short of any goal, standard, or purpose. **Hamartia** in the Bible signifies a departure from God's holy, perfect standard of what is right in word or deed (righteous). It pictures the idea of missing His appointed goal (His will) which results in a deviation from what is pleasing to Him. In short, sin is conceived as a missing the true end and scope of our lives, which is the Triune God Himself. As **Martin Luther** put it "*Sin is essentially a departure from God.*" I would add "sin" is the middle letter capitalized and emphasized (the "big I").

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### **[Dave Guzik](#) - We can follow Paul's logic point-by-point:**

1. If there is no principle of resurrection, then Jesus did not rise from the dead
2. If Jesus did not rise from the dead, then death has power over Him and defeated Him
3. If death has power over Jesus, He is not God
4. If Jesus is not God, He cannot offer a complete sacrifice for sins
5. If Jesus cannot offer a complete sacrifice for sins, our sins are not completely paid for before God
6. If my sins are not completely paid for before God, then I am still in my sins
7. Therefore, if Jesus is not risen, He is unable to save

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### **Fact, Not Fable**

If Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! —1 Corinthians 15:17

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:1-19

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the cornerstone of the Christian faith. Without it we have no hope for this life nor the life to come. That's why it is important to recognize that our belief in Christ's resurrection is not based on a religious feeling or unfounded rumor, but on historical fact with solid evidence to support it.

A century ago, a group of lawyers met in England to discuss the biblical accounts of Jesus' resurrection. They wanted to see if enough information was available to make a case that would hold up in a court of law. They concluded that Christ's resurrection was one of the most well-established facts of history.

In his book *Countdown*, G. B. Hardy offers some thought-provoking questions about the resurrection: “There are but two essential requirements: (1) Has anyone cheated death and proved it? (2) Is it available to me?” Hardy goes on to declare that only the tomb of Jesus is empty. And because Jesus conquered sin and death, we who put our faith in Him will share in His resurrection.

“If Christ is not risen, your faith is futile,” Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 15:17. Historical evidence and countless changed lives testify that the resurrection of Jesus is a fact. Have you put your hope in the risen Christ? By: David C. Egner ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Yes, Christ the Lord is risen,  
Has come forth from the grave;  
He breaks the chains of death for you  
And now has power to save.  
—Woodruff

Christ's resurrection is more than a fact of history—it's the proof of our salvation.

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**1 Corinthians 15:18 Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. ([NASB 1995 - Lockman](#))**

- **fallen** 1Co 15:6 1Th 4:13-14 Rev 14:13
- See also The Resurrection of Christ
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## ALL BELIEVERS FOREVER IN THE GRAVE!

Paul's **fifth** conclusion (consequence) if Christ's resurrection were not true - we would rot in our graves!

**Then** ('furthermore') **those also who have fallen asleep** ("died believing") **in** (in Covenant union with) **Christ** (locative of sphere - en [Christos](#)) **have perished** (are lost forever) - **Fallen asleep** in the NT is virtually always a euphemism for a believer's death (Mt 27:52, Jn 11:11-12, Acts 7:60+, 1 Cor 11:30+, three times in 1 Th 4:13-15+) . **Perished** is a horrible thought! Because the resurrection is true we can *perish the thought of perishing forever!* As an aside the God's Word Translation (a paraphrase) is not good here because it has "no longer exist" for perished, which implies the [aberrant](#) belief of [annihilationism](#). Paul is in essence saying they would go to Hell, into [Eternal Punishment](#) and be no better off than unbelievers! Note that by using the term **fallen asleep** Paul is not speaking of the false doctrine of [soul sleep](#).

Note the beautiful truth that although death normally speaks of a separation (think of family members who have died), the phrase **in Christ** means that this vital, mystical union believers experience with Christ is not altered or disrupted. It strikes me that in that sense Christ is right there with us as we pass through the valley of the shadow of death and is also waiting for us on the other side of the veil, all of which recalls the inseparable nature of our union as described by Paul in Romans 8:38-39+

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**In Christ** in Corinthians (Note 4 uses in chapter 15) - 1 Co. 1:2; 1 Co. 1:4; 1 Co. 1:30; 1 Co. 3:1; 1 Co. 4:10; 1 Co. 4:15; 1 Co. 4:17; 1 Co. 15:18; 1 Co. 15:19; 1 Co. 15:22; 1 Co. 15:31; 1 Co. 16:24; 2 Co. 1:21; 2 Co. 2:14; 2 Co. 2:17; 2 Co. 3:14; 2 Co. 5:17; 2 Co. 5:19; 2 Co. 12:2; 2 Co. 12:19;

- See discussion of meaning and significance of [in Christ](#) ([in Christ](#), [in Christ Jesus](#))

**Arnold** - If Christ be not risen, then all of our loved ones who have gone on to be with the Lord (or that we thought went to be with the Lord), whom we had hoped to meet again, we will never see again. Our children, our parents, our relatives, our friends who have died have all perished if there is no resurrection. ([What If Christ Is Not Risen?](#))

**Fallen asleep** ([2837](#)) ([koimao](#) related to [keimai](#) = to lie outstretched, to lie down) means to cause to sleep, is the word from which we get our word cemetery (see note below) which it was the early Christians optimistic name for a graveyard. It meant a sleeping place. It really was a synonym for a dormitory, a place where people sleep. This metaphorical use of the word **sleep** is appropriate because of the similarity in appearance between a sleeping body and a dead body; restfulness and peace normally characterize both. The object of the metaphor is to suggest that as the sleeper does not cease to exist while his body sleeps, so the dead person continues to exist despite his absence from the region in which those who remain can communicate with him, and that, as sleep is known to be temporary, so the death of the body will be found to be. Sleep has its waking, death will have its resurrection. In short, death to the believer is a sleep for his body—a period of rest to be followed by a glorious day. See discussion of [Soul Sleep](#). [Koimao](#) used in 18v - Matt. 27:52; Matt. 28:13; Lk. 22:45; Jn. 11:11; Jn. 11:12; Acts 7:60; Acts 12:6; Acts 13:36; 1 Co. 7:39; 1 Co. 11:30; 1 Co. 15:6; 1 Co. 15:18; 1 Co. 15:20; 1 Co. 15:51; 1 Thess. 4:13; 1 Thess. 4:14; 1 Thess. 4:15; 2 Pet. 3:4

**Have perished** ([622](#)) [apollumi](#) from [apo](#) = away from or wholly + [olethros](#) = state of utter ruin <> [ollumi](#) = to destroy) means to destroy utterly but not to cause one to cease to exist. [Apollumi](#) as it relates to men, is not the loss of being per se, but is more the loss of well-being. It means to ruin so that the person ruined can no longer serve the use for which he (it) was designed. To render useless. The gospel promises everlasting life for the one who believes. The failure to possess this life will result in utter ruin and eternal uselessness (but not a cessation of existence). [Apollumi](#) in 1-2 Corinthians - 1 Co. 1:18; 1 Co. 1:19; 1 Co. 8:11; 1 Co. 10:9; 1 Co. 10:10; 1 Co. 12:23; 1 Co. 15:18; 2 Co. 2:15; 2 Co. 4:3; 2 Co. 4:9

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**Question:** [What does the Bible say about soul sleep?](#)

**Answer:** "Soul sleep" is a belief that after a person dies, his/her soul "sleeps" until the resurrection and final judgment. The concept

of "soul sleep" is not biblical. When the Bible describes a person "sleeping" in relation to death (Luke 8:52; 1 Corinthians 15:6), it does not mean literal sleep. Sleeping is just a way to describe death because a dead body appears to be asleep. The moment we die, we face the judgment of God (Hebrews 9:27). For believers, to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:6-8; Philippians 1:23). For unbelievers, death means everlasting punishment in hell (Luke 16:22-23).

Until the final resurrection, though, there is a temporary heaven—paradise (Luke 23:43; 2 Corinthians 12:4) and a temporary hell—Hades (Revelation 1:18; 20:13-14). As can be clearly seen in Luke 16:19-31, neither in paradise nor in Hades are people sleeping. It could be said, though, that a person's body is "sleeping" while his soul is in paradise or Hades. At the resurrection, this body is "awakened" and transformed into the everlasting body a person will possess for eternity, whether in heaven or hell. Those who were in paradise will be sent to the new heavens and new earth (Revelation 21:1). Those who were in Hades will be thrown into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:11-15). These are the final, eternal destinations of all people—based entirely on whether or not a person trusted in Jesus Christ for salvation. Present-day defenders of soul sleep include the [Seventh Day Adventist church](#), [Jehovah's Witnesses](#), [Christadelphians](#), and others. [GotQuestions.org](#)

**1 Corinthians 15:19 If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied. [NASB 1995 - Lockman](#)**

- **this** Ps 17:14 Ec 6:11 9:9 Lu 8:14 21:34 1Co 6:3,4 2Ti 2:4
- **hoped** Eph 1:12-13 1Th 1:3 2Ti 1:12 1Pe 1:21
- **of all** 1Co 4:9-13 Mt 10:21-25 24:9 Joh 16:2,33 Ac 14:22 2Ti 3:12 Rev 14:13
- See also The Resurrection of Christ
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## WITHOUT HOPE BELIEVERS ARE LES MISERABLES

Les Miserables means "the wretched."

Paul's **sixth** conclusion (consequence) if Christ's resurrection were not true.

If (first class condition assumed true for sake of argument) **we have hoped in Christ ([Christos](#)) in this life ([zoe](#)) only, we are of all men** (present tense - continually) **most to be pitied** (and miserable) - The first words in the Greek sentence for emphasis are "in this life." **Hoped** is perfect tense, hope beginning in past (when we believed) and continuing on in the present. The qualifier is the time phrase **in this life only**, referring to our temporal (and quickly passing) existence on earth. Paul is showing the consequences of failure to believe in the resurrection results in a short term hope (for there is no afterlife), not an long range hope. And if that is the case the conclusion is that are to be greatly pitied. In striking contrast, hope is used in the NT hope with special focus on the return of Christ as our Blessed Hope (Titus 2:13+), a living hope (1 Pe 1:3+) with the promise that "when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is" (1 Jn 3:2).

**A T Robertson** on **hoped in this life only** - If our hope is limited to this life, we have denied ourselves what people call pleasures and have no happiness beyond. The Epicureans have the argument on us. Paul makes morality turn on the hope of immortality. Is he not right?

**Vine** adds that hoped in this life only "stresses the character of the persons and not the act of hoping; that is to say, if we are men that have had our hope in Christ in this life, and nothing more, the hope has no realization and is confined to this brief life." (Collected Writings)

Note that Paul does not just say **pitied** but **most to be pitied** using the comparative form as a **superlative** which describes the attribute of a person that is the highest in degree compared to other people. In essence Paul is saying if the resurrection is not true, we are far more to be pitied than even non-believers! "Without the resurrection Christianity would be pointless, and anyone who believes in it should be pitied. Without the resurrection, there would be no gospel, no salvation message to believe, no forgiveness of sins, and no hope of a meaningful life (either now or after death)." ([Lewis](#))

**MacArthur** - To have hoped in Christ in this life only would be to teach, preach, suffer, sacrifice, and work entirely for nothing. If Christ is still dead, then He not only cannot help us in regard to the life to come but He cannot help us now. If He cannot grant us eternal life, He cannot improve our earthly life. If He is not alive, where would be our source of peace, joy, or satisfaction now. The Christian life would be a mockery, a charade, a tragic joke. ([MNTC- 1 Corinthians](#))

**Arnold** - If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men. —A Christian is a person who has

committed everything to the resurrected Christ. For Christ, he suffers; because of Christ, he denies himself; to Christ, he has given himself for service. Yet, if Christ be not risen, then He is not Savior or Lord. No one, therefore, is to be pitied more than a Christian because he or she has served, sacrificed and suffered for a Christ who does not exist. Christians would be the most duped and gullible people on the face of the earth. They have believed things that are not true and lived a life for no real purpose. Besides all that, the Christian has lost all that so-called worldly fun that he might have had in his lifetime if Christ be not raised. Christians are to be pitied if Christ is not raised, for, thinking they had the truth, they have been deceived. They must, therefore, return to a life of pessimism, despair and darkness. Without the resurrection, Christianity crumbles, and the Christian is left in utter despair. What do we give up if we deny the resurrection? We give up life with meaning, purpose, hope and excitement. The resurrection does make a difference!...I read recently about an elderly church-goer who heard a modern skeptic talk about the resurrection on a radio program. She concluded that everything she had believed about orthodox Christianity was unreliable, untrue or a hoax. She, in despair, committed suicide. ([What If Christ Is Not Risen?](#))

**Hoped** (1679) **elpizo** from noun **elpis** = absolute assurance of future good) means to look forward with confidence to that which is good and beneficial. To express desire for some good with the expectation of obtaining it.

**Pitied** (1652) (**eleemos** from **eleos** = mercy) means miserable, pitiful, pitiable, wretched, pertaining to one who is deserving of sympathy because of their pathetic condition. Only in 1 Cor 15:19, Rev 3:17+ (CHURCH AT LAODICEA) = "Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched and **miserable** and poor and blind and naked,". Septuagint - Dan. 9:23; Dan. 10:11; Dan. 10:19

**Arnold** summarizes this section - There is a positive as well as a negative logic to the resurrection of Christ. Since Christ is raised, then our preaching is not useless and empty, the Apostles are true witnesses who can be trusted, our sins have been atoned for and we are forgiven, death has not triumphed over our loved ones and we will see them again, and life has become meaningful and full of purpose. Furthermore, since the resurrection is true, then the Christian is the most envied person on the face of the earth, for when he or she dies there will be certainty that the soul and spirit go immediately to be with Christ and will return to unite with the resurrected body at the second coming of Christ Then the resurrected and glorified body will be with Christ for all eternity. This concept of resurrection can only bring hope, encouragement and anticipation of this blessed event, and the Christian can say, "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" Tertullian and later John Wesley made an observation about Christians. They said, "Our people die well." If you do not believe in Christ, I need to warn you that you too shall be resurrected someday, but it will be a resurrection unto judgment and damnation. (Read Jn 5:28-29) ([What If Christ Is Not Risen?](#))

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## Living For Eternity

If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable. —1 Corinthians 15:19

Today's Scripture: 2 Timothy 4:1-8

In a letter to his brother, agnostic Robert G. Ingersoll reflected on his life. He wrote, "I feel that we have passed the crown of the hill, and that the milestones are getting nearer and nearer each other, and now and then I catch glimpses of the great wall where the road ends. A little while ago, I pressed forward; now I hold back. In youth we woo the future and clasp her like a bride; in age we denounce her as a fair and beautiful liar and wonder at the ease with which we were duped. Pursuing that which eludes, gazing at that which fades, hoping for the impossible, regretting that which is, fearing that which must be, and with [nothing] worth having save the bliss of love. And in the red heart of this white flower there is this pang: 'It cannot last.'"

Compare those depressing words with the statement of Paul, who looked to the close of life with confidence because he knew Christ: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day" (2 Tim. 4:7-8).

Do you know Jesus as your Savior? Are you living for Him? Then you can anticipate a glorious future! By: Richard DeHaan [Our Daily Bread](#). Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

God leads us in the path of righteousness  
For His name's sake, and as we walk that way  
We know it leads at last to heaven above,  
To which our souls will rise one glorious day.  
—Hess

What we go after here determines where we go hereafter.

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## Incredible?

Why should it be thought incredible by you that God raises the dead. —Acts 26:8

If Jesus did not rise from the dead and there is no future day of resurrection for us, then life loses all its meaning. If this life is all there is—just a few years of alternate crying and laughing (mostly crying) and then darkness—with Paul we can say, “If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable” (1 Cor. 15:19).

Resurrection, however, is not an incredible, irrational idea. We can see illustrations of resurrection all around us in nature. For example, Egyptian garden peas that had been buried for 3,000 years were brought out and planted on June 4, 1844. Within a few days they had germinated and broken the ground. Buried for 3,000 years—then resurrected. That’s amazing!

Why then should it be thought incredible that God should raise the dead? That was the surprised question of Paul to King Agrippa (Acts 26:8). If God could take some dust and breathe life into it to create a man (Gen. 2:7), why would anyone think it incredible for this same God to raise someone from the dead?

Yes, it is most credible that Jesus would arise. It would be incredible if after the miraculous life He lived He had remained in the grave. Hallelujah! Christ arose! —M. R. De Haan, M.D. (founder of RBC Ministries)

Up from the grave He arose,  
With a mighty triumph o'er His foes;  
He arose a Victor from the dark domain,  
And He lives forever with His saints to reign. —Lowry

Only a living Savior could rescue a dying world.

**1 Corinthians 15:20 But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. [NASB 1995 - Lockman](#)**

- **now** 1Co 15:4-8
- **the firstfruits** Lev. 23:10-14+, 1Co 15:23 Ac 26:23 Ro 8:11 Col 1:18 1Pe 1:3 Rev 1:5
- See also The Resurrection of Christ
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## Related Passages

Romans 8:11+ But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, **He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead** will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

Colossians 1:18+ He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the **beginning** ([arche](#) - related to word for firstfruits - ), **the firstborn from the dead**, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.

1 Peter 1:3+ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a **living hope** (ABSOLUTE ASSURANCE OF FUTURE GOOD OF FUTURE RESURRECTION) through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

James 1:18+ In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of **first fruits** among His creatures.

Revelation 1:5+ and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, **the firstborn of the dead**, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and released us from our sins by His blood—



## Feast of First Fruits

### THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST - FIRST FRUITS - A PROMISE & A PLEDGE

In 1 Cor 15:20-28 Paul begins to describe the theological arguments that support the doctrine of the resurrection. "Many people who reject the doctrine of the resurrection do not realize that this impacts other areas of their system of theology." ([Lewis](#))

**But now** (in fact) - Praise God for this **'but now'** after all the **'if'** ("what if") clauses. Now is not so much temporal here as it is logical

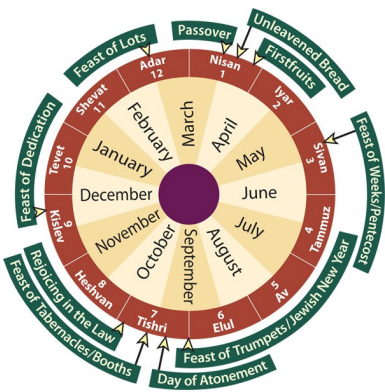
and a return to reality. Paul goes for the money so to speak in this section. He has been looking at the resurrection from the perspective of what would life be like if there were no resurrection. Now Paul looks at the positive truths that are associated with the resurrection.

**But now** - a few other famous "but now's" - Romans 3:21, Romans 6:22, Romans 7:6, Romans 11:30, 1 Cor 13:13, Gal 3:25, Eph 2:13, Eph 5:8, Col 3:8, 2 Ti 1:10+

**Vine** says **but now** "introduces a change from argument against a preposterous idea to triumphant vindication of facts." (Collected Writings)

**Robertson** on **but now** - It is the logical triumph of Paul after the *reductio ad impossibile* ("proof by contradiction") ([Findlay](#)) of the preceding argument.

In [logic](#) and [mathematics](#), **proof by contradiction** is a form of [proof](#) that establishes the [truth](#) or the [validity](#) of a [proposition](#), by showing that assuming the proposition to be false leads to a [contradiction](#). Proof by contradiction is also known as **indirect proof**, **proof by assuming the opposite**, and *reductio ad impossibile*. ([Wikipedia](#))



Calendar of Jewish Feasts  
THE LORD'S APPOINTED TIMES  
(Source: [Rose Guide to the Tabernacle](#)  
Excellent Teaching Resource)

**Christ (Christos) has been raised (egeiro - see [note on perfect tense](#)) from the dead - Has been raised** is perfect tense indicating up from the grave He arose with a mighty triumph over His foes! And He remains triumphant, for He is alive forevermore! And He is returning! Christ's resurrection is like earnest money you put down to buy a house assuring that you will later be able to purchase it. Christ's resurrection assures that all who are united to Christ by grace through faith will one day also experience their resurrection from the dead.

**The first fruits** (singular not plural -- as the "[prototype](#)") **of those who are asleep (koimao)** - NLT = "the first of the great harvest." In ancient Israel, the **first fruits** referred to the first installment of the crop which foreshadowed and in effect pledged the ultimate offering of the whole harvest to Yahweh. **Those who are asleep** in this context is synonymous with all who are believers in Jesus Christ who have died. As noted above **asleep** in a Christian context means death, but it presents such a beautiful picture for the Christian. Death for a Christian is a holy triumph (2 Cor 5:8+), whereas death for an unbeliever is a holy terror (Heb 9:27-28+) The significance of Christ as the First Fruits is that it was the first of the harvest and the promise or pledge of the harvest that would follow, which is all those who have placed their faith in Christ. Stated another way, the resurrection of Christ (First fruits) guarantees the believer's resurrection. So even as Christ was raised (raised is perfect tense) and will exist permanently in that state, so too all believers share this **hope** (absolute assurance of future good) that they will rise in new, glorious, eternal resurrection bodies.

Paul testified of this blessed **hope** before Felix and Festus

But this I admit to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect I do serve the God of our fathers, believing everything that is in accordance with the Law and that is written in the Prophets; **15 having a hope in God**, which these men cherish themselves, (PAUL EXPLAINS THE HOPE) that there shall certainly be a **resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.** (Acts 24:14-15+, cf Jn 5:28-29+)

Comment - There is a "gap" of 1000 years between these two resurrections ("First" and "Second")

**Hunter & McShane** add that "Someone may enquire how He can be the *first* to rise when others rose before Him? It is true that others rose before Him, e.g. the young man of Nain (Luke 7) and Lazarus. (John 11), but they rose to die again; their bodies were raised to continue life on earth. Christ was the first to rise in power and glory, alive for evermore in His glorified body. ([What the Bible teaches – 1 and 2 Corinthians](#))

The **Feast of First fruits** is described in Leviticus...

Leviticus 23:10-11+ Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'When you enter the land which I am going to give to you and reap its harvest, then you shall bring in the sheaf of the **first fruits** of your harvest to the priest (BARLEY WAS FIRST GRAIN TO BE HARVESTED). 11 'He shall wave the sheaf before the LORD for you to be accepted; **on the day after the sabbath** the priest shall wave it.

Notice in the **Calendar of Jewish Feasts** ([above](#)) the 3 feasts at the top of the diagram, **Passover, Unleavened Bread, Firstfruits**. **Passover** is on Friday, **Unleavened Bread** follows on **Sabbath** and then as Lev 23:11 says **First Fruits** is the offering to God by the priest on the day after the sabbath, which would be our Sunday.

**THOUGHT** - What day does First Fruits describe? Our modern name is Easter, but I much prefer the true Biblical name, **First Fruits**. Next "Easter" wish your family and friend a "Happy Feast of First Fruits." You might be able to engage in some edifying conversation instead of talking about dyed eggs and chocolate bunnies! As [Utley](#) says "The first fruits in the OT were ripened sheaves of the barley harvest waved before the Lord in the Temple the day after the High Holy Sabbath of Passover Week, which would be **Resurrection Sunday**. They were given to show God's ownership of the entire crop. This is an OT type for the promise of the resurrection of **ALL** Christ followers!"

**Related Resource:**

- [What was the firstfruits offering? GotQuestions.org](#)

**Hodge** - All the gloomy consequences presented in the preceding verses follow from the assumption that Christ did not rise from the dead. But as in point of fact he did rise, these things have no place. Our preaching is not vain, your faith is not vain, ye are not in your sins, the dead in Christ have not perished, we are not more miserable than other men. The reverse of all this is true. Christ has not only risen, but he has risen in a representative character. His resurrection is the pledge of the resurrection of his people. He rose as the first-fruits of them that slept, and not of them only, but as the first-fruits of all who are ever to sleep in Jesus. The apostle does not mean merely that the resurrection of Christ was to precede that of his people; but as the first sheaf of the harvest presented to God as a thank-offering, was the pledge and assurance of the ingathering of the whole harvest, so the resurrection of Christ is a pledge and proof of the resurrection of his people. In Romans 8:23; 11:16, the word *aparche*, first-fruits, has the same force. Comp. also Colossians 1:18, where Christ is called "the first begotten from the dead," and Revelation 1:5. Of the great harvest of glorified bodies which our earth is to yield Christ is the first-fruits. As he rose, so all his people must; as certainly and as gloriously, Philippians 3:21.

**Ray Pritchard** - The term "first fruits" means the first in a long series. If there are "firstfruits," there must be "second fruits" and "third fruits" and so on. His resurrection is the "down payment" that guarantees that all who follow him by faith will one day be raised as well. I love the words of the Puritan author Thomas Watson: "We are more sure to arise out of our graves than out of our beds. Oh! how precious is the dust of a believer!" ([1 Corinthians 15:35-58 Acorns to Oak Trees: How are Dead Raised?](#))

**First fruits** (536) ([aparche - discusses first fruits in Old and New Testament](#) from *apó* = away from + *árchomai* = to begin) (see also the discussion [First Fruits, Christ - As OT Prophecy of His Resurrection](#)) is first of all an OT technical term used to describe the first portion of a grain harvest or fruit harvest or the first portion of an animal offering, as from one's herd. The first fruits represented the first portion of an offering (grain or animal) or the firstborn male (Ex 13:12-15+, Nu 18:15, 16+), all of which were to be set aside (considered holy) and considered as belonging specifically to the Lord. The first portion of the harvest was regarded both as a first installment and as a pledge of the final delivery of the whole and were offered to God in thanksgiving for His goodness in providing them. **G M Burge** explains that "The Greek term *aparche* had a wide currency stretching from the fifth century b.c. through the patristic period. It referred to the first produce or profits that might be given as a gift of thanksgiving. The recipient might be a person or, as in most cases, the Temple. Its use evolved so that any offering—even Temple taxes on the people—could be called *aparche*. (Dictionary of Paul and His Letters. InterVarsity Press) The word was used in various ways: a birth certificate, a certificate of authorization, a yearly offering for a god, or inheritance tax. [First fruits \(see dictionary discussions\)](#) is related to the Jewish term that refers to that which is set apart to God before remainder could be used. Under the Mosaic Law Israel was to bring the [first fruits](#) of the grain to the LORD and in this act they were acknowledging that all produce was God's. The [first fruits](#) of a harvest of grain was an indication of a greater harvest to come. **Aparche** 8v - Rom. 8:23; Rom. 11:16; Rom. 16:5 (first fruits = believers); 1 Co. 15:20; 1 Co. 15:23; 1 Co. 16:15; Jas. 1:18; Rev. 14:4

**Related Resources:**

- [What is the meaning of Easter? What does Easter mean? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What is the origin of the Easter bunny and Easter eggs? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Should Christians celebrate Easter? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Is Easter a pagan holiday? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What are the origins of Easter? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What is Easter Sunday? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Why do we celebrate Easter? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Who was Ishtar, and is there any connection between Ishtar and Easter? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**Matthew Henry summarizes 1 Cor 15:20-34** - All that are by faith united to Christ, are by his resurrection assured of their own. As through the sin of the first Adam, all men became mortal, because all had from him the same sinful nature, so, through the resurrection of Christ, shall all who are made to partake of the Spirit, and the spiritual nature, revive, and live for ever. There will be an order in the resurrection. Christ himself has been the first-fruits; at his coming, his redeemed people will be raised before others; at the last the wicked will rise also. Then will be the end of this present state of things. Would we triumph in that solemn and important season, we must now submit to his rule, accept his salvation, and live to his glory. Then shall we rejoice in the completion of his undertaking, that God may receive the whole glory of our salvation, that we may for ever serve him, and enjoy his favour. What shall those do, who are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Perhaps baptism is used here in a figure, for afflictions, sufferings, and martyrdom, as Matthew 20:22,23. What is, or will become of those who have suffered many and great injuries, and have even lost their lives, for this doctrine of the resurrection, if the dead rise not at all? Whatever the meaning may be, doubtless the apostle's argument was understood by the Corinthians. And it is as plain to us that Christianity would be a foolish profession, if it proposed advantage to themselves by their faithfulness to God; and to have our fruit to holiness, that our end may be everlasting life. But we must not live like beasts, as we do not die like them. It must be ignorance of God that leads any to disbelieve the resurrection and future life. Those who own a God and a providence, and observe how unequal things are in the present life, how frequently the best men fare worst, cannot doubt as to an after-state, where every thing will be set to rights. Let us not be joined with ungodly men; but warn all around us, especially children and young persons, to shun them as a pestilence. Let us awake to righteousness, and not sin.

**Spurgeon - Morning and Evening** - The whole system of Christianity rests upon the fact that "Christ is risen from the dead;" for, "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain: ye are yet in your sins." The divinity of Christ finds its surest proof in his resurrection, since he was "Declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." It would not be unreasonable to doubt his Deity if he had not risen. Moreover, Christ's sovereignty depends upon his resurrection, "For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living." Again, our justification, that choice blessing of the covenant, is linked with Christ's triumphant victory over death and the grave; for "He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." Nay, more, our very regeneration is connected with his resurrection, for we are "Begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." And most certainly our ultimate resurrection rests here, for, "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." If Christ be not risen, then shall we not rise; but if he be risen then they who are asleep in Christ have not perished, but in their flesh shall surely behold their God. Thus, the silver thread of resurrection runs through all the believer's blessings, from his regeneration onwards to his eternal glory, and binds them together. How important then will this glorious fact be in his estimation, and how will he rejoice that beyond a doubt it is established, that "now is Christ risen from the dead."

"The promise is fulfill'd,  
Redemption's work is done,  
Justice with mercy's reconciled,  
For God has raised his Son."

**F B Meyer - 1 Corinthians 15:20** Christ hath been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of them that are asleep. (R.V.)

Words which are altogether transcendent! How they thrill us and inspire! What memories they recall! How impossible is it not to feel their majesty. Surely no brain nor lip of man had begotten them! They bear the mint-mark of heaven.

On the day that Jesus arose, the firstfruit sheaf of the barley harvest was being waved by the High Priest in the Temple, as the representative of the myriads that stood stacked amid the stubble of the fields. It was the specimen sheaf — representative, pattern, and pledge of all the rest. The risen Christ is the pattern and pledge of what his people will be when their bodies shall be fashioned anew in the likeness of his resurrection.

He is pattern. — His body bore the same general outlines as before; so will theirs. It was recognisable by those who had known and loved Him, even to the tones of his voice; so will it be with theirs. It was the ethereal and pliant instrument of his spirit; so will theirs be. It could no more return to corruption; no more will theirs. It was invulnerable to disease and pain; such an experience awaits them too.

He is pledge. — He does not stand alone. He is united to us by a myriad indissoluble ties. What the power of God did for Him it will do for us. Those that sleep in Jesus God will bring with Him, and we that are alive and remain shall be caught up. There shall not a hoof be left behind. Not one purchased body of a saint, however obscure or unworthy, shall be excepted from the effect of the voice of the archangel and the trump of God. Meanwhile, in the kindly embrace of Mother Earth, like the seed-germs of a vast harvest, the resurrection principle in the bodies of the saints awaits the resurrection signal.

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### **James Smith - Handfuls of Purpose - THE RESURRECTION 1 CORINTHIANS 15:20–22, 35–58**

There were some in the Corinthian Church who taught that “there is no resurrection of the dead” (v. 12). To combat this fatal error, and to establish the doctrine more firmly in the minds of the saints, Paul wrote this magnificent compendium of the subject. There is nothing like it anywhere; no, not in all the world, for the great apostle here delivers that which he had received from the risen Christ Himself (vv. 3, 4). The great truths of this resurrection chapter are—

I. The Resurrection of Christ. “But now is Christ risen from the dead” (v. 20). The Christ of the Scriptures must die, be buried, and rise again (vv. 3, 4). That Jesus was the Christ was proved by His rising from the dead, and appearing to Cephas, and to “five hundred brethren at once” (vv. 5, 6). To deceive five hundred brethren at once would have been about as great a wonder as rising from the dead, especially when these brethren were at first very sceptical. This is no myth, but a fact established by many infallible proofs (Acts 1:3).

II. The Resurrection Hope. “If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins, and they who have died in this faith are perished” (vv. 17, 18). Upon this foundation—the resurrection of Christ—this Spirit-taught apostle builds the whole structure of the Christian faith. The death of Christ will avail us nothing if He is not risen and accepted of God in our behalf. He died for our sins, but He must be raised and exalted with God’s right hand ere forgiveness could be preached in His Name (Acts 5:31). If Christ be not raised, there is no hope for man (Rom. 5:10).

III. The Resurrection of the Dead. Nothing but confusion and error can come to those who think that Paul is here speaking of a general resurrection at the last day. The dead referred to in this chapter are those who have “fallen asleep in Christ” (v. 18). “Even so in Christ shall all be made alive” (v. 22). All are in Adam, but all are not in Christ. “They that are Christ’s at His coming” (v. 23). The wicked dead shall have no part in the first resurrection (Rev. 20:5). How could he speak of them as “sown in dishonour, and raised in glory?” (v. 43).

IV. The Resurrection Body. Paul now raises this great double question, and proceeds to answer it. “How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?” (vv. 35–49).

1. It will NOT be the SAME BODY that is sown in the grave (v. 37). Thank God, there will be no cripples in Heaven; no deformed bodies there.
2. It will be a GOD-GIVEN BODY (v. 38). A body in everything pleasing to Him, and worthy of a redeemed spirit (2 Cor. 5:1).
3. It will be a body in every way SUITED TO THE INDIVIDUAL SPIRIT. “To every seed his own body (v. 38). One body may differ from another body in glory, as “one star differeth from another” (vv. 41, 42).
4. It will be an INCORRUPTIBLE BODY (v. 42). Incapable of death, disease, or decay.
5. It will be a BODY OF GLORY (v. 43). Like unto His own glorious body (Matt. 17:2).
6. It will be a body of POWER (v. 43). Not subject to the laws of earth. Every material fetter broken.
7. It will be a SPIRITUAL BODY (v. 44). Entirely subject to the volitions of the blood-washed spirit (1 John 3:2).  
Then shall we be in the image of the heavenly (v. 49).

V. The Resurrection Mystery. “Behold I show you a mystery,” etc. (vv. 51–54). Here the apostle reveals a truth that had hitherto been veiled, and, strange to say, a truth that is still veiled to many, although revealed, viz., that all the children of God shall not die, but that all must be changed (v. 51). The Lord Himself will come, and those who are alive and remain at that time shall be caught up together with those who have fallen asleep in Christ, but who shall then be raised from the dead (1 Thess. 4:15–17). In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the dead shall be raised, and we (those living at that time) shall be changed (v. 52). It is appointed unto men—not all men—once to die (Heb. 9:27).

VI. The Resurrection Song. This song is entitled, “Death swallowed up in victory” (v. 54). It is a victory over the power of sin, and sin,

too, that was strengthened by a holy law (v. 56). It is a perfect victory over all the effects of sin. "O death, where is thy sting?" Where is not the effect of thy poison in these new bodies of ours? "O grave, where is thy victory?" Once thou didst claim our bodies as thy spoil, but thou hast been eternally defeated in this new incorruptible body. But this is a song of praise as well as of triumph. "Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (v. 57). He alone could "swallow up death in victory" (Isa. 25:8). This will be the complete fulfilment of Hosea 13:14. Notice there His "I wills."

VII. The Resurrection Incentive. Paul now closes his great argument with an exhortation which is full of motive power. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast" (v. 58). Seeing that such glorious prospects are before us, what manner of persons ought we now to be?

1. There should be STABILITY OF CHARACTER. "Be ye stedfast, immovable." Let not the unbelief of others turn you aside from the faith of this Gospel.
2. There should be CONSTANCY OF SERVICE. "Always abounding in the work of the Lord," knowing that it is not in vain; for in the resurrection state, and at the Judgment-Seat of Christ, the reward will be given (Rev. 22:12). Every man's work shall be tried of what sort it is (1 Cor. 3:12-15).

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John Flavel - Death is a dragon, the grave its den; a place of dread and terror; but Christ goes into its den, there grapples with it, and forever overcomes it, disarms it of all its terror; and not only makes it cease to be inimical, but to become the greatest blessing to the saints; a bed of rest, and a perfumed bed; they do but go into Christ's bed, where He lay before them.

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**A HOPE SURE, NOT A HOPE SO!** - Konrad Adenauer, former chancellor of West Germany, once told evangelist Billy Graham, "If Jesus Christ is alive, then there is hope for the world. If not, I don't see the slightest glimmer of hope on the horizon." Then he added, "I believe Christ's resurrection to be one of the best-attested facts of history"

Christ's resurrection and ours go together. Establish one, and the other is sure.

When Socrates lay dying, his friends asked, "Shall we live again?" He could only say "I hope so." In contrast, the night before Sir Walter Raleigh was beheaded, he wrote in his Bible, "From this earth, this grave, this dust, my God shall raise me up."

We who trust Christ don't have to say "I hope so." Jesus' resurrection gives us a sure hope for our coming resurrection. —D. J. D.

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**Spurgeon** - The divinity of Christ finds its surest proof in his resurrection (Rom. 1:4). Christ's sovereignty also depends on his resurrection (Rom. 14:9). Again, our justification hangs on Christ's resurrection (Rom. 4:25). Our very regeneration depends on his resurrection (1 Peter 1:3). And most certainly our ultimate resurrection rests here (Rom. 8:11). The silver thread of resurrection runs through all the blessings, from regeneration onward to our eternal glory, and binds them together.

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### **An Empty Grave**

A conversation between a Christian missionary and a Muslim illustrates a great point. The Mohammedan wanted to impress the missionary with what he considered to be the superiority of Islam. So he said, "When we go to Mecca, we at least find a coffin, but when you Christians go the Jerusalem, your mecca, you find nothing but an empty grave." To this the believer replied, "That is just the difference, Mohammed is dead and in his coffin. And all other systems of religion and philosophy are in their coffins. But Christ is risen, and all power in heaven and on earth is given to Him! He is alive forevermore!

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### **Empty Explanations**

Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. — 1 Corinthians 15:20

Today's Scripture: Matthew 27:62-28:15

No element in the Easter story is more troubling to unbelievers than the report that the followers of Jesus found the tomb empty that Sunday morning.

Some simply deny it, saying that the women and others went to the wrong tomb. Others think that Jesus was not quite dead when He was buried, and somehow He revived and got out of the tomb—even though the Roman soldiers had declared Him dead (Jn. 19:33), an eyewitness saw blood and water flow from the pierced body (v.34), and His body had been wrapped tightly with strips of linen containing 100 pounds of spices (v.39).

In the first century, even Christ's enemies agreed that He had died and the tomb was empty. They bribed the guards to say that the disciples stole His body (Mt. 28:11-15).

Jesus rose from the grave in a real body, and that means everything to us. When a Christian friend or loved one dies, we can be confident that we will meet again. The body may turn to dust, but God will not forget it. It will be transformed into a body perfectly designed for heaven (1 Cor. 15:35-50). This is not wishful thinking. It is an expectation based on solid evidence.

Thank You, Lord, for the empty tomb of Jesus. By: Herbert Vander Lugt ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Crown Him the Lord of life,  
Who triumphed o'er the grave,  
Who rose victorious to the strife  
For those He came to save.  
—Thring

The empty tomb is the foundation of our faith.

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### **The Result of the Resurrection**

1. It guarantees the deity of the Lord Jesus. He is "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1:4).
  2. It is essential to our justification. (See Rom. 4:25; 8:34.) Because Jesus rose from the dead all who believe in Him are justified "from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts 13:39).
  3. It makes possible the forgiveness of sins. (See 1 Cor. 15:17.)
  4. It makes certain a final judgment "because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:31).
  5. It furnishes every believer with a deathless hope. "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept" (1 Cor. 15:20). As He rose from the dead and liveth forever, so will the bodies of believers be raised from the tomb. This is the unshakable confidence of the saints. HAROLD LINDSELL and CHARLES WOODBRIDGE
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### **A Sure Hope**

Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. —1 Corinthians 15:20

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:12-20

Konrad Adenauer, former chancellor of West Germany, said, "If Jesus Christ is alive, then there is hope for the world. If not, I don't see the slightest glimmer of hope on the horizon." Then he added, "I believe Christ's resurrection to be one of the best-attested facts of history."

Christ's resurrection and ours go together. So reasoned the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 15. And if Christ didn't rise from the grave, what's left? Empty preaching (v.14), false witnesses (v.15), a futile faith (v.17), unforgiven sins (v.17), no life after death (v.18), and hopelessness (v.19).

But Christ did rise from the grave. Paul asserted the proof for the resurrection in verses 1 through 11, listing many credible witnesses who saw the risen Lord: Peter (v.5), 500 people (v.6), all the apostles (v.7), and Paul himself (v.8).

When the Greek philosopher Socrates lay dying, his friends asked, "Shall we live again?" He could only say, "I hope so." In contrast, the night before author and explorer Sir Walter Raleigh was beheaded, he wrote in his Bible, "From this earth, this grave, this dust, my God shall raise me up."

If we trust in Christ as our Savior, we won't say, "I hope so" about our own resurrection. Jesus' resurrection gives us a sure hope. By: Dennis J. DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Rejoice in glorious hope!  
Our Lord the Judge shall come  
And take His servants up  
To their eternal home.  
—Wesley

Christ's resurrection is the guarantee of our own.

1 Corinthians 15:21 For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. [NASB 1995 - Lockman](#)

- **by man came death** 1Co 15:22 Ro 5:12-17
- **by man came also** Ro 6:23
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Romans 5:12-21+ Therefore, just as through **one man (ADAM)** sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to ALL MEN (THE "SIN VIRUS" WAS PASSED ON), because all sinned (COMMITTING SINS PROVES WE WERE INFECTED WITH ADAM'S SIN VIRUS!) – 13 for until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. 14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him (ADAM A TYPE OF CHRIST - SEE TYPOLOGY) Who was to come. 15 But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many. 16 The gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the free gift arose from many transgressions resulting in justification. 17 For if by the transgression of the one (ADAM), death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ. 18 So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men (SEE Ro 4:25+). 19 For as through the one man's disobedience (ADAM) the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One (CHRIST) the many will be made (DECLARED) righteous. 20 The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, 21 so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the Resurrection and the Life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies.

### A TALE OF TWO MEN

**For** ([gar](#)) term of explanation. Paul elaborates on those who are asleep, that is who die, explaining why they died and how God provided a solution for their death.

**Since by a man** ([Adam](#)) *came death* ([thanatos](#)) - There are actually no verbs in this sentence which makes the facts of **death** and **resurrection** that much more striking. **Death** was the judicial consequence of sin. This is a man named Adam for "just as through one man (ADAM) sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned." (Ro 5:12+)

**Death** ([2288](#))([thanatos](#)) is a permanent cessation of all vital functions and thus is the end of life on earth (as we know it). The separation of the soul from the body and the end of earthly life. Spiritual death is separation from the life of God forever by dying without being born again. The first use in the Septuagint is in a well known promise from God "you shall surely die (Lxx = thanatos apothnesko)." (Ge 2:17) followed by the second use in the deceptive lie by Satan "You surely shall not die (thanatos apothnesko)!" (Ge 3:4) Death is natural to humanity as part of the created world. Death is a result of Adam's sin (Ro 5:12). Death is universal - no one can escape it. **Thanatos** in 1-2 Corinthians - 1 Co. 3:22; 1 Co. 11:26; 1 Co. 15:21; 1 Co. 15:26; 1 Co. 15:54; 1 Co. 15:55; 1 Co. 15:56; 2 Co. 1:9; 2 Co. 1:10; 2 Co. 2:16; 2 Co. 3:7; 2 Co. 4:11; 2 Co. 4:12; 2 Co. 7:10; 2 Co. 11:23;

**By a** (God-Man, [Last Adam](#)) **Man** (alluding to His incarnation) **also came the resurrection** ([anastasis](#)) **of the dead** - Adam's life brought death to all men including all believers (**those who are asleep** in 1 Cor 15:20). Christ's death and resurrection made possible **the resurrection of the dead for those who are asleep**. In context, this **resurrection** refers to the [first resurrection](#) in which only believers participate. Stated another way, the first man, Adam brought death to men, but Christ conquered death for believers.



**Richard Pratt** - Paul next explained in what sense Christ was raised as the firstfruits of all who would be raised, arguing for a symmetry in God's dealings with the human race (see also Rom. 5:12-19). In the first place, the record of Genesis makes it plain that death came through a man. Adam's sin was more than a personal transgression; it brought guilt and the divine judgment of death on all humanity. Since it was through Adam that death came, it should not be surprising that the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. In many passages Paul pointed out that God considered Christ's experience on earth much more than one persons experience. What happened to him in his death and resurrection happens to all who believe in him. ([Holman NT Commentary](#))

#### Related Resources:

- [Who was Adam in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Did we all inherit sin from Adam and Eve? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Did Adam and Eve know what death was when God commanded them not to eat from the tree of knowledge? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Is the Adam and Eve story to be understood literally? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [How long were Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Was Adam with Eve when she spoke to the serpent \(Genesis 3:6\)? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**1 Corinthians 15:22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. [NASB 1995 - Lockman](#)**

- **in Adam** 1Co 15:45-49 Ge 2:17 3:6,19 Joh 5:21-29 Ro 5:12-21
- See also The Resurrection of Christ
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

Ro 5:12+ (IN ADAM ALL DIE) Therefore, just as through one man (**ADAM**) sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to **ALL** men, because **ALL** sinned (ALL COMMITTED SINS PROVING THEY HAD CONTRACTED THE "SIN VIRUS" FROM ADAM!)—

2 Corinthians 5:17+ Therefore **if anyone is in Christ**, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; **behold**, new things have come.

Acts 24:15+ having a hope in God, which these men cherish themselves, that there shall certainly be a **resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked**.

Jn 5:28-29+ "Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, and will come forth; **those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life**, (THERE GOOD DEEDS DID NOT SAVE THEM BUT DEMONSTRATED THEY WERE TRULY SAVED) **those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment**.

## TWO MEN TWO DESTINIES

For ([gar](#)) term of explanation. Paul elaborates on the significance of the resurrection of the dead.

**Hunter & McShane** "Let us note the presence of the article before each name, **"the Adam"**, **"the Christ"**. This indicates **headship** ([SEE NOTE BELOW](#)): Adam in relation to the old creation, and Christ in relation to the new. What is emphasised is the solidarity of each race with its respective head. Note too the change of the preposition: in 1 Cor 15:21 it was **dia**, denoting agency; here it is **en**, expressing association (cf locative of sphere).([What the Bible teaches – 1 and 2 Corinthians](#))

**As in Adam all** (present tense - continually one after another) **die** ([apothnesko](#)) - **In Adam** is locative of sphere, and is the "spiritual location" of every person ever born. When these "walking dead" believe in Christ, the Spirit takes them OUT OF ADAM and places them INTO CHRIST (also locative of sphere) which is the believer's "spiritual location" forever! The **NLT** paraphrase is in essence a commentary declaring "Just as everyone dies because we all belong to Adam." This is "shorthand" for Ro 5:12+. **All** means all without exception, except of course the **last Adam, Christ** Who was without sin so that He might die FOR our sins! (2 Cor 5:21+, cf 1 Pe 2:24-25+)

Notice Paul describes the two families to which all mankind belongs -- all are either in Adam or in Christ, with no "in between!" The former are headed for hell, the latter for heaven.

**Utley** - In Adam all humanity has been affected by sin (death). (ED: cf Ro 6:23+) In Christ, potentially all humanity can be affected by grace.

**So also in Christ (Christos) all will be made alive** - NLT = "everyone who belongs to Christ will be given new life." **In Christ** (locative of sphere) is a short but profound phrase describing all who are by grace through faith enter into the New Covenant with Christ, being made one with Him, in perfect union with Him, and forever identified with Him. As Paul had taught in 1 Cor 1:30+ "by His doing you are **in** (locative of sphere) Christ Jesus, Who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption." Note that Paul is **not** teaching **universalism!** (the phrase "made alive" is never used of unbelievers). The **all** who will be made alive are the "**all**" who believe in Christ.

The phrase **will be made alive** is the result of the truth that all believers in Christ will be resurrected bodily and live forever with Christ. Note the **future** tense which guarantees our future hope. Now our "hope" is the absolute assurance that God will do good to us in the **future**, and thus we know that we can count on our being **made alive** in new bodies. The passive voice indicates this "revivification" so to speak is the result of external, supernatural power (aka divine passive).

Note that it is also true that believers have been "spiritually resurrected" for in Romans Paul explains that believers "have been buried with Him through baptism (NOT WATER BUT IDENTIFICATION WITH HIM WHEN WE BELIEVED) into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have become united with Him **in the likeness of His death**, certainly we shall also be **in the likeness of His resurrection**" (Ro 6:4-5+) **Kenneth Wuest** explains that "we were not only placed in Christ by God the Holy Spirit in order that **we might share His death** and thus be separated from the evil nature, but we were placed in Him in order that **we might share His resurrection** and thus have divine life imparted to us. (cf 2Pe 1:4+) This Paul tells us in the words, "that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." ([Wuest Word Studies - Eerdmans Publishing Company Volume 1, Volume 2, Volume 3](#) - used [by permission](#))

### **I serve a risen Savior,**

He's in the world today;  
I know that He is living,  
Whatever men may say.

### **HE LIVES, HE LIVES!**

—Ackley

**THOUGHT** - Notice how a non-Berean (Acts 17:11+) reading of the second half of this passage can lead to a horrible heresy. Can you see how it might be misinterpreted? Note the phrase **all will be made alive**. If you just had that passage what conclusion might you draw regarding salvation of all mankind? As is almost always the case context saves us from a gross error. What is the truth of the context? Paul states that the "ALL" who will be made alive (or saved) are restricted to those who are in Christ, in the "Ark" so speak. When the "flood" of divine righteous wrath is poured out ALL those outside the "Ark" of Christ will perish eternally. (See [Universalism](#))

**Die** (599) **apothnesko** from **apo** = marker of dissociation implying a rupture from a former association, separation, departure, cessation + **thnesko** = die) literally means to die off (that is, to die and thus be *away from* this earthly realm). **Apothnesko** is a permanent cessation of all vital functions resulting in the end of life, with a **separation** of one's soul from their physical body. **Apothnesko** speaks of literal physical death (Ro 6:9+) It is notable that as life was never meant to be merely existence, death which is the antonym of life does not mean non-existence. The important point is that to die does not mean one is annihilated as some would falsely teach. Everyone who has ever been born will continue to exist, either in the presence of God or to experience conscious existence in separation from God (see 2Th 1:9+). **Apothnesko** in 1-2 Corinthians - 1 Co. 8:11; 1 Co. 9:15; 1 Co. 15:3; 1 Co. 15:22; 1 Co. 15:31; 1 Co. 15:32; 1 Co. 15:36; 2 Co. 5:14; 2 Co. 5:15; 2 Co. 6:9;

**Be made alive** (2227) **zoopoieo** from **zoos** = alive + **poieo** = to make) means to revitalize, make alive, give life, quicken, vivify, reanimate, restore to life. Most of the NT uses refer to God's ability to give life to men, either by resurrecting them from physical death or by regenerating them from spiritual death. In 1Co 15:36 Paul uses **zoopoieo** figuratively to picture the sprouting of a seed in his defense of the doctrine of the resurrection. **Zoopoieo** - 10v - Jn. 5:21; Jn. 6:63; Rom. 4:17; Rom. 8:11; 1 Co. 15:22; 1 Co. 15:36; 1 Co. 15:45; 2 Co. 3:6; Gal. 3:21; 1 Pet. 3:18

**Related Resource:**

- Discussion of meaning and significance of [in Christ](#) (Eph & Col duplicates [in Christ](#) and [in Christ Jesus](#) & [in Christ](#))
- 

**John Flavel** - We lost our inheritance by the fall of Adam: we receive it by the death of Christ, which restores it again to us by a new and better title.

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**Question - [What is the meaning of federal headship?](#)**

**Answer:** In theology, federal headship is one theory used to explain imputation—how Adam's sin was imputed to all his descendants and how [Christ's righteousness](#) was imputed to those who believe the gospel. According to the federal headship theory, or [federalism](#), Adam was the federal (or representative) head of the human race; Adam chose to sin, and all of us are considered guilty, too, because he was our representative. Federal headship is seen as a possible explanation of Paul's comparison of the roles of Adam and Christ in Romans 5:18: "As one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men" (ESV). So, Adam's sin brought condemnation on the human race; Christ's sacrifice brought salvation for the whole race. The idea of federal headship involves the teaching that Adam was the first representative of the human race and Christ was the second representative.

The idea of federal headship is not explicit in the Bible; that is, the Bible nowhere calls Adam our representative. Federal headship is simply a way some scholars have chosen to speak about Adam's, and then Christ's, involvement in the destiny of humanity. The theory is based on Paul's argument in Romans 5 that "sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned" (Ro 5:12). From Adam to Moses, even before the Law was given, "death reigned" (verse 14). If there was no Mosaic Law, and if "where there is no law there is no transgression" (Romans 4:15), how could Adam's sons have been deemed sinful? Applying the concept of federal headship, we can say it was because they were part of the human race; Adam was their representative, and therefore Adam's transgression applied to all men.

The weakness of federal headship is that it is an interpretive tool, not an explicitly biblical truth. Romans 5 does not say that Adam was the representative of the human race, only that "by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man" (Romans 5:17). God never says exactly how the transference of the [sin nature](#) occurred, only that it did occur.

What we know for certain is that death entered the world through Adam's sin. The idea of federal headship is not stated outright in Scripture, but Adam's sin was definitely the origin of the problem, and sin was inherited by all of us through him. Then Christ came and by His sacrifice became our Savior. Thus, there is a parallel between Adam and Christ: "Just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous" (Romans 5:18–19). [GotQuestions.org](#)

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## **Sunrise Hope**

Very early in the morning, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen. —Mark 16:2

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:20-28

Think of what it would be like if we went to bed some night knowing that the sun would not rise again the next morning. Think of the coldness, the unending darkness, the inescapable fingers of death that would gradually move across the earth. Plants would wither, flowers would wilt, trees would die, and all of life would perish for lack of sunlight.

But praise God, the sun does rise every day. Its warm, life-giving light floods the earth. The "death" of a sunset each day is followed by the "resurrection" of a sunrise the next day—and our hope is renewed. Every morning the rays of the sun remind us that the long night of sin and darkness will give way to eternal day in heaven.

Even more sure than the rising of the morning sun is the certainty of our resurrection in Jesus Christ. The dark night of death came upon Him, and His lifeless body was laid in the tomb. But He arose! And in His resurrection is the promise of our own resurrection to life. The apostle Paul declared, "Even so in Christ all shall be made alive" (1 Corinthians 15:22).

The next time you see the sun rise and watch its rays brighten the morning sky, let hope fill your heart. It is a reminder of your own sure resurrection! By: David C. Egener ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Rejoice in glorious hope!  
Our Lord the Judge shall come  
And take His servants up

To their eternal home.

—Wesley

Christ's resurrection is the guarantee of our own.

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### Your Flight Is Confirmed

For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. —1 Corinthians 15:22

Today's Scripture: Romans 3:21-26

A heavy thunderstorm delayed our flight to Frankfurt, causing us to miss our connecting flight. We were told that we had been confirmed on another flight the next evening. But when we arrived at the gate, we were told that we were on standby. The flight was full.

When I learned this, I wondered if this was mere miscommunication or if this was how they dealt with missed flights. If passengers had been told up front that they were only on standby, they would have been unhappy. Perhaps they saved the truth until later.

Thankfully, God doesn't work that way. He clearly tells us everything we need to know to get to heaven. The Bible declares that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). God gave us the full picture of our sin nature from Genesis 3 so that He could give us His full and complete solution.

God's solution in Romans 3:24 is that we are "justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." God sent His own sinless Son to die for our sins. His sacrifice on the cross provided us forgiveness. All we need to do is receive that free gift through faith. I'm so glad God told us the truth up front! He hasn't left us to find our own way. By: C. P. Hia ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Thank You, Almighty God, that You don't hide the truth from us. You showed us how completely sin has affected our lives in order to reinforce just how much Jesus Christ has delivered us from.

Christ's work makes us safe; God's Word makes us sure.

**1 Corinthians 15:23 But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming, ([NASB 1995 - Lockman](#))**

- **each** 1Co 15:20 Isa 26:19 1Th 4:15-17
- **those who** 1Co 3:23 2Co 10:7 Ga 3:29, 5:24
- See also The Resurrection of Christ
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Isaiah 26:19 Your dead will live; Their corpses will rise. You who lie in the dust, awake and shout for joy, For your dew is as the dew of the dawn, And the earth will give birth to the departed spirits.

Galatians 3:29+ And if **you belong to Christ**, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise.

Galatians 5:24+ Now **those who belong to Christ Jesus** have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

1 Cor 6:19-20+ Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that **you are not your own?** 20 For **you have been bought with a price**: therefore glorify God in your body.

## CHRIST'S RESURRECTION LEADS THE WAY FOR ALL BELIEVERS

**But** - Term of contrast. MIT (The Idiomatic Translation of the New Testament by W G MacDonald) sees it more as an explanatory paraphrasing it "It works this way."

Why is Paul all of a sudden discussing prophecy? Clearly in the context of the resurrection, he is showing that all future prophetic events until the end of time and beginning of the new heavens and new earth are predicated on the resurrection. If the resurrection were not true, if Christ had not been raised as the first fruits, how could there be a Second Coming and the events that follow the His return?

**Hunter & McShane** Paul is now revealing, in broad outline, that the **prophetic programme** rests upon the resurrection of Christ. He makes known the sequence of events: ([SEE DEPICTION OF KINGDOM OF GOD BELOW](#))

1. *The resurrection of Christ*, the Firstfruits.
2. *The parousia*, the coming, embracing "they that are Christ's".
3. *The end*, which takes us forward to the border of the eternal state, when Christ, as the divine Executor, hands over the kingdom to God the Father, having accomplished fully the purposes of the Godhead. .

**Again it must be stressed that this whole programme as to its fulfilment rests upon the fact of Christ's resurrection.**  
([What the Bible teaches – 1 and 2 Corinthians](#))

**Each** ([hekastos](#) = each and every one) **in his own order: Christ** ([Christos](#)) **the first fruits** ([aparche](#) first of the harvest), **after that those who are** (belong to) **Christ's at His coming** - Paul gives the general sequence of the resurrection of believers, with Christ first and then **each in his own order**. As emphasized in [discussion of Christ the First Fruits](#) in 1 Cor 15:20, Christ's past resurrection is the guarantee of our future resurrection. As discussed in more detail believers will take part in one of the stages of what is referred to as the "First Resurrection." Only unbelievers participate in the "Second Resurrection" which will follow the Millennium (assuming you believe in the Millennium).

The Greek word for order is **tagma** found only here and meaning that which has been arranged in order. It was a military technical term denoting a body of troops (of varying numbers) which could be disposed according to the decision of the commanding officer. In this context **tagma** clearly refers to the order in which the events take place. Vine adds that "the word **tagma**, "order," was generally used as a military term, of troops in order of rank. **Here there are two orders**, Christ, who has the preeminence in resurrection, and has already become the Precursor of those who belong to the **second order**, namely, those who are His and who are destined, in virtue of His resurrection (ED: SEE [EXCURSUS BELOW](#)), to experience the same power when He comes to bring them into His own Presence and into the place prepared for them.

Note that Christ described as the **First Fruits** is distinct from Christ described as the **Firstborn** of the dead in Col 1:18+ (and "of all creation" Col 1:15+). **First fruits** refers to order in time whereas **Firstborn** refers to Christ's priority or pre-eminence. (See [What does it mean that Jesus is the "firstborn" over Creation? | GotQuestions.org](#))

**Coming** ([3952](#)) **parousia** is a combination of two Greek words **para** = with, alongside + **ousia** = being (**ousia** is the participial form of the verb **eimi** = to be) which together literally mean to be alongside. Most lexicons state that **parousia** is from **pareimi** (**para** = near, with + **eimi** = to be) which means to be present, to be nearby, to have come. **Parousia** then literally means a **being beside** or a **presence**. The word denotes both an arrival and a consequent presence with. **Parousia** conveys the thought of an arrival (advent or coming) of a person to a place plus the idea of their presence at that place until a certain event transpires. **Parousia** means more than just coming but also includes the idea of "**presence**." The word **parousia** has no English equivalent and therefore is often transliterated in writings. In secular Greek **parousia** was used as a technical expression for the arrival of a king or emperor or for the appearance of a "god." See related study on [Imminency, Imminent - Christ's Second Coming](#)

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**Norman Geisler** - 1 CORINTHIANS 15:23—Does the verse support the Roman Catholic dogma of the bodily assumption of Mary?

MISINTERPRETATION: According to Catholic dogma, "Mary was assumed body and soul into heaven" (Ott, 1960, 208). On November 1, 1950, the Roman Pontiff spoke ex cathedra to proclaim infallibly that "just as the glorious resurrection of Christ was an essential part, and final evidence of the victory, so the Blessed Virgin's common struggle with her son was to be concluded with the 'glorification' of her virginal body" (Denzinger, 1957, no. 2331, 647). Some Catholic theologians appeal to 1 Corinthians 15:23 to support this dogma, arguing that Christ is the "firstfruits" of the resurrection and "then, at his coming, those who belong to Christ" (Ott, 208).

CORRECTING THE MISINTERPRETATION: It is a far-fetched use of 1 Corinthians 15:23 to support the Bodily Assumption dogma. Even noted defenders of Catholic dogma admit that "direct and express scriptural proofs are not to be had" (Ibid.). They speak rather of the "possibility" of it in this text. But one is hard-pressed to find even that.

The text speaks about Christ being the "firstfruits" of the resurrection. Mary is not in view in the text at all. (When Cultist Ask)

## EXCURSUS ON ORDER OF RESURRECTIONS FIRST AND SECOND RESURRECTIONS

There are several resurrection “events” which have transpired in history, each of which falls into one of two categories. All but the last resurrection event make up the **FIRST RESURRECTION**. The point is that you want to participate in the **FIRST RESURRECTION!** The **SECOND RESURRECTION** is at the [Great White Throne](#) where all will be thrown into the [Lake of Fire](#)

### Related Resources

- [Click here for more explanation of this table](#) by Tony Garland.
- [Births, Deaths, and Resurrections](#) by Tony Garland.
- [Timing of resurrections](#) by Gotquestions.org

Order	Which	Timing	Who	Description	Scriptures
1	<b>First</b>	The Third Day	Jesus Christ	The resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, the “ <b>firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.</b> ”	Mt. 28:1-7; Mk 16:1-11; Lk 24:1-12; Jn 20:1-18; 1 Cor. 15:20
2	<b>First</b>	Shortly after Christ’s Resurrection.	A Few OT Saints	At the earthquake attending the crucifixion, graves were opened. Shortly after the resurrection of Christ, these saints were raised	Mt. 27:50-53
3	<b>First</b>	Before the Tribulation.	Church	The resurrection of Church-age believers at the Rapture.	Jn 14:3; 1Th. 4:13-18; 1Cor. 15:50-53
4	<b>First</b>	Middle of the Tribulation	Two Witnesses	God’s two witnesses will be raised after being killed by The Beast.	Rev. 11:11-12
5	<b>First</b>	After <a href="#">Jacob’s Trouble</a> or <a href="#">Great Tribulation</a>	OT Saints	Old Testament saints will be resurrected to enter the Millennial Kingdom	Da 12:1-2 Isa 26:19; Ezek 37:13-14
6	<b>First</b>	Beginning of <a href="#">Millennial Kingdom</a> .	Tribulation Martyrs	<a href="#">The Tribulation</a> martyrs will be resurrected so that they can rule and reign with Christ.	Rev. 20:4-6
7	<b>Second</b>	End of <a href="#">Millennial Kingdom</a>	Unbelieving Dead	At the end of the <a href="#">millennial reign of Christ</a> , the final resurrection will consist of all of the unbelieving, wicked dead. They will be found guilty at the Great White Throne Judgment and cast into the Lake of Fire.	Rev. 20:11-15

### The First Resurrection and the Second Resurrection

In order to better understand the Biblical nomenclature regarding the resurrection associated with the Rapture, it is important to give a brief summary of the two main categories of Biblical resurrections. In the interest of full disclosure, the chart below is predicated on a pre-tribulation rapture which of course not everyone agrees with.

In the **gospel of John**, Jesus taught there were **two general categories of resurrection**, one of believers and one of unbelievers...

Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall

come forth; those who did the good deeds (good deeds do not save but are evidence of genuine saving faith in Christ - faith is the "root" and "good deeds" are the "root") to a **resurrection of life**, those who committed the evil deeds to a **resurrection of judgment**. (John 5:28-29)

**Comment:** From the following schematic timeline you will notice that the resurrection of unbelievers follows the last identifiable resurrection of believers by 1000 years, assuming one interprets the 1000 years of Revelation 20 literally.

In **1 Corinthians 15**, the "Resurrection Chapter", Paul gives us the prototype for all subsequent resurrections of believers, explaining that...

now Christ has been raised from the dead, the **first fruits** of those who are asleep. (1 Corinthians 15:20)

**Comment:** In Leviticus 23:10-14+, the first fruits of grain harvested were offered by the priests to Jehovah as a sign and a promise of a greater harvest to come. In the same way, Christ's resurrection as the "first fruits" assures that all those who have placed their faith in Him will be part of the first resurrection, which is the greater harvest of all believers, both OT and NT. The exception is those believers who are alive when Christ returns to Rapture the Church will not experience physical death and will not require bodily resurrection.

In **Revelation 20**, John uses the term **first resurrection** writing...

Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the **first resurrection**; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years. (Rev 20:6+)

Study the schematic timeline below and note that there are two general categories of resurrections. Then read the explanatory notes that follow.

### THE TWO RESURRECTIONS

( 3 ) **FIRST**  
 Resurrection  
 The Two  
 Witnesses Saints from **FIRST** Resurrection  
 Raised at Mid- Experience the Millennium  
 Tribulation  
 ||  
 V

	(4)	
	(2) <b>FIRST</b>	(5) <b>SECOND</b>
(1) <b>FIRST</b>	Resurrection	Resurrection
Resurrection	a) Believers	Non Believers
Christ the First Fruits	Martyred in	End of 1000 yr
On 3rd Day	Tribulation	
	b) OT Saints	
	Pre-tribulation	
	preceding 1000 yr	

THE	GAP	7 Years	1000 Years
CROSS	2000+ Years	Church Age	Millennium
		Tribulation*	

**\*Note:** The word "**Tribulation**" is never specifically used in Scripture to designate the last 7 years, Daniel's 70th week, but will be used in these notes because the term is so firmly entrenched in Christian jargon. Last 3.5 years is designated the Great Tribulation.

**EXPLANATORY NOTES:** The **First Resurrection** concerns only believers and is composed of several distinct "stages" at different times. Note that all believers (not just saints martyred during the Great Tribulation) will reign with Christ in His Millennial Kingdom. The **Second Resurrection** deals only with unbelievers and occurs in a single "stage" or as a one time event. Both the First and Second Resurrections refer to **physical** or **bodily resurrection**, not spiritual resurrection.

(1) **The prototype resurrection forming the basis of the First Resurrection** - Christ the first fruits of all subsequent resurrections of believers (1Co 15:20)

**(2) The Second "stage" of the First Resurrection** - Believers who have died during the Church Age will be resurrected at the time the Lord returns to Rapture His Bride, the Church. (1 Th 4:13-18+ 1Co 15:50-53, cp Jn 14:3)

**(3) The Third "stage" of the First Resurrection** - The two witnesses who are killed in Revelation 11 are raised and then went up to heaven (Rev 11:11, 12+)

**(4a) The Fourth "stage" of the First Resurrection** - After the Great Tribulation, believers who have been martyred will be resurrected to immortality (See notes regarding those who come out of Great Tribulation, some of which are undoubtedly martyred - Re 7:9,14+; ; see notes regarding saints martyred during the Great Tribulation - Rev 20:4-6+)

**(4b) The Fourth "stage" of the First Resurrection** - After the time of Jacob's Distress or Trouble (= the Great Tribulation), the Old Testament saints will also be resurrected (see OT descriptions of resurrection - Daniel 12:1, 2, 13+, Isaiah 26:19, Job 19:26)

What Biblical basis is there for placing the resurrection of OT saints at the end of the Great Tribulation, the time of Jacob's distress? Jeremiah gives us a clue writing...

'Alas! for that day (not a literal day but a 3.5 year period that corresponds to the Great Tribulation) is great, there is none like it; and it is the time of Jacob's distress (at which time there is a horrible time of persecution of Jews by the Satanically inspired Antichrist, a "Jewish holocaust" the likes of which the world has never seen, but one that will be cut short by the return of the Messiah), But he (Israel, the believing **remnant**) will be saved from it. And it shall come about on that day (what day? the day of the Lord's return - see description beginning in Re 19:11+),' declares the LORD of hosts, 'that I will break his yoke from off their neck, and will tear off their bonds; and strangers shall no longer make them their slaves. (To reiterate, this day corresponds to the return of the Lord, who defeats the Antichrist and all Gentile powers arrayed against God, His saints and Israel) But **they** (this refers to those Jews who come to saving faith in the time of Jacob's distress - see Ro 11:25, 26, 27+) shall serve the LORD their God, and **David their king**, whom **I will raise up** for them. (Jeremiah 30:7-9+)

**Comment:** Note that these passages {also Ezekiel 37:24+} indicate that David himself will be resurrected and will actually reign over the earthly Israel during the millennial age. David's resurrection follows the defeat of the Gentiles at the end of the Great Tribulation which supports the premise that this period is the time when OT saints are resurrected.

**(5) The Second Resurrection** - After the 1000 year Millennial Kingdom all of the unbelieving dead will be resurrected to stand before the Great White Throne judgment and since their names are not found written in the book of life, they will be cast into the Lake of fire, which constitutes the Second Death, eternal separation away from the glory of God. (Rev 20:11-15+)

**1 Corinthians 15:24 then comes the end, when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power. (NASB 1995 - Lockman)**

- **comes** Da 12:4,9,13 Mt 10:22 13:39,40 Mt 24:13 1Pe 4:7
- **the kingdom** Isa 9:7 Da 7:14,27 Mt 11:27 28:18 Lu 10:22 Joh 3:35 13:3 1Ti 6:15 Eph 6
- See also The Resurrection of Christ
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Isaiah 9:7+ There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his **kingdom**, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.

Daniel 7:14+ "And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a **kingdom**, That all the peoples, nations and men of every language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His **kingdom** is one Which will not be destroyed.

Daniel 7:27+ 'Then the sovereignty, the dominion and the greatness of all the kingdoms under the whole



heaven will be given to the people of the saints (DANIEL IS WRITING TO JEWS) of the Highest One; His **kingdom** will be an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him.'

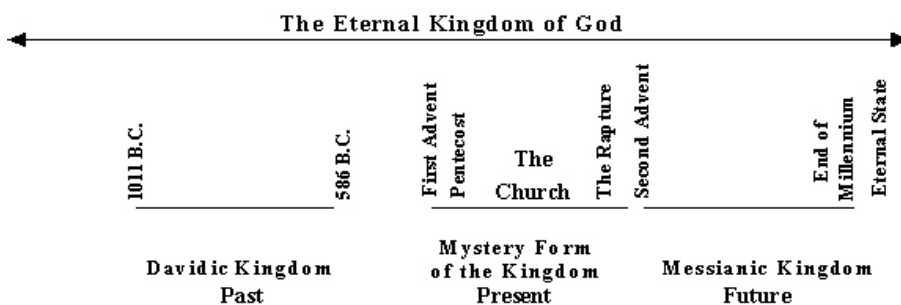
Ephesians 1:20-21+ which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all **rule** ([arche](#)) and **authority** ([exousia](#)) and **power** ([dunamis](#)) and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.

Ephesians 3:10+ so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the **rulers** ([arche](#)) and the **authorities** ([exousia](#)) in the heavenly places.

Ephesians 6:11+ Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the **rulers** ([arche](#)), against the **powers** ([exousia](#)), against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.

Revelation 20:11-15+ Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. 12 And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. 13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. 14 Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. 15 And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

## KINGDOMS OF GOD



KINGDOM OF GOD PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE  
FROM BIBLE.ORG

## THE KINGDOM OF MESSIAH BECOMES THE KINGDOM OF GOD

This is an amazing prophetic passage teaching a truth about the future Kingdom that is taught no where else in the Bible. So hang in there as I try to break it down phrase by phrase.

**Then - [then](#)**: is a very important time phrase to observe especially when studying prophecy as it often delineates a chronological sequence of events - don't overlook the [then](#)'s in prophecy! The NLT paraphrases **then** "after that." (Cf then in Mark 4:17, 28+).

**Comes the end ([consummation](#))** - This time phrase **the end** begs the question, when is the end? The context helps but does not completely answer the question. See the comment on the next clause. **Vine** says that end (telos "is here used of the last event in a succession or series. The series is mentioned in verses 25 to 28.

**End** (custom, outcome) ([5056](#))([telos](#) means an end, a completion, a [consummation](#). The word [termination](#) is close but misses the **essence** of the meaning, because a process can be terminated without reaching completion or consummation, which is the essence of the meaning of telos. The idea of telos is that the various stages that are reached to go on to full development (eternal significance). **Telos** refers to a goal achieved, a result attained, a realization, an end-goal, a purpose fulfilled. The root **tel-** means reaching the end (aim) and is illustrated by an old pirate's telescope ([pictures](#)) which unfolds or extends one stage at a time to reach full-capacity (effectiveness). **Telos** in 1-2 Corinthians - 1 Co. 1:8; 1 Co. 10:11; 1 Co. 15:24; 2 Co. 1:13; 2 Co. 3:13; 2 Co. 11:15

**When He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father** - Another time phrase "WHEN" and this time is specifically stated as when Jesus hands over the kingdom to the God and Father. The question arises "What kingdom?" Your answer depends on whether you interpret Revelation 20 literally or figuratively. I am a literalist and interpret John's 6 uses of "1000" as literal years and thus interpret this as the Millennial Kingdom or the Messianic Kingdom over which Messiah reigns. At the end of the 1000 years, the devil is unleashed for a short time, rebels one last time, is destroyed and cast into the lake of fire (Rev 20:7-10<sub>±</sub>). Then (reading it literally and chronologically) there is an unusual passage Rev 20:11<sub>±</sub> which says "**Then** (don't miss this then!) I saw a Great White Throne and Him (JESUS - cf Jn 5:22-23, 2 Ti 4:1<sub>+</sub>) who sat upon it, from whose presence **earth and heaven fled away**, and no place was found for them." They fled away and there is no place for them because this is the time when **heaven and earth** have been destroyed, Peter explaining that "the **heavens** will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the **earth** and its works will be burned up (2 Peter 3:10-13<sub>+</sub>). At that time the "**Second Resurrection**" of all unbelievers will occur as they stand before their Judge Jesus (Rev 20:12<sub>±</sub>) and they are judged according to their works and cast into the Lake of Fire and eternal punishment (Rev 20:11-15<sub>±</sub>). Notice that John follows with Rev 21:1<sub>±</sub> which begins with "**then**" (then) and which fits perfectly with the chronological sequence after the first heaven and earth had been destroyed, for John records "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea." Sin has been destroyed totally with the destruction by fire of the old heavens and earth and the sinners have been judged and depart from the New Heaven and New Earth.

**Hands over** (delivers) (3860) paradidomi from **para** = alongside, beside, to the side of, over to + **didomi** = to give) conveys the basic meaning of to give over from one's hand to someone, especially to give over to the power of another, in this context from God the Son to God the Father, which shows the hierarchy in the Trinity. **Paradidomi** in 1-2 Corinthians - 1 Co. 5:5; 1 Co. 11:2; 1 Co. 11:23; 1 Co. 13:3; 1 Co. 15:3; 1 Co. 15:24; 2 Co. 4:11; The use of **paradidomi** in 1 Corinthians 15:3 refers to the transmitting of or passing on of traditional instruction from Paul to the saints at Corinth.

**Kingdom** (932) basileia from **basileus** = a sovereign, king, monarch) denotes sovereignty, royal power, dominion. Basileia can also refer to the territory or people over whom a king rules. **Basileia** in 1-2 Corinthians - 1 Co. 4:20; 1 Co. 6:9; 1 Co. 6:10; 1 Co. 15:24; 1 Co. 15:50;

**When He has abolished** (katargeo brought to an end, after He has destroyed) **all rule** (every ruler) **and all authority and power** - **Abolished** means brought to an end, destroyed and the aorist tense speaks of a completed action in the past. In other words Paul is so certain (and under the inspiration of the Spirit) that this future will occur that he uses the past tense! It is as good as done! Note the repetition of ALL meaning all without exception! **Rule...authority...power** is not specific but often refers to the evil forces (and evil people) arrayed against God. Their evil effect will be brought to an end forever and ever. Amen. The events in Revelation 20 describe the final destruction of the Evil One (Satan) (Rev 20:7-10<sub>±</sub>) and his evil subjects (Rev 20:12-15<sub>±</sub>). At that time all adversaries have been **abolished** and the Son **hands over** the Kingdom to the God and Father and we enter into eternity future in the New Heavens and New Earth.

**Rule** (rulers) (746)(arche) primarily conveys the sense of primacy (state of being first and/or foremost) and thus in the context of time can refer to the beginning of something, but here it is in the context of rank, so the idea is "primacy" of rank. In this setting arche speaks of a position of power or an entity who possesses that power. And so in the present context arche speaks of angelic or transcendent powers, since they were thought of as having a political organization (See Eph 1:20-21<sub>+</sub>, Eph 3:10<sub>+</sub>, Eph 6:11<sub>+</sub>, Ro 8:38; 1 Cor 15:24; Eph 1:21; 3:10; 6:12; Col 1:16; 2:10, 15)

**Authority** (1849) exousia from **éxesti** = it is permitted, it is lawful) means the power to do something and was a technical term used in the law courts, of a legal right. "**Authority** or right is the dominant meaning (of exousia) in the New Testament." (Vincent) **Exousia** refers to delegated authority and combines the idea of the "right and the might", these attributes having been granted to someone. **Exousia** is an important term in the Gospels. Many conflicts in Jesus' life and ministry turn on debates about authority or the idea that Jesus taught with an unparalleled authority (Mt 7:29; 8:9; 9:6, 8; 21:23-27; 28:18; Mk 1:22, 27; 2:10; 3:15; 11:28-33; Lk 4:32, 36; 5:24; 7:8; 20:2-8). **Uses of exousia** in 1-2 Corinthians - 1 Co. 1:18; 1 Co. 1:24; 1 Co. 2:4; 1 Co. 2:5; 1 Co. 4:19; 1 Co. 4:20; 1 Co. 5:4; 1 Co. 6:14; 1 Co. 12:10; 1 Co. 12:28; 1 Co. 12:29; 1 Co. 14:11; 1 Co. 15:24; 1 Co. 15:43; 1 Co. 15:56; 2 Co. 1:8; 2 Co. 4:7; 2 Co. 6:7; 2 Co. 8:3; 2 Co. 12:9; 2 Co. 12:12; 2 Co. 13:4

**Power** (supernatural) (1411)(dunamis) from **dunamai** = to be able, to have power) power especially achieving power. It refers to intrinsic power or inherent ability, the power or ability to carry out some function, the potential for functioning in some way (power, might, strength, ability, capability), the power residing in a thing by virtue of its nature. Uses of dunamis in 1-2 Corinthians - 1 Co. 1:18; 1 Co. 1:24; 1 Co. 2:4; 1 Co. 2:5; 1 Co.

4:19; 1 Co. 4:20; 1 Co. 5:4; 1 Co. 6:14; 1 Co. 12:10; 1 Co. 12:28; 1 Co. 12:29; 1 Co. 14:11; 1 Co. 15:24; 1 Co. 15:43; 1 Co. 15:56; 2 Co. 1:8; 2 Co. 4:7; 2 Co. 6:7; 2 Co. 8:3; 2 Co. 12:9; 2 Co. 12:12; 2 Co. 13:4;

## 1 Corinthians 15:25 For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. [\(NASB 1995 - Lockman\)](#)

- Ps 2:6-10 45:3-6 Ps 110:1 Mt 22:44 Mk 12:36 Lu 20:42,43 Ac 2:34 Eph 1:22 Heb 1:13 10:12,13
- See also The Resurrection of Christ
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

Psalms 2:6-12 "But as for Me, I (GOD THE FATHER) have installed My King (MESSIAH) Upon Zion, My holy mountain (TO BE FULFILLED IN MILLENIUM)." 7 "I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, 'You (MESSIAH) are My Son, Today I have begotten You. 8 'Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, And the very ends of the earth as Your possession. 9' You shall break them with a rod of iron, You shall shatter them like earthenware.'" 10 Now therefore, O kings, show discernment; Take warning, O judges of the earth. 11 Worship the LORD with reverence And rejoice with trembling. 12 Do homage to the Son, that He not become angry, and you perish in the way, For His wrath may soon be kindled. **How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!** (See [Psalm 2 - Why do the Nations Rage?](#) Excellent)

Hebrews 1:13+ But to which of the angels has He ever said, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET"? (QUOTING Ps 110:1)

Isaiah 32:1 Behold, a king will reign righteously And princes will rule justly.

For ([gar](#)) term of explanation Paul explains the transfer of the kingdom from the Son to the Father.

**He** ([dei](#) in present tense - continually) **must** (present tense - continually) **reign until He has put** ([subjugates](#), [vanquishes](#), [overpowers](#), [subdues](#)) **all** (no exceptions) **His enemies under His feet** - Note this is not a "maybe" reign but an absolute "**must**" reign ([Jesus Shall Reign](#), [Another version](#), [He Shall Reign Forevermore](#) - Chris Tomlin)! **He** refers to Jesus ruling and reigning over His Messianic Kingdom for 1000 years. Why must He **reign**? It fulfills Messianic prophecy in Psalm 110:1+ which says "The LORD (FATHER) says to my Lord (MESSIAH): "Sit at My right hand Until I make Your (MESSIAH) enemies a footstool for Your feet." Another reason Jesus **must** rule is because His Kingdom fulfills the promises to the nation of Israel. In short Jesus **MUST REIGN** in order that all the prophecies regarding the nation of Israel are perfectly fulfilled. **Under** is the preposition [hupo](#) which in this context speaks of Christ in a controlling position with His enemies submitted to Him. **Under His feet** speaks of total dominion and final victory over all enemies. Often in warfare when a king conquered his enemy, he would place his [foot on his neck](#) symbolizing total and complete defeat of his enemy ([pix](#)).

We see the final defeat of the devil and His human **enemies** in Revelation 20:7-10+ "When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, 8 and will come out to **deceive the nations** which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the **number of them is like the sand of the seashore** (THIS IS INCREDIBLE FOR THEY HAVE HAD HIS RIGHTEOUS PRESENCE ON EARTH FOR 1000 YEARS. IT SHOWS THE TOTAL DEPRAVITY OF THE HUMAN HEART!). 9 And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city (JERUSALEM), and fire came down from heaven and **devoured them**. 10 And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever."

**Must** (1163) ([dei](#) from **de**o = to bind or tie objects together, put in prison and also root of **doulos**, bond-servant) refers to what is not optional but needful (binding) out of intrinsic necessity or inevitability. **Dei** refers to inward constraint which is why it is often translated "**must**". **Dei** describes that which is under the necessity of happening or which must necessarily take place, and as stated above, conveys a sense of inevitability. To express the sense of necessity **dei** is translated "one ought", "one should", "one has to" or "one must". The **TDNT** comments that **dei** "expresses the character of necessity or compulsion in an event. **Dei** in 1-2 Corinthians - 1 Co. 8:2; 1 Co. 11:19; 1 Co. 15:25; 1 Co. 15:53; 2 Co. 2:3; 2 Co. 5:10; 2 Co. 11:30; 2 Co. 12:1

- Play Messianic believer Paul Wilbur's lively version of [He Shall Reign Over All the Earth](#)

**Reign** (become king) ([936](#)) [basileuo](#) from **basileus** - a king) means literally to exercise supreme authority at a

royal level, to reign over, to be king over (Rev 11:15, 17-± of Jesus' reign in the Millennial Kingdom). Only other use in Corinthians in 1 Cor 4:8.

**Enemies** (hostile parties) (2190) **echthros** from **échthos** = hatred, enmity; noun = **echthra** = enmity, hostility) is an adjective which pertains to manifesting hostility or being at enmity with another, where enmity is a deep seated animosity or hatred which may be open or concealed or a "deep-rooted hatred." In the active sense **echthros** means to be hateful, hostile toward, at enmity with or adversary of someone. In the passive sense **echthros** pertains to being subjected to hostility, to be hated or to be regarded as an enemy. Echthros - 32v - Matt. 5:43; Matt. 5:44; Matt. 10:36; Matt. 13:25; Matt. 13:28; Matt. 13:39; Matt. 22:44; Mk. 12:36; Lk. 1:71; Lk. 1:74; Lk. 6:27; Lk. 6:35; Lk. 10:19; Lk. 19:27; Lk. 19:43; Lk. 20:43; Acts 2:35; Acts 13:10; Rom. 5:10; Rom. 11:28; Rom. 12:20; 1 Co. 15:25; 1 Co. 15:26; Gal. 4:16; Phil. 3:18; Col. 1:21; 2 Thess. 3:15; Heb. 1:13; Heb. 10:13; Jas. 4:4; Rev. 11:5; Rev. 11:12

## 1 Corinthians 15:26 The last enemy that will be abolished is death. [NASB 1995 - Lockman](#)

- 1Co 15:55 Isa 25:8 Ho 13:14 Lu 20:36 2Ti 1:10 Heb 2:14 Rev 20:14 Rev 21:4
- See also The Resurrection of Christ
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

1 Corinthians 15:55-57± "**O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?**" 56 The sting of **death** is sin, and the power of sin is the law; 57 but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Isaiah 25:8 **He will swallow up death for all time**, And the Lord GOD will wipe tears away from all faces, And He will remove the reproach of His people from all the earth; For the LORD has spoken.

Hosea 13:14 Shall I ransom them from the power of Sheol? Shall I redeem them from death?**O Death, where are your thorns?** O Sheol, where is your sting? Compassion will be hidden from My sight.

2 Timothy 1:10+ but now (contrast "from all eternity" 2 Ti 1:9) has been revealed ([phaneroo](#)) by the (FIRST) appearing ( [epiphaneia](#)) of our Savior Christ Jesus, Who **abolished** ([katargeo](#)) death and brought **life and immortality** ([aphtharsia](#)) to light through the Gospel,

Revelation 21:4± and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and **there will no longer be any death**; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."

death

Death, the [Grim Reaper](#)

## THE LAST ENEMY DEATH

**The last enemy** ([echthros](#)) **that will be abolished is death** ([thanatos](#)) - This is a prophecy which will finally and fully be fulfilled in Rev 20:14± when Jesus sits on the Great White Throne as Judge of the living and the dead and "Thend**death** and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire." Thereafter in the New Heaven and New Earth "there will no longer be any death" (Revelation 21:4±) But for now **Death** is personified as Christ's enemy and of course "he" is also the enemy of all mankind, for he takes the life of every person born (unless we are raptured).

The resurrection assures what Calvary secures.

**Last** (2078) ([eschatos](#) from **ek** = from, primarily as it relates to place) a noun which means last in time or space/place (most remote) (Acts 1:8±, Acts 13:47±). **Eschatos** can refer to the lowest status or "last place" (Mt 19:30) **Eschatos** as in the present passage means "last" in the sense of a final stage in a process.

**Abolished** (Brought to an end, done away with) (2673) [katargeo](#) from **kata** = intensifies meaning + **argeo** = to be idle or inactive from **argos** = ineffective, idle, inactive from **a** = without + **érgon** = work) literally means to reduce to inactivity. The idea is to make the power or force of something ineffective and so to render powerless, do away with, put out of use, render entirely idle, inoperative, cause to come to an end. **Katargeo**

in 1-2 Corinthians - 1 Co. 1:28; 1 Co. 2:6; 1 Co. 6:13; 1 Co. 13:8; 1 Co. 13:10; 1 Co. 13:11; 1 Co. 15:24; 1 Co. 15:26; 2 Co. 3:7; 2 Co. 3:11; 2 Co. 3:13; 2 Co. 3:14

**1 Corinthians 15:27 For HE HAS PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET. But when He says, "All things are put in subjection," it is evident that He is excepted who put all things in subjection to Him. ([NASB 1995 - Lockman](#))**

- Ps 8:6 Mt 11:27 28:18 Joh 3:35 13:3 Eph 1:20 Php 2:9-11 Heb 1:13 2:8 10:12 1Pe 3:22 Rev 1:18
- See also The Resurrection of Christ
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Philippians 2:9-11+ For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, 10 so that **at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth,** 11 and that every tongue will confess that **Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**

Hebrews 1:13+ But to which of the angels has He ever said, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET"?



#### Conqueror's Foot on Head of Enemy

### ALL HEAVEN AND EARTH SUBJECTED TO CHRIST

**For** ([gar](#)) term of explanation Paul explains why even the greatest of all enemies, Death, will be demolished by Christ, the Resurrection and the Life.

**HE** (God the Father) **HAS PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER** ([hupo](#) often depicted by a king putting his [foot on the defeated enemy's neck](#) symbolizing total and complete defeat of his enemy) **HIS** (Christ's) **FEET** (including DEATH!)- Paul quotes from Psalm 8:6+ which ends with the prophecy "Thou hast put (Heb shith = put, set; Lxx = [hupotasso](#)) all things under His feet." Psalm 8:6+ originally spoke of the dominion that was delegated to man in Genesis 1:26, but here Paul under the inspiration of the Spirit extends the meaning and applies it to the universal dominion of Christ, even as he repeats in Eph. 1:22+ declaring "He (GOD THE FATHER) put all things in subjection under His (CHRIST THE SON'S) feet. Psalm 8:6 is also cited in Hebrews 2:5-8+, where it is applied to Christ. One ancient writer said "Some will experience this subjection by way of torment, while others will experience it by way of a direct knowledge which is not 'through a dim mirror or an enigma,' as is the case now"

**But when He says, "All things are put in subjection** (perfect tense = permanence)," **it is evident that He** (GOD THE FATHER) **is excepted who put all things in subjection to Him** (CHRIST) - **All things** means all things without exception, except ONE! What is Paul saying? In context while **all things** in the heavens and earth will be placed under the dominion of the Jesus Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords, there is one "exception," and that is God the Father. He will not be subjected to the Son, again emphasizing the [hierarchy](#) in the [Trinity](#).

**Hunter & McShane** - Everything now be according to the divine pleasure. God, and the Godhead, will now rest in undisturbed repose, every enemy having been dealt with, and the whole creation will move into eternal conditions—the struggle and conflict of earth over for ever..([What the Bible teaches – 1 and 2 Corinthians](#))

**Subjected** ([5293](#)) [hupotasso](#) from **hupó** = under + **tasso** = arrange in orderly manner) means literally to place under or rank under in an orderly fashion. Hupotasso was used as a military term arranging soldiers in the "best order, to accomplish the strategic objective; hence, 'to arrange under one's authority,' in order to execute a mission" In the active voice **hupotasso** means to subject, bring under firm control, subordinate. As an aside Biblical submission can not be inferiority because Jesus submitted to the Father every day of His life on earth (Jn 5:19, 30)! Jesus Christ, the second person of the eternal Trinity, modeled submission in His earthly ministry. This provides absolute proof that submission does not mean inferiority or loss of dignity!

**Evident** ([1212](#))([delos](#)) is an adjective which means clearly visible and hence clear, plain, clear to the understanding or mind. **Delos** pertains to that which can be clearly and easily able to be known.

**1 Corinthians 15:28** When all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, so that God may be all in all. ([NASB 1995 - Lockman](#))

- all things Ps 2:8,9 18:39,47 21:8,9 Da 2:34,35,40-45 Mt 13:41-43 Php 3:21 Rev 19:11-21 20:2-4,10-15
- then 1Co 3:23 11:3 Joh 14:28
- all in all 1Co 12:6 Eph 1:23 Col 3:11
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE ORDER OF SUBJECTION

**When all things are subjected ([hupotasso](#)) to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected([hupotasso](#)) to the One who subjected ([hupotasso](#)) all things to Him** - The NLT has a fairly good paraphrase "Then, when all things are under his authority, the Son will put himself under God's authority, so that God, who gave his Son authority over all things, will be utterly supreme over everything everywhere." (1Co 15:28NLT)

**So that** (purpose clause) **God may be all in all** - I like the NLT rendering = "will be utterly supreme over everything everywhere."

**THOUGHT** - Since God is to be **all in all**, may He grant us the Spirit enabled desire and power to continually, daily choose to bow down and worship Him now and forever and ever as our **ALL IN ALL**. In His Holy Name. Amen. Take a moment to worship Jesus, the Lamb of God, Who Alone is Worthy to be worshiped as our **ALL IN ALL** (play song).

**1 Corinthians 15:29** Otherwise, what will those do who are baptized for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why then are they baptized for them? ([NASB 1995 - Lockman](#))

- **what** 1Co 15:16,32 Ro 6:3,4 Mt 20:22
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## A PUZZLING PASSAGE BAPTIZED FOR THE DEAD

**Otherwise, what will those do who are baptized for the dead?** - One thing this clearly does not mean is that a live person can be baptized in place of a dead person resulting in salvation for that dead person! That is absurd but sadly is why is sometimes falsely taught! If personal faith is required for salvation (which it is), then this false belief is utter heresy!

**NET Note** - Many suggestions have been offered for the puzzling expression baptized for the dead. There are **up to 200 different explanations** for the passage; a summary is given by K. C. Thompson, "1 Corinthians 15, 29 and Baptism for the Dead," Studia Evangelica 2.1 (TU 87), 647-59. The most likely interpretation is that some Corinthians had undergone baptism to bear witness to the faith of fellow believers who had died without experiencing that rite themselves. Paul's reference to the practice here is neither a recommendation nor a condemnation. He simply uses it as evidence from the lives of the Corinthians themselves to bolster his larger argument, begun in 1 cOR 15:12, that resurrection from the dead is a present reality in Christ and a future reality for them.

**Whatever they may have proclaimed, the Corinthians' actions demonstrated that they had hope for a bodily resurrection**

**John MacArthur** - A reasonable view seems to be that those who are baptized refers to living believers who give outward testimony to their faith in baptism by water because they were first drawn to Christ by the exemplary lives, faithful influence, and witness of believers who had subsequently died. Paul's point is that if there is no resurrection and no life after death, then why are people coming to Christ to follow the hope of those who have died? ([MNTC- 1 Corinthians](#))

As **Gotquestions.org** says "Baptism for the dead is a practice that was common in the pagan religions of Greece and is still practiced today by some cults; but it doesn't change a person's eternal destiny, for that is determined while he lives (Luke 16:26+)"

Here is the excerpt from **Thomas Scott** which is one of the 30 interpretations of this strange passage and it at least does seem to make some sense - The apostle refers to the case of those, who presented themselves for baptism, immediately after the martyrdom of their brethren, or at their funerals; as if fresh soldiers should enlist and press forward to the assault, to supply the

places of those who had fallen in battle. Thus they professed their faith in Christ, and ventured the rage of their enemies, at the very time when others had been put to death for the gospel. But what advantage could they propose to themselves from such a conduct, if there were no resurrection? Or what wisdom could there be in so doing? For in this case, Christianity itself would lose the great evidence of its truth; even the immortality of the soul might be called in question; believers were yet “in their sins;” and they who died as martyrs had lost their souls, as well as their lives. This might show the Corinthian speculators how greatly their notions tended to discourage men from professing the gospel in times of persecution, and to make them afraid and ashamed to own the cause of Christ. If this were the case, why did Christians in general, or the apostles and evangelists in particular, live in continual and imminent danger of suffering and death, by their open profession of the gospel, and their zeal in promoting it? They could have no sufficient encouragement for so doing, if the dead should never arise.

**If the dead are not raised ([egeiro](#)) at all, why then are they baptized for them** - The point as alluded to by Scott, is if there is no resurrection of the dead, then why should anyone believe and be baptized?

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**Question:** [What is baptism for the dead?](#)

**Answer:** Baptism for the dead is a non-biblical practice where a living person is baptized in lieu of a person that passed away, as a means of making a public profession of faith for a person that is already deceased. We can, essentially, think of it as the practice of baptizing a dead person.

The practice has as its basis the misinterpretation of 1 Corinthians 15:29: “**Otherwise, what will they do, those being baptized on behalf of the dead? If the dead are not at all raised, why indeed are they baptized on behalf of the dead?**” This is a difficult passage to interpret, but we do know by comparing it with the rest of Scripture that it does not mean that a dead person can be saved by someone else being baptized on his or her behalf, because baptism is not a requirement for salvation in the first place (Ephesians 2:8; Romans 3:28; 4:3; 6:3-4). The entire passage (vv. 12-29) is about the surety of the resurrection, not about baptism for the dead.

What was being baptized for the dead? It is a mysterious passage, and there have been more than thirty different interpretations put forward. 1. The plain meaning of the Greek in verse 29 is that some people are being baptized on behalf of those who have died—and if there is no resurrection, why are they doing this? 2. Either Paul is referring to a pagan custom (notice he uses “they,” not “we”), or to a superstitious and unscriptural practice in the Corinthian church of vicarious baptism for believers who died before being baptized. 3. Either way, he certainly does not approve of the practice; he merely says that if there is no resurrection, why would the custom take place? The Mormon practice of baptism for the dead is neither scriptural nor sensible. Baptism for the dead is a practice that was common in the pagan religions of Greece and is still practiced today by some cults; but it doesn’t change a person’s eternal destiny, for that is determined while he lives (Luke 16:26). [GotQuestions.org](#)

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Thomas Scott, Baptized for the Dead - The expression baptized for the dead, has given occasion to a variety of ingenious conjectures and learned discussions. Some argue that [it] only means, ‘baptized in the name of one who certainly died, and who, “if the dead rise not,” ‘still remains among the dead.’ But the word rendered “dead” is plural, and all the labour bestowed to remove that difficulty is to no purpose. Others suppose, that the apostle refers to a practice, which, it seems, at one time prevailed in the church, of baptizing a living person in the stead, and for the supposed benefit, of one who had died unbaptized. But who can imagine, that so absurd and gross a superstition was customary, when the apostle wrote? Or that, if it were, he should sanction it?—

Beza, rather triumphantly, concludes that he has discovered and fixed the true interpretation; and that the apostle meant the washing of the dead bodies, among the Jews and Christians, before burial; (Acts 9:37.) which he thinks was a profession that they expected a resurrection. But the use of the word baptize, in such a connection, could hardly be expected; and the words will not bear that sense, by any fair interpretation.—

Hammond contends, that it means the profession of faith, concerning the resurrection of the dead, which was required of persons at their baptism, which represented, as he thinks, the burial and resurrection of Christ. ‘Why did they profess this, if they did not believe it?’ But this is far from satisfactory: for the peculiar circumstances of some persons, when they were baptized, seem evidently intended. ‘What this baptizing for the dead was, I confess I know not; but it seems by the following verses, to be something, wherein they exposed themselves to the danger of death.’ [says John] Locke.—

The following interpretation, however, suggested by Dr. Doddridge, who received it from Sir Richard Ellis, appears the true one. The apostle refers to the case of those, who presented themselves for baptism, immediately after the martyrdom of their brethren, or at their funerals; as if fresh soldiers should enlist and press forward to the assault, to supply the places of those who had fallen in battle. Thus they professed their faith in Christ, and ventured the rage of their enemies, at the very time when others had been put to death for the gospel. But what advantage could they propose to themselves from such a conduct, if there were no resurrection? Or what wisdom could there be in so doing? For in this case, Christianity itself would lose the great evidence of its truth; even the

immortality of the soul might be called in question; believers were yet “in their sins;” and they who died as martyrs had lost their souls, as well as their lives. This might show the Corinthian speculators how greatly their notions tended to discourage men from professing the gospel in times of persecution, and to make them afraid and ashamed to own the cause of Christ. If this were the case, why did Christians in general, or the apostles and evangelists in particular, live in continual and imminent danger of suffering and death, by their open profession of the gospel, and their zeal in promoting it? They could have no sufficient encouragement for so doing, if the dead should never arise. (Thomas Scott, *The Holy Bible . . . with Explanatory Notes, Practical Observations, and Copious Marginal References*, Vol. , 1832, pp. 601-2)

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**David Reed** - 1 Corinthians 15:29 Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?

Much if not most of the activity in Mormon temples involves ceremonies for the benefit of the dead. Using information gleaned from elaborate and detailed genealogical research, vicarious baptisms and even marriages are performed with the idea that the dead people whose names are invoked actually benefit from these ceremonies just as much as if they were live participants. For biblical support Mormons turn to the verse quoted above.

First Corinthians 15:29 has been a mystery for apologists, with literally hundreds of different interpretations proposed. The reason for such ambiguity is obvious: the verse deals with a subject mentioned nowhere else in the Bible, yet does so without any introduction or explanation, as if it is expected that the reader will already know what is meant. And the members of the Corinthian congregation no doubt understood the reference. After all, even though it is titled “First Corinthians” in the Bible, this was not Paul’s first letter to them (1 Cor. 5:9). He had spent time in Corinth and was familiar with both the church and the city. But we, never having lived in first-century Corinth or visited the church there, are left at a disadvantage.

Cults love to take verses like this and run with them, sometimes developing an extensive doctrinal framework on a single obscure passage. And even sincere Christians sometimes allow imagination to take over where knowledge stops. But sound interpretation must be based on what is known about the verse, its immediate context, and the wider context of Paul’s letters and the rest of the Bible. On this basis commentators have come up with some plausible explanations. One writer thought that it could refer to people who promised dying Christian relatives that they would get baptized and then followed through on the promise after they died by in effect getting baptized for the dead persons. Others have suggested that some in the Corinthian congregation added the wrong practice of proxy baptism for the dead to their sectarian divisions (1 Cor. 1:10), their carnality (3:1), their immorality (5:1), their heresies (11:19), their abuse of the Lord’s supper (11:21), and their misuse of spiritual gifts (ch. 12–14).

However, we think an explanation more in keeping with the rest of Paul’s writings can be arrived at as follows. Notice that in 1 Corinthians chapter 15 the apostle Paul is teaching the Corinthian church about the resurrection of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, and the resurrection of the body. From verse 1 and throughout the whole chapter Paul addresses “brethren” in the Lord and speaks in terms of you, we, and us, with one exception. Only in verse 29 are they mentioned: “Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?” From this it would be reasonable to conclude that Paul talks in verse 29 about a group outside the Christian community. Baptism for the dead is not mentioned anywhere else in the Bible. If it were an ordinance of the church one would expect to see the teaching repeated and elaborated on.

Moreover, the time and effort Mormons devote to genealogy work in preparation for their practice of baptism for the dead in their temples seems to conflict with what Paul wrote in 1 Timothy 1:3, 4: namely, “Charge some that they teach no other doctrine, Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith.” It also violates the admonition of Titus 3:9 to “avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, . . . for they are unprofitable and vain.”

If a Mormon remains unconvinced after seeing the above evidence, you may wish to show him an internal contradiction in his own religion. The following passages in the Book of Mormon teach that only in this life can we obtain salvation: 2 Nephi 9:38; 26:11; Alma 5:28; and Mosiah 16:5, 11; 26:25–27. Even more plainly, Alma 34:31–35 teaches that “now is the time and the day of your salvation. . . . For behold, this life is the time for men to prepare to meet God. . . . For behold, if ye have procrastinated the day of your repentance even until death, behold, ye have become subjected to the spirit of the devil, and he doth seal you his . . . and this is the final state of the wicked.” We do not accept these statements in the Book of Mormon as authoritative, of course, but Mormons do. So they are left with the problem of reconciling their church’s ordinance of baptism for the dead with their own sacred scriptures that rule out the practice. (Mormons Answered Verse by Verse)

**1 Corinthians 15:30 Why are we also in danger every hour? ([NASB 1995 - Lockman](#))**

- 1Co 15:31 Ro 8:36-39 2Co 4:7-12 2 Cor 6:9 2 Cor 11:23-27 Ga 5:11



- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Acts 9:19-30+ and he took food and was strengthened. Now for several days he was with the disciples who were at Damascus, 20and immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is the Son of God." 21 All those hearing him continued to be amazed, and were saying, "Is this not he who in Jerusalem destroyed those who called on this name, and who had come here for the purpose of bringing them bound before the chief priests?" 22 But Saul kept increasing in strength and confounding the Jews who lived at Damascus by proving that this Jesus is the Christ. 23 When many days had elapsed, **the Jews plotted together to do away with him,** 24 but their plot became known to Saul. They were also watching the gates day and night **so that they might put him to death;** 25 but his disciples took him by night and let him down through an opening in the wall, lowering him in a large basket. 26 When he came to Jerusalem, he was trying to associate with the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple. 27 But Barnabas took hold of him and brought him to the apostles and described to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had talked to him, and how at Damascus he had spoken out boldly in the name of Jesus. 28 And he was with them, moving about freely in Jerusalem, speaking out boldly in the name of the Lord. 29 And he was talking and arguing with the Hellenistic Jews; but **they were attempting to put him to death.** 30 But when the brethren learned of it, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him away to Tarsus.

2 Corinthians 4:7-12 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; 8we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; 9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; 10 always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. 11 **For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake,** so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. 12 So death works in us, but life in you.

2 Corinthians 11:23-27 Are they servants of Christ?—I speak as if insane—I more so; in far more labors, in far more imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death. 24 Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes. 25 Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep. 26 I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren; 27 I have been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure.

Romans 8:18+ For I consider that the **sufferings** of this **present time** are not worthy to be compared with the **glory** that is to be revealed to us (IN THE FUTURE TIME).

### **WHY RISK ONE'S LIFE IF RESURRECTION NOT TRUE**

Why does Paul now begin this personal testimony mentioning dangers and dying daily? Paul's logic would be something like this -- why would he be willing to face continual danger if the resurrection were not true which of course would mean that the Gospel itself was not really good news but at best "no news."

**John MacArthur** has an excellent explanation noting that "it is an obvious truth, that unbelievers and hypocrites do not become martyrs. People do not die for something they hold lightly. They do not die for something about which they have doubt. They do not die for things they do not believe are worthy of life and death. People give their lives only for causes to which they are wholeheartedly committed. And one of those great realities is the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, Who said, "Because I live, ye, too, shall live also." And millions of Christians have given their lives in living and given their lives in dying with the hope of that resurrection truth." ([MNTC- 1 Corinthians](#))

**Why** (present tense - continually) **are we also in danger every hour - Every hour** might be a bit of hyperbole, but it did reflect the truth that Paul's life was always in danger! Paul's proclamation of the Gospel was a precarious practice. From the moment he was converted his opponents sought to silence him (see [passages above](#)). Now in his argument substantiating the truth of the resurrection, he uses his willingness to suffer danger for the Gospel as indirect evidence that the resurrection is true and it is worth dying for. And he was aware that his "near death experiences" were common knowledge among the saints at Corinth for from the very beginning in Acts 18 we read that "he settled there (IN CORINTH) a year and six months, teaching the word of God among

them. But while Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, **the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul** and brought him before the judgment seat." (Acts 18:11-12+). Paul's logic would be something like this -- why would he be willing to face continual danger if the resurrection were not true which of course would mean that the Gospel itself was not really good news but at best "no news." Paul was not living for his life but the next life (what a pattern he gives for all believers!) He had earlier pointed out "If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied." (1 Cor 15:19) But he knew his hope in Christ would be fulfilled fully in the future (and that should motivate us also beloved).

**THOUGHT** - The way Paul lived his life all-out for the gospel was evidence of the truth of the resurrection.. Most of us are so concerned about living comfortable lives here on earth that our lives give no evidence of the resurrection. Paul lived such a committed Christian life, people could look at him and say, "There is no way he would live like that unless there was a reward waiting for him in heaven." ([Dave Guzik](#))

**William MacDonald** - Secret plots were hatched against him in an effort to take his life. He could have avoided all this by abandoning his profession of Christ. In fact, it would have been wise for him to abandon it if there was no such thing as resurrection from the dead. (Believers Bible Commentary)

**John MacArthur** - The only thing that makes Christians willing to work hard, willing to suffer, willing to be abused and ridiculed, willing to endure in the work of Christ is that Christ's own supreme finished work, the redemption of sinners, will last past this present life (cf. Ro 8:18). What would be the purpose of suffering for Christ if we would never see Him face to face? What would be the purpose of winning others to Christ if they would never see Him face to face? Where would be the good news in such a gospel? Where would be the incentive for preaching or believing such a gospel? Why make this life miserable if this life is all there is? Why be in danger every hour, if we have no security to look forward to? Why die daily, that is, risk your life in self-denying ministry, if death ends it all? I protest, Paul says vehemently, "You who deny the resurrection make a shambles of Christian service. Nothing makes sense if there is no resurrection." If Christ's resurrection on Easter morning was the only resurrection, as some of the Corinthians believed, then His being raised was no victory for us. He would not have conquered death but only made death a greater mockery for those who put their trust in Him. (MacArthur New Testament Commentary – 1 Corinthians)

**Are in danger** ([2793](#)) **kinduneuo** from **kindunos** = danger from **kineo** = to move, put in motion) means to be in peril, to face danger or to run a risk ([Lk 8:23](#)), to run the risk a risk of something, to be in jeopardy ([Acts 19:27](#)). Their lives were at risk! Presumably the same thing is happening to the other boats that are accompanying the boat with the disciples and Jesus. 4v - Lk. 8:23; Acts 19:27; Acts 19:40; 1 Co. 15:30

**1 Corinthians 15:31 I affirm, brethren, by the boasting in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.** ([NASB 1995 - Lockman](#))

MIT I die, as it were, on a daily basis; I make that affirmation of experience on the basis of your being my object of pride, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- **I affirm** Ge 43:3 1Sa 8:9 Jer 11:7 Zec 3:6 Php 3:3
- your "Some read, our." 2Co 1:12, 2:14, 1Th 2:19 1 Th 3:9
- **die** 1Co 4:9-13 Ac 20:23 Ro 8:36 2Co 4:10-11 2 Cor 11:23
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Acts 20:23-24+ except that the Holy Spirit solemnly testifies to me in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions await me. "But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, so that I may finish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God.

Romans 8:36 Just as it is written, "FOR YOUR SAKE **WE ARE BEING PUT TO DEATH ALL DAY LONG; WE WERE CONSIDERED AS SHEEP TO BE SLAUGHTERED.**"

2 Corinthians 1:8 For we do not want you to be unaware, brethren, of our affliction which came to us in Asia, that we were burdened excessively, beyond our strength, so that **we despaired even of life;**

2 Corinthians 4:10-11 always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. 11 For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

**I affirm, brethren, by the boasting in you which I have in Christ(Christos) Jesus our Lord, I die daily** - The NAS is not the best translation, for the phrase "**I die daily**" is the first in the Greek text, not the last, as the NAS suggests. I think the **NET** reading is much more accurate = "Every day I am in danger of death! This is as sure as my boasting in you, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord." (1Co 15:31NET) In 1 Cor 15:20 Paul said he was in danger every hour and now say he faces danger every day. If the resurrection were not true, he would be foolish to risk death for a "dead gospel" that proclaims a "dead Savior!"

The statement about **boasting** is not easy to tie in with "**I die daily**" - The idea is Paul is in danger every day. **Robertson and Plummer** explain it this way writing that "Every day he goes about with his life in his hands. What assurance is he to give them for the truth of this strong statement? The estimation in which (as they know) he holds them. 'As surely as I am proud of you,' or, 'I affirm it by the glorying in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord.' It is, however, not in any earthly sphere that he has this feeling, but **in Christ Jesus our Lord**. The full titles show how great the security is, and the  $\chi\omega$  perhaps implies that he regards his exultation over them as a valuable possession. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

The **New RSV** translates it in a way that agrees with the explanation of Robertson and Plummer - "I die every day! That is as certain, brothers and sisters, as my boasting of you-- a boast that I make in Christ Jesus our Lord." The **NAB** is similar "Every day I face death; I swear it by the pride in you (brothers) that I have in Christ Jesus our Lord." The **Easy to Read Version** says "I face death every day. That is true, brothers and sisters, just as it is true that I am proud of what you are because of Christ Jesus our Lord."

At first reading, one might think Paul is speaking of **daily** "dying to self" as Jesus had commanded of His followers (e.g., "take up his cross **daily**" - Lk 9:23+, cf Mark 8:34-35+) and there may be an element of truth in that interpretation because to be willing to face death daily one has to have an element of death to self. However, if we let the context guide the interpretation ("context is king" for accurate interpretation), Paul has just stated he was hourly in dangerous situations and his point would be that on any given day the danger could actually bring death. But knowing Christ was resurrected and he would be resurrected, he had no reason to fear danger and death.

**Hunter & McShane** add that "The expression "I die daily" is physical, not moral. Every day of his life he faced the prospect of death; each day as it came could be his last on earth. Such was his constant exposure to danger, and his daily committal to the service of Christ. "I count not my life dear unto myself—was his declaration" (Acts 20:24). We marvel at such courage and sacrificial devotion: "I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 21:13)..([What the Bible teaches – 1 and 2 Corinthians](#))

**Guzik** - "It is important to understand that when Paul says, "**I die daily**," he does not speak of his spiritual identification with the death of Jesus. He does not speak of the spiritual putting to death of the flesh. He writes of the constant imminent danger to his physical life. It is important and useful for Christians to daily reckon themselves dead to sin with Jesus Christ (as in Romans 6:11, Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord). But to use this statement I die daily to support that truth is wrong, because in context Paul is writing about the danger to his physical life." ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Godet** - "Not a day, nor an hour of the day, when they might not expect to be seized and led out to execution"

**Barton** - Why should the apostles bother to put themselves in danger every hour, dying every day for the sake of the gospel message. To suffer and face danger for the sake of a message that only has "benefits" for this life would be foolish indeed. "I die every day" refers to Paul's daily exposure to danger. Why would any sane person do this for the sake of a gospel that only ends in death, just like anything else? This constant danger is as certain ... as [Paul's] **boasting** about the Corinthians. Despite all that Paul had to correct and rebuke in them, he genuinely loved the Corinthian believers and boasted of their faith. He could make that boast in Christ Jesus our Lord, knowing that Christ had saved them and that Paul had been their spiritual father (1 Cor 4:15+). ([Life Application Commentary](#)) (On "**the boasting in you**" see also G G Findlay [Commentary](#))

**Gordon Fee** explains his **boasting** - Paul's point could have been made by his simply adding v. 32b at this point. Instead, for their sake he elaborates on the continual dangers mentioned in the opening sentence: "Daily I die." Taken as an elaboration of v. 30, this means something like "On a daily basis I face the reality of death."...**What follows comes as something of a surprise. It is a kind of oath**, the first word serving as the affirming particle (= "I swear by"), and the next words serving as that by which one swears. Literally it reads "I swear by your boasting," which he quickly qualifies as "(boasting) which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord." The NIV's "I glory over you" translates the possessive adjective "your" plus the noun for the act of "boasting." Although grammatically this could refer to their boasting in him, that fits neither the immediate context (especially the following qualifying phrase) nor the context of the letter as a whole. Rather, the possessive is here objective and refers to Paul's "boast" in the Corinthians as believers,<sup>46</sup> a "boast" that probably does not so much refer to his telling others about the Corinthians as to their very existence as the result of his apostolic labors (cf. 1 Cor 9:2, 15–16). What a telling oath this is. To make sure that they understand the truth of his constant facing of death, he swears by that which is dearest to him, their own existence in Christ, which also came about by labors that had exposed

him to such dangers. That seems also to be the point of the qualifying addition, "which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord." The boast is his, but it is not self-serving nor self-exalting. It rests completely on what Christ had done among them through his labors (cf. 1 Cor 15:9–10). Thus they are his boast; but for Paul that ultimately means boasting in Christ. ([NICNT - 1 Cor](#)) (Bold added)

**I DIE DAILY** - In some respects prayer resembles death. When man dies his soul returns to God, and when he prays he does the same thing; and it is this habitual return of the soul to its maker in acts of devotion that makes the final return in death so easy. The Christian thus dies on a small scale every day; and this enables him to die aright when the appointed time comes.

**1 Corinthians 15:32 If from human motives I fought with wild beasts at Ephesus, what does it profit me? If the dead are not raised, LET US EAT AND DRINK, FOR TOMORROW WE DIE.** ([NASB 1995 - Lockman](#))

- after or, to speak after, Ro 6:19 Ga 3:15
- **beasts** 2Pe 2:12 Jude 1:10
- **Ephesus** Ac 19:1,23-41 2Co 1:8-10
- **what** Job 35:3 Ps 73:13 Mal 3:14,15 Lu 9:25
- **let** Ec 2:24 11:9 Isa 22:13 Isa 56:12 Lu 12:19
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Luke 9:25+ "For what is a man **profited** if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself?"

Ecclesiastes 2:24 There is nothing better for a man than to eat and drink and tell himself that his labor is good. This also I have seen that it is from the hand of God.

Luke 12:19+ "And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry."

### IF THERE IS NO RESURRECTION LET'S PARTY!

If (first class conditional - assumed true) **from human motives I fought with wild beasts at Ephesus what does it profit** (benefit, advantage to) **me?** -NLT - And what value was there in fighting wild beasts-- those people of Ephesus-- if there will be no resurrection from the dead? A (1Co 15:32NLT) This is somewhat difficult to interpret. Was Paul literally placed in a coliseum to fight with wild beasts? Or was he speaking in a figurative sense, alluding to the unbelieving Ephesians who sought to shut down his testimony against the great Artemis which brought lucrative business to the city (see Acts 19:23-34+)? So whether they were literal beasts or "beast-like" adversaries, clearly his point is that these were dangerous circumstances. Paul asks this question to further his argument for the resurrection, and here answers his own question.

**Easy to Read Version** - I fought wild animals in Ephesus. If I did that only for human reasons, then I have gained nothing. If we are not raised from death, "Let us eat and drink, because tomorrow we die."

**John MacArthur** thinks Paul was literally exposed to wild beasts but that seems unlikely as Paul could not be thrown in the ring with beasts for civil punishment because he was a Roman citizen. Also had this been literally true, why is it not mentioned in his lists of adverse experiences? Finally, Paul uses a similar "bestial metaphor" in 2 Timothy 4:17+ "But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that through me the proclamation might be fully accomplished, and that all the Gentiles might hear; and **I was rescued out of the lion's mouth.**"

**Hunter & McShane** "He refers to his enemies as '**beasts**'. This indicates their fierceness, that they would have destroyed him; that they were cruel, heartless, without conscience. Men who were inspired satanically are seen to be savage and callous. The point being made is clear: why suffer such terrible afflictions if there is no future? Why not, says Paul, quoting verbatim from Isa 22:13, "... eat and drink, for tomorrow we die"? See also Isa 56:12; Eccl 2:24; Luke 12:19. If there is no life to come, then the present life, as to discipline and morality loses all value and quality. Let us live and indulge ourselves to the full, if the dead rise not. One can see the logic of this, but what a hopeless existence! Let us thank God that it is not so. Life can be lived to the full for Christ now, and "'tis better on before". ([What the Bible teaches – 1 and 2 Corinthians](#))

**Pulpit Commentary** on **wild beasts** - Not literally, for in that case he would have mentioned it in 2 Corinthians 11. as one of his deadliest perils, and it must have been recorded by St. Luke in his full account of St. Paul's life at Ephesus. A Roman citizen was

legally exempt from this mode of punishment. The word points to some special peril incurred in resisting the hostility of the worshippers of Artemis (Acts 20:19+),

If (first class conditional - assumed true for sake of argument) **the dead are not raised** ([egeiro](#)), **LET US EAT AND DRINK, FOR TOMORROW WE DIE** - His point is why risk his life if there is no resurrection, no "good news." In that case "Let's party!" Paul is quoting from Isaiah 22:13 which a statement describing Israel in a time when she was in rebellion, facing doom and had no desire to repent so "Instead, (LET'S PARTY!) there is gaiety and gladness, Killing of cattle and slaughtering of sheep, Eating of meat and drinking of wine: "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we may die." (Isaiah 22:13) Paul is saying that if there is no resurrection than their destiny was doom (like Israel in Isaiah 22), so one might as well have a good time before we die. Since we only go around once, let's grab for all the gusto we can get (to paraphrase a popular beer commercial from the past). They needed to add Daniel 12:2+ to the beer commercial!

"Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the **others to disgrace and everlasting contempt** (SO MUCH FOR GRABBING FOR ALL THE GUSTO IN THIS SHORT TIME ON EARTH!!!).

**THOUGHT** - Something I often tell believers who are going through hard times when their unsaved friends seem unscathed -- This is as bad as it gets for us and as good as it gets for them!

Note that some say this is an allusion also to Isaiah 56:12. This reminds one of the sad words of Solomon "Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher, "Vanity of vanities! All is vanity." What advantage does man have in all his work Which he does under the sun? " (Ecclesiastes 1:2-3)

**ILLUSTRATION** - The Greek historian Herodotus tells of an interesting custom of the Egyptians. "In social meetings among the rich, when the banquet was ended, a servant would often carry around among the guests a coffin, in which was a wooden image of a corpse carved and painted to resemble a dead person as nearly as possible. The servant would show it to each of the guests and would say, 'Gaze here and drink and be merry, for when you die such you shall be.' " ([MNTC- 1 Corinthians](#))

[Who Would Die for a Lie?](#) - ONE AREA often overlooked in challenges to Christianity is the transformation of Jesus' apostles. Their changed lives provide solid testimony for the validity of his claims. Since the Christian faith is historical, to investigate it we must rely heavily upon testimony, both written and oral. There are many definitions of "history," but the one I prefer is "a knowledge of the past based upon testimony." If someone says, "I don't believe that's a good definition," I ask, "Do you believe that Napoleon lived?" They almost always reply, "Yes." "Have you seen him?" I ask, and they confess they haven't. "How do you know, then?" Well, they are relying on testimony. This definition of history has one inherent problem. The testimony must be reliable or the hearer will be misinformed. Christianity involves knowledge of the past based upon testimony, so now we must ask, "Were the original oral testimonies about Jesus trustworthy? Can they be trusted to have conveyed correctly what Jesus said and did?" I believe they can be. I can trust the apostles' testimonies because, of those men, eleven died martyrs' deaths on the basis of two things: the resurrection of Christ, and their belief in him as the Son of God. They were tortured and flogged, and they finally faced death by some of the crudest methods then known: The response that is usually chorused back is this: "Why, a lot of people have died for a lie; so what does it prove?" Yes, a lot of people have died for a lie, but they thought it was the truth. Now if the resurrection didn't take place (i.e., was false), the disciples knew it. I find no way to demonstrate that they could have been deceived. Therefore these eleven men not only died for a lie—here is the catch—but they knew it was a lie. It would be hard to find eleven people in history who died for a lie, knowing it was a lie. We need to be cognizant of several factors in order to appreciate what they did. First, when the apostles wrote or spoke, they did so as eyewitnesses of the events they described.

**1 Corinthians 15:33 Do not be deceived: "Bad company corrupts good morals." ([NASB 1995 - Lockman](#))**

- **Be** 1Co 6:9 Mt 24:4,11,24 Ga 6:7 Eph 5:6 2Th 2:10 Rev 12:9 13:8-14
- evil 1Co 5:6 Pr 9:6 13:20 2Ti 2:16-18 Heb 12:15 2Pe 2:2,18-20
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

1 Corinthians 6:9+ Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? **Do not be deceived** ([planao](#) in [present imperative with a negative](#)); neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals,

Galatians 6:7+ **Do not be deceived** ([planao](#) in [present imperative with a negative](#)), God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.

Ephesians 5:6+ **Let no one deceive** ([present imperative with a negative](#)) you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

## **STOP LISTENING TO BAD THEOLOGY FOR IT LEADS TO BAD BEHAVIOR**

**Do not be** (continually) **deceived**: - Paul was concerned that those who denied the resurrection would by their "live for today attitude" would corrupt the genuine believers. And so Paul gives a stern command, a [present imperative with a negative](#) (see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)). It could mean either do not start being deceived but more likely means **stop being deceived** or led astray for the Corinthians were being led astray. Remember the context is the doctrine of the resurrection and the belief of some in Corinth (1 Cor 15:12+) that there is no resurrection of the dead. Therefore Paul implies with this command that the Corinthians were being led astray into this false belief.

**Lenski** - "Do not go on being deceived! Deception runs its course; do not be persuaded to enter on or to continue in this course." As the passive shows, deception is communicated by deceivers. ([Commentary](#))

**Be deceived** (led astray, misled)(4105)([planao](#) from **plane** which describes "a wandering" and gives us our English word "planet") means literally made to wander and so to go (active sense) or be led astray (in present passage in the passive voice, like sheep in Mt 18:12-13). See [various entities that can lead astray](#). The [passive voice](#) which indicates an outside force or influence. **Literal wandering** is described in Hebrews 11:38+. **Spiritual wandering** is described in (1 Peter 2:25+) In spiritual terms, **planao** means to be made to err from the right way, the highway of truth and holiness. Straying in the spiritual sense occurs when one **does not adhere to the truth** (James 5:19+) and/or **forsakes the right way** (see 2 Peter 2:15+) **Matthew Henry** writes that "Man in this his degenerate state is of **astraying nature**, thence compared to a lost sheep; this must be sought and brought back, and guided in the right way, Ps 119:176. ([See Spurgeon's Note](#)) He is weak, and ready to be imposed upon by the wiles and subtleties of Satan, and of men lying in wait to seduce and mislead.

**Bad** ([kakos](#)) **company** ([homilia](#)) (present tense - continually) **corrupts** ([phtheiro](#)) **good** ([chrestos](#)) **morals** - "Bad company spoils noble character." He reminded them of what was probably a well-known proverb from the Greek poet Menander: As noted above the passive voice of **deceived** indicates some of the Corinthians were being led astray from the truth of the resurrection and/or into "bad" behavior. In context the **bad company** would seem to be teachers or other wicked people who had the belief that there was no resurrection. In Corinth the **bad company** could have included the pagan philosophers who did not believe in the resurrection. So what is the association with **good morals**? The answer is simple - what one believes will affect how one behaves. If one does not believe in a resurrection, then one is far more likely to "eat, drink and be merry," which certainly has the tendency to corrupt **good morals**. Frankly, the morals of many of the Corinthians were already "borderline" (to be euphemistic), so it would not take that much to further corrupt them.

**THOUGHT** - The corollary is beware of **bad company** because you are not likely to bring them up to your level of more godly morality, but they will almost certainly bring you down to their level! Of course, we should witness to them, but not commune with them. There is a big difference. [Friendship evangelism \(see caveats\)](#) is possible without participating in their evil deeds or evil thinking. (Compare 1 Cor 5:10+)

**Lenski** - While **homilia** means "communications" and "conversations," the term is here used to designate "associations" or "company" with a definite influence. If these associations are [kakos](#), "good for nothing" and thus "bad," they are bound to corrupt and to ruin manners that are [χρήσθα](#) ([chrestos](#)), "serviceable" and thus "good." The adjectives are contrasts; the one means worthless, the other ([chrestos](#)) serviceable and thus full of worth. Paul intends to say in the present connection that association with deceivers who are full of skeptical ideas is bound to react hurtfully on the good ways of life (ethos) of Christians. Instead of letting the divine truth mold their manner of living they let the false and insidious ideas of their associates mislead them. Even one bad apple spreads rot among many others. He who rejects the resurrection cannot live and act like one who truly believes this divine reality ([Commentary](#))

**MacArthur** sums it up - People who think wrongly invariably behave wrongly. Wrong behavior comes from wrong thinking, from wrong beliefs and wrong standards. It is impossible to associate regularly with wicked people without being contaminated both by their ideas and by their habits. The context implies that the bad company was teaching the heretical theology that there is no resurrection of the dead, and that bad theology had corrupted good morals. Just as hoping in the resurrection is an incentive to obedience and holiness, so disbelief of it is an incentive to disobedience and immorality. As Paul has just pointed out, if there is no resurrection, we might as well eat and drink, for tomorrow we die. If death is the end, what great difference does it make what we do? ([MNTC- 1 Corinthians](#))

**Guzik** - It was bad enough that these associations had affected their thinking on an important matter like the resurrection, but this evil company could corrupt far more. This speaks to the vital need described in Romans 12:2: do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. By keeping evil company, the Corinthian Christians were being conformed to this world, and they needed to be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Christians must let the Word of God shape their thinking, not the evil company of this world. Through much of this book, Paul deals with the moral problems of the Corinthians: envy, divisions, pride, immorality, greed, irreverence, and selfishness. How much of this came in because of they kept evil company? Their problem with the resurrection also indicated the source of many of their moral problems. Paul quotes from an ancient, secular comedy play, *Thais*, written by [Menander](#). Though he was a pagan, Menander told the truth at this point, and Paul (more properly, the Holy Spirit) had no problem quoting a pagan who did tell the truth at a particular point. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Bad** (evil) (2556) **kakos** related word = **kakia**) is a word which basically denotes a lack of something so that it is "bad" or "not as it ought to be. **Kakos** means not meeting accepted standards of behavior, and thus worthless, bad or inferior. **Kakos** then speaks of lack of goodness, of a bad nature. (Note there is some repetition in this discussion, but hopefully this repetition will give you a good sense of the different nuances of this word). One of the more frightening uses of **kakos** (personal opinion) is in the phrase "inventors of evil" (Ro 1:30). **Vine** says **kakos** stands for "whatever is evil in character, base," in distinction (wherever the distinction is observable) from **poneros**, which indicates "what is evil in influence and effect, malignant." See Bible Dictionary discussion of evil - [Evil](#). **Kakos** in 1-2 Corinthians - 1 Co. 10:6; 1 Co. 13:5; 1 Co. 15:33; 2 Co. 13:7

**Company** (3657) (**homilia** from **homileo** = converse, talk) means companionship ("homily"), communication. Originally the word meant being together in company, companionship, but in the NT it means conversation. Eng. words **homiletic** = pertaining to the art of preaching; **homily** = a discourse; **homilist** = one who writes or delivers homilies. Only use in NT is 1 Cor 15:33. Lxx - Ex 21:10, Pr 7:21.

**Gilbrant** - This substantive, found in Greek literature from Thucydides (Fifth Century B.C.) onward, has two major usages in Greek literature. Its primary use is to denote communion with others. This can refer to a gathering of individuals or of a couple; in this latter sense it can denote sexual intercourse (see Exodus 21:10 in the Septuagint). It is also used to denote instruction or a lecture (cf. the English homiletics) or even practice. Its second major usage is to denote "association" or "company," or in a collective sense, "fellow-sojourners" or "shipmates." This rare term occurs in the New Testament only in 1 Corinthians 15:33 where Paul, quoting from Meander (*Thais* 218; see Orr and Walther, *Anchor Bible*, 32:336), reminded the readers they would be corrupted if they persisted in having evil persons as their company (companions). ([Complete Biblical Library - Incredible Resource](#))

**Corrupts** (5351) **phtheiro** from **phthío** or **phthino** = waste, decay, wither, pine away) means to cause harm to in a physical manner or in outward circumstances. To shrivel, to wither, to spoil. It means to ruin or destroy something with the implication of causing something to be corrupt and cease to exist. To destroy by corrupting. To pine or waste away. To corrupt in the sense of degeneration. 8v in NT - 1 Co. 3:17; 1 Co. 15:33; 2 Co. 7:2; 2 Co. 11:3; Eph. 4:22; 2 Pet. 2:12; Jude 1:10; Rev. 19:2

**Morals** (2239) (**ethos** from **ethos** = a habit, custom) is a noun which conveys the idea of a customary abode, haunt or habit such as the haunts of animals or men. Paul used it in 1 Corinthians 15:33 of the moral character or ethical conduct of a person. **BDAG** = a pattern of behavior or practice that is habitual or characteristic of a group or an individual. the habit of purity 1 Cl 21:7. Charondas the lawgiver [V BC] champions the principle that good men would easily have their characters ruined by association with evil men....it is said of a tyrant: 'he corrupted people's morals through base speech' **Liddell-Scott** - an accustomed place: in pl. the haunts or abodes of animals, Hom., Hdt. II. custom, usage, Hes., Hdt. 2. of man, his disposition, character, Lat. ingenium, mores, Hes., Att.; w= miaro.n h=qoj, addressed to a person, Soph. 3. in pl., generally, of manners, like Lat. mores, Hes., Hdt., Thuc. Only in apocrypha - 4 Macc 1:29; 2:7.21; 5:24; 13,27 disposition, character Sirach 20:26 manners, customs Sir prol.,35; bearings 4 Mc 5,24; to.as usual (as adv) 4 Macc 2:7 (4 Ma. 1:29; 4 Ma. 2:7; 4 Ma. 2:21; 4 Ma. 5:24; 4 Ma. 13:27; Sip. 1:35; Sir. 20:26)

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Scripture teaches us that various things or classes of people can deceive a person including the following...

- **Signs, sorcery, pretenders** coming in Jesus' name (Mt 24:4, 5+, Mark 13:5, 6+, Luke 21:8+),
- **False teachers** (1Co 15:33+, 1 Jn 2:26+, 1 Jn 3:7+),
- **False Christs and false prophets** (Mt 24:11+, Mt 24:24+, see note on Jezebel the false prophetess Re 2:20+),
- **Not understanding the Scriptures or the power of God** (Mt 22:29, Mark 12:24+),

- **One's own self** (evil flesh) ("self deception" 1Co 6:9+, Gal 6:7+, Titus 3:3±, 1 John 1:8+)
- **One's heart** (synonymous with evil flesh - Hebrews 3:10+)
- **Evil men and imposters** (2Ti 3:13-+),
- **The devil** (Rev 12:9±, Rev 20:3±; Re 20:8±;Re 20:10±)
- **Babylon** (Revelation 18:23±)
- **The Antichrist's false prophet** (Rev 13:14±, Re 19:20±)

#### Related Resources:

- [What does the Bible say about self-deception? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Why does God allow deception? | GotQuestions.org](#)

#### Question: [How does bad company corrupt good character \(1 Corinthians 15:33\)?](#)

- [Watch video from gotquestions.org](#)

**Answer:** In his first letter to the Corinthians, the apostle Paul wrote of the false teachers who had come into the church at Corinth teaching that the resurrection of Jesus Christ wasn't true. These people considered only their physical existence and denied life after death or the resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:32). As a result, their moral outlook on life influenced the rest of the Corinthian believers.

Paul is telling us that in associating with false teachers, we will be adversely influenced by them. The truth is that false teachings do not lead to holiness. As such, it is critical that we are careful whom we form relationships with, especially those outside the church because unbelievers can cause even the strongest Christians to waver in their faith and adversely affect their walk with Christ and their witness to the world. This is why Paul tells us, "Do not be misled."

Actually, this was the second time Paul warned the Corinthians not to be deceived (1 Corinthians 6:9). He cautioned them not to take up the lifestyles of corrupt people—those who will not inherit the kingdom of God. Paul knew how easy it is for people to be influenced by such adverse teachings. If not checked at the very beginning, they could begin to adopt such perverted ideas and behaviors as normal. For this reason, Paul quotes a proverb by the Greek poet Menander: "Bad company corrupts good character" (1 Corinthians 15:33). No doubt this proverb was well known among Greeks of this time.

The point Paul makes here is pertinent to all people in all ages. When we associate with or take delight in the company of people with worldly morals, we run the risk of mimicking their behaviors, their language, and their habits. Before long we are no longer of Christ, but of the world with its denial of absolute authority, its rejection of the Bible as the Word of God, and its ideology of relative morality. This is especially pertinent to young people who are generally easily influenced by their peers. Young people are desperate for the approval of others. So motivated are they by the need for acceptance that godly wisdom in decision-making can go out the window in the face of peer pressure. Therefore, it is crucial for parents of young teens especially to be on guard against the influence of bad company.

So, what are we to do? Paul provides us the answer at the very end of chapter 15: "Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain" (1 Corinthians 15:58). As parents, we stand firm against ungodly influences that may corrupt our children. As Christians, we stand firm against those who would corrupt our walk with Christ. As church members, we stand firm against false teaching and watered-down gospel presentations that lead others astray. In all things, we are "self-controlled and alert" because our "enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour" (1 Peter 5:8). [GotQuestions.org](#)

**1 Corinthians 15:34** **Become sober-minded** as you ought, and stop sinning; for some have no knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame. ([NASB 1995 - Lockman](#))

- **Become sober-minded** Joe 1:5 Jon 1:6 Ro 13:11 Eph 5:14
- **stop sinning** Ps 4:4 119:11 Joh 5:14 8:11
- **some have no knowledge of God** 1Co 8:7 Ro 1:28 1Th 4:5
- **I speak this to your shame!** 1Co 6:5 Heb 5:11,12
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**AROUSE YOURSELF AND**



## STOP SINNING

**Become sober-minded as you ought** - "Sober up in the right way" (Lenski) ESV = "Wake up from your drunken stupor." NIV = "Come back to your senses as you ought." After the previous negative command, Paul now gives a positive command in the [aorist imperative](#) calling for immediate obedience to come out of their dazed, deceived (moral) stupor by thinking clearly and accurately about the resurrection from the dead.

**As you ought** means in essence the "right way," the way that is right in the sight of the Lord. Paul's point is that those who doubted the resurrection from the dead thought they were thinking rightly (and acting rightly) when in fact they were spiritually "drunk" and they even "assailed the believers as people who are being carried away by foolish and fanatical notions because they actually believe such an impossible doctrine as the resurrection." ([Lenski - commentary](#))

The effect of false teaching is to intoxicate and captivate the mind and senses of the hearer producing a sort of spiritual stupor so that the hearer is unaware of the danger they are in by following false belief that leads to "foul" behavior (the result of corrupting effect on morals).

Note that the KJV/NKJV has a word not in the modern translations and so reads "**Awake to righteousness.**"

**Robertson and Plummer** - Once for all shake off your drowsiness in a right spirit, and do not begin to sin,' i.e. do not let yourselves drift into evil courses by dallying with false opinions; or, 'Get rid of your stupor with a righteous resolve, and cease to go wrong' in bad company. The strong metaphor, κνήψατε, implies that they were already in a grievous case. He addresses them, says Chrysostom, as if they were drunk or mad. It is possible that these sceptics claimed to be sober thinkers, and condemned the belief in a resurrection as a wild enthusiasm. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Lenski** goes on to add that "It is the way of all rationalists and all skeptics to pose as clearheaded, sound, and sober thinkers and to charge true believers with blind acceptance of "dogmas" that are nothing but narcotics. Our present-day scientists are often arrogant in their superiority. They alone know the facts, they alone do straight and sober thinking, they alone are right, and woe to him who dares to challenge their claims! Against this pseudo-soberness and pseudo-saneness Paul launches his little adverb δίκαιως. Here, too, this derivative of δικαιο v retains its forensic meaning, for "rightly" means rightly in the judgment of God and not merely in my own judgment. The Pharisees claimed: "We see!" John 9:41, and proceeded with mighty assurance "to justify themselves," Luke 16:15; but the judgment of God declared them wickedly and wilfully blind and cast them out. So Paul commands the Corinthians to be sober in the true way that God approves. He is rightly sober who sees and believes the divine realities as God reveals them, and who does all his thinking so that every thought accords with these realities. And this man does not need to wait for the divine verdict that he is rightly sober; that verdict is recorded in a thousand places in Holy Writ. ([Commentary](#))

**Become sober-minded** (1594)(**eknephō** from **ek** = out + **nephō** = be sober) means to sober up from a drunken state (as in Lxx - Ge 9:24, 1 Sa 25:37, Joel 1:5). In this solitary NT use **eknephō** means to rouse oneself out of a state of stupor (sinful stupor in this context). Come to your senses is the idea. Sober up from your sinful stupor! Used 5x in Septuagint - Gen. 9:24; 1 Sam. 25:37; Joel 1:5; Hab. 2:7; Hab. 2:19

**Ought** (1346) **dikaiois** from the adjective **dikaiois** which means being in accordance with what God requires) means manifesting right conduct, waking morally upright outwardly or in a right way which is in accordance with what God requires. It's a more general description of observable "rightness" in all aspects of life. It is conduct that cannot be condemned. **Dikaiois** pertains to what is just or right in a judicial sense. In the present passage **dikaiois** pertains to the quality of one's ethical behavior which is with integrity, and conforms to rectitude. 5v in NT - Lk. 23:41; 1 Co. 15:34; 1 Thess. 2:10; Tit. 2:12; 1 Pet. 2:23

**And stop sinning** ("do not go on missing the mark!") - Paul deals first with their belief (become sober-minded) and now commands this to be shown forth in their behavior of cessation from sinning. **Stop sinning** is a [present imperative with a negative](#) (see [need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) which means stop an act or action which was in progress. What was their sin? In context it has to be failure to believe in the resurrection and presumably passing this false doctrine on to others, which would be sinning! But we know from the rest of Corinthians that their heterodoxy had led them to heteropraxy. In other words their failure to believe the resurrection in effect "energized" their manifold sinful behavior (quarrels, immorality, etc, etc).

**THOUGHT** - What we believe affects how we behave! If you are not regularly in the Word renewing your mind (cf Ro 12:2+), you are in risk for you are placing yourself in a vulnerable position in which you will begin to buy into the lies of the world (Satan's lies are subtle and seductive - just read Genesis 3+!). You need to heed Paul's warning to **become sober minded**, to believe rightly, so that you will behave rightly! Life is short. The resurrection is real. Eternity is long! Live like you believe these truths.

**Lenski** - There is, then, a kind of thinking and of reasoning that seems to be sanely sober and is yet wholly wrong because it goes

on missing the mark, namely the true mark set by God for all our thinking, the realities about God, his will, his work, etc. This is the worst kind of sinning, for it affects not only our conduct but corrupts the very heart, the source of all conduct. "Sober up rightly!" Paul calls to the Corinthians, and go on hitting instead of missing the mark. ([Commentary](#))

**MacArthur**- The Greek historian Thucydides reported that when a deadly plague came to Athens, "People committed every shameful crime and eagerly snatched at every lustful pleasure." They believed life was short and there was no resurrection, so they would have to pay no price for their vice. The Roman poet Horace wrote, "Tell them to bring wine and perfume and the too short-lived blossoms of the lovely rose while circumstance and age and the black threads of the three sisters fate still allow us to do so." Another Roman poet, Catullus, penned the lines: "Let's live my Lesbia and let's love, and let's value the tales of austere old men at a single half penny. Suns can set and then return again, but for us when once our brief light sets there is but one perpetual night through which we must sleep." Without the prospect of a resurrection, and of the accountability it brings, there is no incentive for doing anything but what we feel like doing here and now. If behavior has no reward or condemnation, it is uncontrollable. ([MNTC- 1 Corinthians](#))

**Sinning** (verb) ([264](#)) **hamartano** literally means to miss the mark (and so not share in the prize). Hamartano means to act contrary to the will and law of God. To commit a wrong. To be in error. emphasizes loss which always results from missing God's mark or target *naturat* , His **good and acceptable and perfect will** (Ro 12:2). **Hamartano** means to **err** (err is from Latin *errare* = to wander or to stray!) which means to wander from the right way, to deviate from the true course or purpose and so to violate an accepted standard of conduct. To err is to miss the right way. To **err** means to deviate from the path or line of duty. To stray by design or mistake. To **err** is to stray from God and/or His commandments.

**For** ([gar](#)) term of explanation. Paul explains why he is giving them such stern commands and it was because some were ignorant of God!

**Some** (present tense - continually) **have no knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame- Robertson and Plummer** = "It is to move you to shame that I am speaking to you in this manner." (cf 1 Cor 6:5+) NLT - "For to your shame I say that some of you don't know God at all." (1Co 15:34NLT) Paul is calling them out, stating plainly that some of those holding to the false belief of no resurrection of the dead had no knowledge of God for they were essentially denying His Gospel (which is no Gospel without the resurrection.).

**Vine** says "**agnōsia**, "no knowledge," is not agnoia (mere ignorance), but reprehensible ignorance, a failure to take in knowledge through observation and practical experience (the same is used in 1 Pet. 2:15). Denial of the truth of resurrection on the part of some in the assembly was giving evidence of that kind of ignorance. Of only some was this true. Yet the whole assembly was affected, for it was the entire company whom the apostle sought to move to shame. They were priding themselves in their wisdom and intelligence; yet by the spread of this error in their midst they displayed their culpable inability to recognize the character and power of God. (Collected Writings)

**Robertson and Plummer** - *γῠωσιᾱ* is not *γῠοιᾱ*, ignorantia, the absence of knowledge, but *ignoratio*, the failure or inability to take knowledge. These Corinthians had no power of appreciating God's existence or presence, His nature or will. It was indeed a bitter thing for Corinthians, who prided themselves on their intelligence, to be told that as regards the knowledge of God they were more purblind than the heathen. *Paulus ignorantiam Dei illis exprobat, omni prorsus honore eos spoliat* (Paul, an ignorance of God unto them, to denounce, in stripping them from every species of honor, - Calvin). Their inability to recognize the power and goodness of God was shown in their dogmatic assertion that He does not raise the dead. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Lenski** - he says that "some have ignorance" like a disease that is afflicting them spiritually. Thinking that by denying the resurrection they are displaying great *γῠσις* or "knowledge," they actually display *γῠωσιᾱ*, "ignorance," the opposite of knowledge. Their coin is counterfeit, Rev. 3:17, 18. They are to blame for this ignorance which they carry around with them and which they try to sell to others as knowledge. ([Commentary](#))

**No knowledge** ([56](#)) (**agnosia** from **a** = not + **gnosis** - knowledge) means literally "not knowing" and so to not have information about— want of knowledge, ignorance. To not be acquainted with something. It is ignorance, especially denoting a lack of knowledge of God and of spiritual discernment. As uses by Paul and Peter, agnosia is not just intellectually ignorant but willfully ignorant which has moral implication. Uses in the Bible - Job 35:16; 1 Co. 15:34; 1 Pet. 2:15

([Complete Biblical Library - Incredible Resource](#)) Essentially there are two basic definitions of **agnōsia** in classical Greek: (1) "ignorance" (the opposite of *gnōsis*, "knowledge") and (2) "unknown," i.e., "obscure" (Liddell-Scott). This especially pertains to ignorance about general matters; thus, it parallels "uneducated, untrained" (Bultmann, "agnoeō," Kittel, 1:116). The force of **agnōsia** closely follows **agnoia**, "ignorance." Bultmann notes its lack of technical force and its apparent absence in Stoic writings and Philo. However, both

terms become important in the later “dualistic Gnostic language of Hellenism” (ibid., 1:118). In Gnostic writings agnōsia comes to denote a “lack of knowledge” sufficient for salvation of the soul. Thus men are “entangled in agnōsia before they receive revelation” (ibid.). Agnōsia appears only in the later writings of the Septuagint; only one of these texts is canonical (Job 35:16). “Without knowledge” is the literal translation of the Hebrew bēlî-dha’ath. From the immediate context “knowledge” here probably concerns knowledge about God (Job 36:3,4). The Wisdom of Solomon expressly associated agnōsia with the “lack of knowledge” of God common to men who refuse to acknowledge God, despite the evidence (cf. Romans 1). The usage in 3 Maccabees is entirely without religious significance (5:27). Only two occurrences of agnōsia (cf. agnoia [51]) are attested in the New Testament; one in 1 Corinthians and one in 1 Peter. “Ignorant of God” is the meaning of 1 Corinthians 15:34. Paul viewed this as “out of one’s senses,” and he expressly tied it to “sinning.” To Peter agnōsia was related to a state outside of God (1 Peter 2:15). Thus those pagans— “foolish men” (aphrōn [871])—must silence their “ignorance” (agnōsia) in the face of the good works of the believers. Their willful ignorance was a direct consequence of their being “pagans”— outside of God (cf. 1 Peter 1:14,18; 4:2ff.).

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## Ants And Elephant Seals

Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God. — 1 Corinthians 15:34

Today's Scripture: Proverbs 6:6-11

**Elephant seals** spend most of their lives sleeping. Science News magazine reports, “Male elephant seals measure 16 feet from trunk-like nose to flipper, and they weigh about 3 tons. Occasionally, a seal will use a front flipper—incredibly tiny for such a massive creature—to scratch itself or flip sun-shielding sand on its body.” Otherwise these huge animals are basically motionless.

The article goes on to state that because they don’t eat while on land during the breeding season, they sleep most of the time. Besides scratching, dirt-flipping, or rolling over, these ponderous animals seldom move.

By contrast, the little ant seems tireless as it goes about its industrious work of storing up food for the colony. The writer of Proverbs commends the diligence of the ant, citing her active ways as a model for people who would live wisely.

There’s a spiritual lesson here. Christians who pattern their service after the ant get things done for the Lord. But others, like the elephant seal, scarcely move. They seem to be barely alive spiritually, as if they are conserving their energy for some huge effort later on. But the time to get busy for Christ is now, even though our talents may seem insignificant.

Imitate the ant, not the elephant seal. By: David C. Egner ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Lord Christ, we humbly ask  
Of Thee the power and will  
With fear and meekness every task  
Of duty to fulfill.  
—Montgomery

Many Christians do nothing, but no Christian has nothing to do.

**1 Corinthians 15:35** But someone will say, "How are the dead raised? And with what kind of body do they come?" [NASB 1995 - Lockman](#))

- **How** Job 11:12 22:13 Ps 73:11 Ec 11:5 Eze 37:3,11 Joh 3:4,9 9:10
- **with** 1Co 15:38-53 Mt 22:29,30 Php 3:20-21
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## Related Passages:

Philippians 3:20-21+ For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; 21 **Who will transform (*metaschematizo*) the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory**, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

**TWO QUESTIONS:**

## HOW AND WHAT KIND?

Do you recall the last words of the [Apostle's Creed](#)? -- "I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic (*the true Christian church of all times and all places*) church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, **the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting**. Amen. (Indeed, "Amen!")

[Ray Pritchard](#) comments "The doctrine of the resurrection of the dead runs against the whole tenor of contemporary thinking. It asks us to believe that bodies now resting in the grave will one day come back to life. If you ponder that thought, it is truly hard to believe."

In this last section 1 Cor 15:35-58 Paul deals with the nature of the resurrected body. As **Robertson and Plummer** says "we have three subdivisions; (a) The Answers of Nature and of Scripture, 1 Cor 15:35–49; (b) Victory over Death, 1 Cor 15:50–57; (c) Practical Result, 1 Cor 15:58."

**Arnold** - In 1 Corinthians 15:35-49 the Apostle Paul deals specifically with the resurrected body the Christian will receive at the Second Advent of Christ. A sovereign, miracle working God will have no problem resurrecting a decomposed body or a cremated body on the great day of resurrection for God's people. The resurrected body will be a **spiritual body** adapted to the spirit world but it will **not be ghost-like**. It will be a real body with the individual identity and personality of each person. It will be an imperishable body, one of great supernatural power with enlarged mental capacities. It will be a body like Christ's resurrected body, fully equipped to exist in the eternal state. Paul's whole point is that our present human body is not adapted for the heavenly home of Christians. No earthly, human body is prepared for heaven. ([The New, Resurrected Body](#))

**Utley** has a different suggested arrangement of the following section - Paul uses a series of illustrations that show the continuity, and yet difference, between the physical body and the spiritual body. (1) seed vs. mature plant, v. 37 (2) human vs. animal flesh, v. 39 (3) heavenly body vs. earthly bodies, v. 40 (4) night lights vs. Sun light, v. 41 ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Robertson and Plummer** go on to say "Plato in the *Phaedo*, and Cicero in the *Tusculan Disputations*, argue for a future life; but **resurrection** is beyond their view. Does St Paul confuse the **resurrection of the body** with the immortality of the soul? Only so far as those with whom he is arguing confused the two. According to current ideas, to deny the possibility of resurrection was coming very near to denying any real life beyond the grave. The body was commonly regarded as the security for the preservation of personality. If the body was never to be preserved, the survival of the soul would be precarious or worthless. Either the finite spirit would be absorbed in the Infinite Spirit, or its separate existence would be shadowy, insipid, and joyless. St Paul shapes his argument to meet both classes,—those who denied the resurrection of the body, but allowed the survival of the soul, and those who denied both. Christ, in refuting the Sadducees, treated the two doctrines as so closely connected that to admit immortality and deny resurrection was illogical. Christ argues from the Living God, as St Paul from the Risen Christ. The continued relation of the Living God to each one of the patriarchs implied the permanence of their personal life. The continued relation of believers to the Christ who has been raised in the body implies the permanence of their bodily life. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Utley** explains Paul's technique of asking using questions - This is Paul's use of a literary technique called [diatribe](#) (See "[Diatribes in Religious Speech](#)"). This question/answer format is also seen in the OT in Malachi and in the NT in Romans and 1 John. The subject of the literary work is carried forward by a dialog between the writer and a supposed objector. Here the argument is moved on to a slightly different theme. First, some of the factious groups denied the resurrection of Christ and thereby the resurrection of all believers. Now Paul addresses those who question the form of the resurrection body. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**But someone will say** - Paul moves further in his defense of the doctrine of the resurrection and imagines someone saying "Okay, let's assume the doctrine is true. What does the resurrected person look like?"

**Robertson** paraphrases it "Granted that historical testimony and natural fitness are in favour of believing that Christ rose again as an earnest that we shall be raised, is our bodily resurrection possible? Can we conceive such a thing? We cannot be expected to believe what is impossible and inconceivable."

**How are the dead raised ([egeiro](#))? And with what kind of body do they come?** - "But some one is sure to object, Is it possible for the dead to be raised? Why, with what kind of a body will they come back" (R & P) Part of this type of question might come from the fact that everyone knew when you put a body in the grave, it begins to decay, or as the Bible itself says "dust to dust." (Ge 3:19+). And what about bodies buried at sea? Or what about a person who was [cremated](#)? Or what about a person donating part of their body (say a kidney) to another person? How could these bodies be raised? What would they look like? "In verses 36–49 Paul answers the questions of verse 35 in four ways: (1) he gives an illustration from nature, (2) he tells what kind of body resurrection bodies will be, (3) he contrasts earthly and resurrection bodies, and (4) he reminds them of the prototype resurrection, in which they already believed." (MacArthur [MNTC- 1 Corinthians](#))

**Thomas Constable** has an interesting comment - This objection to the resurrection has to do with the reconstruction of the body out

of the same elements that it formerly possessed. Obviously it would be impossible to reassemble the same cells to reconstruct a person after he or she had been dead for some time. This is the primary problem that Paul solved in the rest of this pericope. For example, if someone died at sea and sailors buried him, a fish might eat his body. The atoms and molecules of his body would become part of the fish. If a fisherman caught and ate the fish, its body would become part of the fisherman's body. If the fisherman died and an undertaker buried him in the ground and someone eventually sowed wheat over his grave, the fisherman's atoms and molecules would go into the wheat. A third person would eat the wheat and so on. How could the first person's body ever come together again? ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Spurgeon** - "Truly it is never a pleasant sound, that rattle of the clay upon the coffin-lid, 'Earth to earth, dust to dust, ashes to ashes,' nor to the farmer, for its own sake, would it be a very pleasant thing to put his grain into the dull cold earth; yet I trow no farmer ever weeps when he sows his seed."...."Dear friends, if such be death—if it be but a sowing, let us have done with all faithless, hopeless, graceless sorrow ... 'Our family circle has been broken,' say you. Yes, but only broken that it may be re-formed. You have lost a dear friend: yes, but only lost that friend that you may find him again, and find more than you lost. They are not lost; they are sown.

**Utley on what kind of body**- One source of the conflict concerning a resurrected body comes from the negative view of the physical body in some schools of Greek philosophy. The Greeks often viewed the material as evil (gnosticism) and even worse, the physical body as the prison-house of the eternal divine spark or soul within all humans. This cultural/philosophical background came into direct conflict with Paul's Hebraic (Pharisaic) background of the affirmation of a physical, bodily afterlife." ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Robertson** - The Talmud shows that the Rabbis believed that the particles of the body which died would reunite at the resurrection and form the same body again.

**Chrysostom** asks, Why does not the Apostle appeal to the omnipotence of God? and replies, Because he is dealing with people who do not believe

**MacArthur** has an additional note - Part of the problem some Greeks had may have been traceable to a false view of resurrection taught by many rabbis of that time. By misinterpreting such passages as Job 19:26 ("Yet from my flesh I shall see God"), they concluded that resurrection bodies will be identical to earthly bodies in every way. The writer of the Jewish apocryphal book of Baruch wrote, for example, that "the earth shall then [at the resurrection] assuredly restore the dead; it shall make no change in form, but as it has received so shall it restore." To Gnostics, that view made resurrection seem even less desirable and possible. ([MNTC- 1 Corinthians](#))

**Hodge** - How it is possible for life to come out of death, and, What is to be the nature of the body after the resurrection. The latter difficulty was the main one, and therefore to that the most of what follows refers. The great objection in the minds of the Corinthians to the doctrine of the resurrection was evidently the same as that of the Sadducees. Both supposed our future bodies are to be like our present ones. Our Lord's answer to the Sadducees, therefore, is the same as that which Paul gives to the Corinthian objectors. The future body is not to be like the present. To reject a plainly-revealed and most important doctrine on such grounds as these is wicked as well as foolish, and therefore the apostle says in the next verse "You fool!" ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Jack Arnold** - Now I ask you how John Wycliffe will be raised from the dead? His body was in the grave for twelve years and was then exhumed and burned as a body of a heretic and his ashes scattered over a river which took them out to the North Sea. Will Wycliffe be raised? Yes! Surely all this is impossible with man but not with a sovereign, supernatural, miracle working God. The Sadducees asked Christ a skeptical question about the resurrection, and He answered, "You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God" (Matt. 22:29). Nothing is impossible with God. How are the dead raised? By God in supernatural power. ([The New Resurrected Body](#))

**Ray Stedman** - For twenty centuries now the skeptics of all ages have asked these same questions. Of course, they amplify them by imposing various obstacles they see. They say, for instance, "We can understand, perhaps, that a body that has been carefully embalmed and placed in a grave might possibly be brought back to life, but what about those that have been destroyed? What about all the people that have been cremated?" . . .These questions always arise when unbelief faces this question of the resurrection of the dead. "How can it be?" That is what some of these Corinthians were asking. The clear implication was, "It cannot be; it is impossible." The Greeks, of course, were teaching that it was a good thing, an advantage, to lose the body. The body was a prison-house, they taught, where we are limited and restricted. The Oriental religions, on the other hand, were teaching that many bodies were needed in a process of salvation, that you return to earth many times. Their question would be, "Which body is raised from the dead? Is it the 'cow' body you once had, or the 'gorilla' body you may have had, or the one you are walking around in now?" Reincarnation would, for them, pose an entirely different question concerning the resurrection of the body. ([The New Body - What is it Like?](#))

**Body** (4983) **soma** is literally the body of man or animals and could be living (Mt 5:29f; 6:25; Mk 14:22; Lk 11:34; Ro 4:19; 7:24; 8:10, 13; 12:1; 1 Cor 5:3; 6:20; 11:24, 27, 29; 15:44; 2 Cor 5:6, 8, 10; Gal 6:17; Col 2:11; Heb 13:3; Jas 3:3) or dead (corpse Mt 27:52, 58f; Lk 17:37; Jn 19:31, 38, 40; Acts 9:40.). The word **soma** was used by Homer (about ninth century B.C.) for a dead body. But beginning with Hesiod (eighth century B.C.) it came to be employed for living bodies, whether of animals or men. In the present context **soma** also speaks of plant and seed structure using **body**. In order to gain an answer to the question in 1 Cor 15:35 Paul speaks of bodies of plants (which are different in kind from the 'body' of the seed which is planted). Paul also uses **soma** for celestial bodies in 1 Cor 15:40 and finally for a natural human**body** and a resurrection **body** in 1 Cor 15:44. Paul uses **soma** 9x in this section so it is clearly a **key word** - 1 Co. 15:35; 1 Co. 15:37; 1 Co. 15:38; 1 Co. 15:40;

**ILLUSTRATION** - There were two lawyers, Mr. Ebbison and Mr. West, who on one occasion were talking about the Christian faith. Neither believed it for both were Deists. They did not deny the existence of God but the providence and activity of God in creation. They decided, as objective and intelligent lawyers, to discredit Christianity. They agreed that to do this they would have to disprove two things in the Bible, two historical facts. They would have to disprove the conversion of the Apostle Paul and the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Each of them chose one of these topics to disprove and went on his way, agreeing to meet the other a year later with his findings. They subjected the facts to the best of legal and scientific procedures. When they came together again, Mr. West asked Mr. Ebbison if in fact he had written his book. Ebbison said, "Yes, I have. I have taken the alleged fact of the conversion of Saul of Tarsus and scrutinized it as an objective lawyer and have concluded it is a historical event. And I have been converted myself to Christianity, for I have received the same Christ that Saul received." Mr. Ebbison then said to Mr. West, "Have you written your book?" He replied, "Yes, I have. I have taken the facts about the resurrection of Jesus Christ and have sifted through the evidence, and I have concluded that it was an historical event and I have come to know this resurrected Christ as my personal Lord and Savior."

1 Cor 15:35	1 Cor 15:36	1 Cor 15:45	1 Cor 15:50
<b>Two questions</b>	<b>Three Answers: The Resurrection Body is...</b>		
How raised? What body?	Illustrated in nature	Necessary from the Old Testament	Experienced at the coming of Christ

### Dirty Windows

If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. —1 Thessalonians 4:14

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:35-49

The Shepherd's Home in Wisconsin has a problem with dirty windows. Although many of its residents are severely disabled, they love Jesus and understand that He has promised to return someday and give them new bodies. "Every day," said the superintendent, "some of them go to the windows and press their noses against the glass, looking for Him."

The expectation of those precious people is genuine. Their irreversible mental and physical limitations fuel their longing for the day when they will be perfectly whole and free.

The Holy Spirit enables us to keep alive that same hope. And it is a sure hope because it rests on two events, one past and one future—the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (1 Cor. 15:20), and the reality that He will return to this earth someday (1 Th. 4:13-18). Paul united both truths in today's key verse (v.14).

When the going gets tough, we must resist the temptation to give up on life, or to find morbid pleasure in complaining. Instead, we must stay obedient to the Lord, renounce sin, and keep our eyes on the future (1 Cor. 15:33-34). Then we can rejoice in the certainty that in the world to come our painful trials will be no more.

Let's keep looking for Christ's return. By: Dennis J. DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

One day at death or Christ's return  
We'll shed this earthly life of care;  
And we who've known and loved the Lord

Will in His perfect likeness share.

—DJD

The greatest joy on earth is the clear prospect of heaven.

**1 Corinthians 15:36 You fool! That which you sow does not come to life unless it dies; [NASB 1995 - Lockman](#)**

- **fool** Lu 12:20 24:25 Ro 1:22 Eph 5:15
- **that** Joh 12:24
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

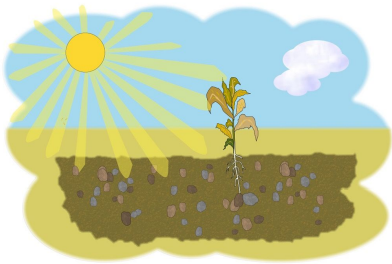
Luke 11:40+ "You **foolish** ones, did not He who made the outside make the inside also?"

Luke 12:20+ "But God said to him, 'You **fool!** This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?'

John 12:24 "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and **dies**, it remains alone; but **if it dies, it bears much fruit.**

Acts 26:8+ "Why is it considered incredible among you people if God does raise the dead? (Comment - especially since we have the evidence of "resurrection" surrounding us in nature!)

Daniel 12:13+ But as for you (DANIEL), go your way to the end; then you will enter into rest and **rise again** for your allotted portion at the end of the age." (WHEN CHRIST RETURNS THIS PRESENT AGE IS ABRUPTLY BROUGHT TO AN END).



#### Sown Seed Dies then Germinates

### THE ILLUSTRATION OF A SEED

**Robertson and Plummer** - People ask how the body that dies and the body that is raised can be the same. Nature itself shows that there is no necessity for their being the same. The seed and the plant that rises from it are so far from being the same, that the one must die in order that the other may live. This is the answer to the first question, and it is given with a severity which implies that the objector [plumes](#) himself on his [acuteness](#). But he is not at all [acute](#)." (ED: Instead Paul says he is a fool) ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**You fool ([aphron](#))!** - Literally the Greek says **Fool!** One version (Easy to Read Version) says "These are stupid questions!" As **Hodge** says **fool** is "An exclamation both of disapprobation and contempt. (Lk 12:20) **Robertson** adds that their "question (in 1 Cor 15:35) may seem to be clever, but it is really very foolish, and daily experience answers it. The seed which you yourself sow can have no new life given to it, unless it dies."

This is surely a bit of Pauline irony, as he sarcastically refers to the "wise" Corinthians as **fools!** They are not using their understanding. They were fools for considering death the end of existence and to in effect exclude God from consideration (that is the essence of what a **fool** does in the Bible, men like [Nabal](#) 1 Sa 25:25)! If they were truly wise, they would know that death of a seed (its planting) was not the end of its existence but the beginning of a new existence (the plant that grows from the seed). And so Paul's first point is that there must be death before there can be new life and he proceeds to illustrate this truth with the analogy

of a seed that is planted ("**dies**") but then grows into a new plant ("**life**").

**Ray Stedman on you fool** - Why did he say that? It is a normal question, almost everybody asks it, and yet Paul immediately brands it as a foolish question. The reason, of course, is evident in what he says next. It is foolish, he says, because everywhere around you are examples of what is happening in resurrection. He is referring to the normal process of plants growing from seeds or bulbs that are placed in the ground. They die, they lose their consistency, and out of them emerges another kind of body which is yet identical to the seed that was placed in the ground....Easter, therefore, always falls in the midst of the awakening of earth from its death in winter and the coming to life again of things that once were dead. Thus Paul is pointing out that we have ample evidence in the processes of nature itself to believe in a resurrection of the body. Nature teaches us two obvious lessons. ([The New Body - What is it Like?](#))

**That which you sow (*speiro*) does not come to life (*zoopoieo*) unless it dies (*apothnesko*)** - Notice Paul says "**you**" pointing to the Corinthians themselves, who had surely sown seeds. Now Paul reminds them that although the sown seed falls into the ground and dies, death is not the end of the seed, but it gives life when the new plant comes up.

**Thomas Gray** speaks of death in "[Elegy written in a Country Churchyard](#)" (take a moment and slowly [read the lengthy poem](#) pondering Gray's profound prose).

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of pow'r,  
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,  
Awaits alike th' inevitable hour.  
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

**Arnold** - Apparently he did not have much patience with people who said they believed in God but did not see Him as a supernatural working God. He used an illustration from nature, from the vegetable kingdom. Death is a necessary process in resurrection. Far from being an obstacle, death is essential to resurrection. ([The New, Resurrected Body](#))

**Robertson** - Only by dissolution of the material particles in the seed is the germ of life, which no microscope can detect, made to operate. The new living organism is not the old one reconstructed, although it has a necessary and close connexion with it; it is neither identical with the former, nor is it a new creation (John 12:24). Dissolution and continuity are not incompatible; how they are combined is a mystery beyond our ken, but the fact that they can be combined is evident, and death setting free a mysterious power of new life is part of the how.

**Hodge** - Fool! says Paul, a seed cannot live unless it does die. Disorganization is the necessary condition of reorganization. If the seed remain a seed there is an end of it. But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit, John 12:24. The seed is as much disorganized, it as really ceases to be a seed when sown in the ground, as the body when laid in the grave. If the one dies, the other dies. Death is not annihilation, but disorganization; the passing from one form or mode of existence to another. How then can the disorganization of the body in the grave be an objection to the doctrine of a resurrection? ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**MacArthur**- Jesus said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit" (John 12:24). Before Christ could bear the fruit of salvation for us, He had to die. Likewise, before we can participate in the fruit of His resurrection, or bear fruit in His service, we too must die. "He who loves his life loses it; and he who hates his life in this world shall keep it to life eternal" (Jn 12:25). When Jesus was crucified His earthly body died; it ceased to exist as an earthly body. Just as with growing crops, there had to be an end to the old before there could be a beginning of the new. In the case of men, one body will die to give life to another. ([MNTC- 1 Corinthians](#))

**Stedman**: Nature teaches us two obvious lessons. **First**: Death is a necessary part of the process. Far from being an obstacle to resurrection, death is essential to it. You can put that in the form of an axiom: Nothing that has never died shall ever be raised from the dead. Obviously if it is going to be raised from the dead it has to die. Therefore, death is not an obstacle to resurrection. It is an ingredient of it and necessary to it. To balk at the fact that people die and the body loses its ability to function and its form and consistency as a body, ought never to be any hindrance to believing that life will emerge from it. The body must die just as the seed must die. The **second** lesson that nature teaches us is this: The body that emerges from the seed that dies is different from the one that was planted. Put a grain of wheat or a kernel of corn into the ground and what comes up? Another grain of wheat or another kernel? No! What comes up is a green stem which does not look at all like what you put into the ground. Nevertheless it is tied to it; it is continuous from it; it has an identity with it. There is an undeniable tie with that which you put into the ground, and yet it is not the same; it is the "same" without being similar. Now, if you had never seen that process before, would you have believed it if somebody had said that that is what would happen? You would have looked at him as though he were mad and said, "How can that be?" because you can put almost anything else into the ground and that will not happen. It is one of those miracles that is so familiar to us that we miss the miraculous part of it. But Paul says it happens so frequently there should therefore be no struggle with believing in the resurrection of the dead. ([The New Body - What is it Like?](#))



**Fool** (878) **aphron** from **a** = without + **phren** = understanding, means originally meant diaphragm and was regarded as the seat of mental and spiritual activity, then mind or understanding -- see another study on **aphron** - [click here](#) is literally a lack of sense, reflection, understanding or reason. Aphron is one who does not use his rational powers. The aphrōn hates knowledge, but loves haughtiness (Proverbs 1:22).10v - Lk. 11:40; Lk. 12:20; Rom. 2:20; 1 Co. 15:36; 2 Co. 11:16; 2 Co. 11:19; 2 Co. 12:6; 2 Co. 12:11; Eph. 5:17; 1 Pet. 2:15

**Sow** (4687) **speiro** from spao = draw out, pull) literally means to scatter (seed) and the opposite of reaping or gathering. Speiro is used figuratively to describe the sowing of the "seed" of the Word of God, the Gospel (= "the word of the kingdom" - Mt13:19, cp Mk 4:14 15, 16, 18), "the ideas and precepts that have been implanted like seed in their hearts, ie, received in their hearts (Mk 4:18)." In [1 Corinthians 15:42-44](#) he presented resurrection truth in these terms. The burial of the body is, by analogy, like the planting of seed; it must decay before it brings forth new, incorruptible life. Speiro - 1 Co. 9:11; 1 Co. 15:36; 1 Co. 15:37; 1 Co. 15:42; 1 Co. 15:43; 1 Co. 15:44; 2 Co. 9:6; 2 Co. 9:10

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### "Do You Plant Corn?"

A missionary lady in Africa was talking to some black men and women. "Jesus died on the Cross for us all," she told them. "Then His body was put in a grave and on the third day He arose from the grave. We, too, shall arise from our graves after our bodies have rested for a time in the ground."

"How can that happen?" asked one old black man. "I do not believe that What is put in the ground cannot come up."

"Listen to me," said the missionary lady. "Do you plant corn?"

"Yes, I do," he answered.

"Well, what happens when you put the grain of corn in the ground?"

"The grain decays and the corn comes up out of the ground," he replied.

"Very well," said the missionary lady. "The grain decays but the life in the corn doesn't die. It sends up a plant that comes through the soil and grows several feet above the ground.

"It will be the same with us. When we are dead our bodies will be put into the ground. They will lie there until Jesus comes again. Then He will wake us and we shall arise from our graves. We believe that His Word is true."

"I cannot understand it," said the old black man, "but I believe it now, too, for Jesus has said it." —Selected

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**Martin Luther** - Our Lord has written the promise of the resurrection, not in books alone, but in every leaf in springtime.

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EMBLEMS OF THE RESURRECTION.— God has filled all Nature with continual emblems of this doctrine. What is night but the death of day? What is morning but its resurrection from the shades of darkness? We see the insect-tribe give their evidence—sometimes crawling, as a worm, then lying in apparent torpor; then bursting the shell, and, with wings of beauty and activity, skimming the atmosphere.

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### Frozen Heads

[Christ] will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body. —Philippians 3:21

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:35-58

A newspaper article told about a California mathematician with a life-threatening brain tumor who wants to have his head quick-frozen while he is still alive. The process is known as cryonic suspension. The man believes that scientists will discover a way to cure his tumor and attach his head to a healthy body. He is quoted as saying, "Everyone should be immortal. I am dying and want to continue to live."

We can't fault that man for wanting to live forever in a healthy body. But we seriously question his method of fulfilling his desire. First, he has no assurance that this expensive procedure will work. Second, even if it did, its benefits would be only temporary. His new body and old head would die eventually.

There is a way, however, to secure all the benefits that he desires. It is to receive Jesus as his Savior. When Christ returns to this earth, everyone who has trusted in Him will get a new body that will last forever and never be subjected to disease or death. According to the Bible, the Lord Jesus Christ "will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body" (Phil. 3:21).

With a new, glorified body guaranteed to those in Christ, who would want a "frozen head"? By: Richard DeHaan [Our Daily Bread](#).

He is coming! I shall know Him,  
Jesus, my beloved Lord!  
Changed forever to His likeness—  
Oh, what joy this will afford!  
—Dimmock

Because Christ arose with a new body, we are guaranteed a new body.

**1 Corinthians 15:37 and that which you sow, you do not sow the body which is to be, but a bare grain, perhaps of wheat or of something else.**[\(NASB 1995 - Lockman\)](#)

Easy to Read - These are stupid questions. When you plant something, it must die in the ground before it can live and grow.

- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

seed

**Seed Sown Yields a Different Body**

## PAUL'S ANSWER TO THE SECOND QUESTION

Paul is answering the hypothetical question **And with what kind of body do they come?** (1 Cor 15:35)

**Ray Pritchard:** Paul uses the analogy of the seed to correct two common errors: (1) That the resurrection body will be identical to the one that was buried (Ed: **Difference** is illustrated in 1 Cor 15:37). (2) That the resurrection body will be completely unrelated to the original (Ed: **Continuity** is illustrated in 1 Cor 15:38)....No, it (RESURRECTION BODY) will be me but a whole new me, vastly improved by God. I am to my resurrection body as the acorn is to the oak tree. That's what John meant when he said, "What we will be has not yet been made known" (1 John 3:2+). Today I'm just an acorn, tomorrow I will be a mighty oak tree. You can't tell by looking at me what I will be (and I can't even imagine it myself) but there are enormous powers resident in me that are placed there by the power of God. Today those powers are mostly latent but one day they will be fully displayed. Today I'm a nut, tomorrow I'm an oak tree. (I said that on purpose because it made me smile to think of it but it's just as true of you as it is of me.) And this revolutionizes our view of death. I know from sad experience how difficult it is to stand by the casket of a dear friend or family member and feel the overwhelming power of death staring you in the face. It's as if death is alive and is laughing at us and saying, "You fool! You believed all that Jesus stuff and you thought you would live forever. But I have the last laugh. Your friend is dead and you'll never see him again. And what's more, you'll be dead soon and all your hope will be gone." I have felt it and almost heard that voice in my ears. But then I consider what Paul is saying. Death is like planting the seed in the ground. If you never plant the seed, you never reap the harvest. **Write it down in big letters. If you want to be raised from the dead, you have to die first. No one will ever be resurrected who wasn't already dead.** Which means that death (which seems so fearful to us) is actually the necessary first step to the resurrection. And that's why death has lost its sting and the grave has been robbed of its victory. Through Jesus Christ death now becomes the doorway to immortal glory. The passage may seem dark but there is light shining on the other side....One Bible teacher suggests that in the resurrection we will have 500 senses compared to our current five. We can't prove that today but it is consistent with the image of the seed and the harvest. ([1 Corinthians 15:35-58 Acorns to Oak Trees: How are Dead Raised?](#))

**And that which you sow ([speiro](#)) , you do not sow the body ([soma](#)) which is to be, but a bare grain, perhaps of wheat or of something else** - As with the previous verse Paul again uses the plural pronoun "**you**" which draws the Corinthians into this sowing and they would be aware of how the sown seed differed from what grew up. As the **Common English Bible** paraphrases it "What you put in the ground doesn't have the shape that it will have, but it's a bare grain of wheat or some other seed." The point is that what is sown (seed) does not look like the final plant. What you plant does not have the same **body** it will have when it germinates. You plant an acorn but what comes up eventually is a huge oak tree. This was true of the "planting of Jesus in the ground" (so to speak), for when He arose from the grave, His body was different than His human body had been, for it was not subject to the laws of the old body, the limitations of conditions of time and space, not touched by exhaustion and pain. For example He could appear and disappear at will and do so without even being initially recognized (Lk 24:15, 31+) and could pass through unopened doors (Jn

20:19).

**MacDonald** - Is the plant the same as the seed? No, the plant is not the same as the seed; however, there is a very vital connection between the two. Without the seed there would have been no plant. Also, the plant derives its features from the seed (ED: as taught in 1 Cor 15:38). So it is in resurrection.

**Alan Redpath** - You cannot explain how God does all that, but you believe in the “resurrection” of the grain because you see it. Because you cannot see it, don’t dismiss the fact of the resurrection of the body from the grave, from the ocean, from the crematorium, from anywhere, for God is omnipotent, and with Him all things are possible.

**Stedman** - The body that emerges from the seed that dies is different from the one that was planted. Put a grain of wheat or a kernel of corn into the ground and what comes up? Another grain of wheat or another kernel? No! What comes up is a green stem which does not look at all like what you put into the ground. Nevertheless it is tied to it; it is continuous from it; it has an identity with it. There is an undeniable tie with that which you put into the ground, and yet it is not the same; it is the “same” without being similar. Now, if you had never seen that process before, would you have believed it if somebody had said that that is what would happen? You would have looked at him as though he were mad and said, “How can that be?” because you can put almost anything else into the ground and that will not happen. It is one of those miracles that is so familiar to us that we miss the miraculous part of it. But Paul says it happens so frequently there should therefore be no struggle with believing in the resurrection of the dead. ([1 Corinthians 15:35-49 The New Body: What Is It Like?](#))

**Constable** points out that Paul illustration of the difference between the seed planted and the final plant “is so obvious in nature that we can understand Paul’s sharp retort in verse 36 (“Fool”). A fool in biblical literature is someone who excludes God from consideration. That is exactly what the Corinthians were doing when they failed to observe what God did in the seed that they sowed in their fields. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Zeisler**: Here Paul is testifying to the fact that although humans are planted in the ground when they die, they will be raised very different beings indeed. Bodies may be burned or suffer decay, but what was planted will not be the same as what will be raised. Yet there is continuity, however. The one who was buried will be the one who will be raised. Wheat seed will produce wheat. What you are right now, everything you are becoming inside, all of the changes which God is making in your character, will be there upon your resurrection. You will be raised, but not with the same body. In the resurrection, you will be gloriously different. ([1 Corinthians - Physical Fitness Forever](#))

**Alan Redpath** - The illustration Paul gives is that of a simple grain of wheat. He invites us to look at it. First take it in your hand, and then plant it in the ground. What happens to it? It dies. But soon you will see a green shoot, and it unmistakably comes alive again, not the same grain you put in, but another plant. Yet by some amazing miracle, that new plant has come out of the grain that you put in the ground. The two are distinctly different, but they are absolutely connected. The grain which is put into the ground dies, but is quickened into life, for there would be no coming again into life except first that grain has died. As Jesus said, “Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit” (John 12:24). The mystery of the resurrection of the body is not greater than that. If you say that because there are mysteries you cannot understand you refuse to believe the resurrection of the body, then logically you have to say, “I don’t believe in harvest, because I don’t understand the process.” Look at that bare grain you are putting into the ground, and then in a few months look at the harvest. A new life, a new plant, but out of the old grain that has been planted into death. You can only explain the miracle of its growth if you put God behind it, and say in the words of verse 38: “But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.” All the harvest fields of the world are eternal witness to the work of God who takes hold of death, brings it to life, gives it a new body, and produces the harvest. (The Road to Heaven)

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**Norman Geisler - 1 CORINTHIANS 15:37—Is Paul teaching that the resurrection body is a different one from the one that is sown—a kind of reincarnation?**

**MISINTERPRETATION:** Just as seeds change when they are sown, so this verse says that the body will change when it is resurrected. Some take this to mean the resurrection body is a different one, a “spiritual” (v. 44) body that is not essentially material. Does this prove that we are not raised in the same physical body of flesh and blood in which we die? This verse is relevant to discussions with the Jehovah’s Witnesses (Aid to Bible Understanding, 1971, 1395).

**CORRECTING THE MISINTERPRETATION:** There are real changes in the resurrection body, but it is not changed into a nonphysical body—one substantially different from the one we possess now. The seed that goes into the ground brings forth more seeds that are the same kind, not immaterial seeds. It is in this sense that Paul can say “you do not sow [cause to die] the body that shall be,” since it is immortal and cannot die. The body that is raised is different in that it is immortal (1 Cor. 15:53), not in that it is immaterial. Of his resurrection body Jesus said, “It is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have” (Luke 24:39).

Jesus' resurrection body, though transformed and glorified, is the numerically same body of flesh and bones Jesus possessed before his resurrection. And since our resurrection bodies will be like his (Phil. 3:21), the same is true of the believer's resurrection body. Notice these characteristics of Jesus' resurrection body: (1) It was the same body, with the crucifixion scars, it had from before the resurrection (Luke 24:39; John 20:27). (2) It was the same body that left the empty tomb behind (Matt. 28:6; John 20:5–7; cf. John 5:28–29). (3) The physical body of Jesus did not corrupt in the tomb (Acts 2:31). (4) Jesus said his body would be destroyed and built up again (John 2:19–22). (5) It was a body of "flesh and bones" (Luke 24:39) that could be touched (Matt. 28:9; John 20:27) and could eat physical food (Luke 24:41–42).

Further, Scripture teaches that the immortal body is "put on" over, but does not replace, the mortal body (1 Cor. 15:53). The plant that springs forth from the seed is both genetically and physically connected with the seed. What is sown is what is reaped (1 Cor. 15:37–38).

The "change" (1 Cor. 15:51) Paul referred to at the resurrection is a change in the body, not a change of body. The changes in the resurrection are accidental, not substantial. They are changes in secondary qualities, not changes in primary qualities. It is changed from a corruptible physical body to an incorruptible physical body. It is not changed from a physical body into a nonphysical body. It is changed from a mortal to an immortal physical body. But it not changed from a material to an immaterial body. (When Cultists Ask)

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An 8-year-old boy, who was learning in school about the way plants grow, was intrigued when told how a tiny seed that germinates in the ground could later burst through the soil as a plant.

During that same time, he and his family attended the funeral of a family member. At the service, the pastor talked about the final resurrection of our bodies.

Several days later as the family traveled past the cemetery, the boy remarked, "That's where they plant people." Seeds planted in the ground and bodies buried at death had connected in his young mind.

Our Savior's life for us was given  
That we might one day bloom in heaven,  
Our mortal bodies changed to be  
Like His through all eternity!  
—Spicer

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**Incredible?** By M.R. De Haan

Why should it be thought incredible by you that God raises the dead. —Acts 26:8

If Jesus did not rise from the dead and there is no future day of resurrection for us, then life loses all its meaning. If this life is all there is—just a few years of alternate crying and laughing (mostly crying) and then darkness—with Paul we can say, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable" (1 Cor. 15:19).

Resurrection, however, is not an incredible, irrational idea. We can see illustrations of resurrection all around us in nature. For example, Egyptian garden peas that had been buried for 3,000 years were brought out and planted on June 4, 1844. Within a few days they had germinated and broken the ground. Buried for 3,000 years—then resurrected. That's amazing! Why then should it be thought incredible that God should raise the dead? That was the surprised question of Paul to King Agrippa (Acts 26:8). If God could take some dust and breathe life into it to create a man (Gen. 2:7), why would anyone think it incredible for this same God to raise someone from the dead? Yes, it is most credible that Jesus would arise. It would be incredible if after the miraculous life He lived He had remained in the grave. Hallelujah! Christ arose! —M. R. De Haan, M.D. (founder of RBC Ministries) ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

### **UP FROM THE GRAVE HE AROSE**

With a mighty triumph o'er His foes;  
He arose a Victor from the dark domain,  
And He lives forever with His saints to reign.  
—Lowry

Only a living Savior could rescue a dying world.

- 1Co 3:7 Ge 1:11,12 Ps 104:14 Isa 61:11 Mk 4:26-29
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

1 Corinthians 3:7+ So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but **God who causes the growth.**"

Job 14:14 "If a man dies, will he live again? All the days of my struggle I will wait Until my change comes.

Henry Morris - Death is man's greatest and unconquerable enemy. The question was especially poignant as voiced by Job, for he had even expressed a desire to die (Job 3:11-13). Later, as his faith reasserted itself, he answered his own question (Job 19:25).

### **DISTINCTNESS YET SIMILARITY**

In verse 37 Paul used the illustration of a seed to a plant to show that the body that dies will be distinct from the body that is resurrected. Now in verse 38 he again uses the seed illustration to show that despite the distinctive aspects of the resurrection body, there would still be similarity (or continuity).

Paul continues answering the question **And with what kind of body do they come?** (1 Cor 15:35) He has just illustrated the resurrection body with a seed that is planted that grow into a plant that is different in appearance than the seed. The implication is that this would be true with the resurrection body. And yet despite the fact that the final growth looked different from the seed sown, the final plant and the seed are still related. In other words a wheat seed that grew into a plant did not grow into a barley stalk but a wheat stalk. So too the resurrection body though different, would still be related to the person who had been "planted."

As **Goins** says "there is a continuity, and that's the point of verse 38...**To each of the seeds a body of its own**" The seed changes radically, but it does continue the same life form. A wheat seed doesn't turn into a barley plant, and a kernel of corn doesn't turn into flax. The identity of the seed continues into the full-grown plant. In Jesus' post-resurrection appearances in his resurrection body, none of his disciples and followers recognized him until he chose to reveal himself to them. But once he told them who he was, they did recognize him. They saw the wound in his side and the nail prints in his hands. They knew his face. The promise for us is that we will have some kind of continuity of our personhood, our personality, our unique individuality, after death.

**Robertson and Plummer** point out that "This is the important point. Neither the seed itself, nor the sower, provides the new body; 'but it is God that giveth it a body exactly as He willed, and to each of the seeds a body of its own,' i.e. the right body, the one that is proper to its kind. Therefore to every buried human being He will give a proper resurrection-body." The use of **soma** of vegetation reminds us that the illustration has reference to the human body: and καθ ὅς θελήσεν, as in 12:18 (not καθ ὅς θέλει, or καθ ὅς βούλεται, as in 12:11), shows that God does not deal with each case separately, just as He pleases at the moment, but according to fixed laws, just as it pleased Him when the world was created and regulated. From the first, vegetation has had its laws κατ' γένος καθ' ἑαυτὴν (Gen. 1:11, 12), and great as is the variety of plants, the seed of each has a body of its own, in which the vital principle, to be brought into action by death and decay, resides. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**But God** (present tense - continually) **gives it a body (soma) just as He wished** (that He has planned for it), **and to each of the seeds a body (soma) of its own** - The new **body** is not given by the seed, but by **God**. God's sovereign power gives the seed a **body** in accordance with His good and acceptable and perfect will. Paul's point is that just as God gives the seed the **body** He desires, so too He will give each believer a resurrection **body** just as He desires. The clear implication is that that resurrected **body** would not be the same type of **body** that died but it would be a **body** of the same person (but of course, glorified and sinless, so different in a good way.)

**Lenski** - Paul is not delivering a biological lecture. He is constructing a simple analogy which all of his readers are able to understand whether they are scientific biologists or not. A dying results in a quickening and a new life—we see it in the seed which we plant. God's creative act is back of what we see and not a will or an arrangement of ours. What goes into the ground is a bare seed, what comes out is a beautiful plant. God is responsible for this marvel: "God gives it a body."...A seed of wheat produces a plant of wheat and no other species of plant; and so does every other kind of seed. In the resultant plant every seed gets "a body of its own," always the one God originally designed for it, the one God now gives it. The vast world of nature demonstrates this in

endless succession. "Great oaks from little acorns grow" and not great elms or beeches, nor little currant or raspberry bushes. The simple analogy is thus made secure against misunderstanding: seed and body go into the ground—new living forms result; but in both cases with a marvelous change that is due entirely to God's almighty will and power. To be sure, what is said concerning the seed is fitted closely to what is meant regarding the body. ([Commentary](#))

**Gilbrant** - The man sows; the seed dies; the plant is raised by the power of God. It is an ordained rising; so shall it be with the resurrection of the body. God gives continually the proper body to each seed.

**Hodge** - What is deposited in the earth is very different from that which springs from it. Every seed produces its own plant. The product depends on the will of God. It was determined at the creation, and therefore the apostle says that God, in the continual agency of his providence, gives to each seed its own appropriate product, as he willed, i. e. he originally purposed. The point of this is, if God thus gives to all the products of the earth each its own form, why may he not determine the form in which the body is to appear at the resurrection? **You cannot infer from looking at a seed what the plant is to be; it is very foolish, therefore, to attempt to determine from our present bodies what is to be the nature of our bodies hereafter.** ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**W E Vine** adds that God "determined every detail of the differing species in nature, and He has determined the condition of the resurrection body, with the glory and power which God has prepared."

**Hunter & McShane** adds that "At creation God willed and planned what should be, and in the processes of nature everything conforms to the plan. The divine volition has seen to it that every seed produces a body according to its genus or family; this is the emphasis of the expression "seed after his *kind*" (Gen 1:12). The operation proceeds with regularity, but each family exhibits a tremendous number of varieties. Even with a single variety each seed has its separate individuality given by God. So the teaching is clear. Personality will continue, but the body possessed will be altogether different from the present body. Paul now develops this idea, for he knows that just here lies the difficulty with so many in their understanding of these things. ([What the Bible teaches – 1 and 2 Corinthians](#))

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#### J. WESLEY JOHNSTON.

You cannot tell what is in that body of yours; but wait until all the sin has been removed from it; wait until its weaknesses and limitations disappear; wait until it is changed and made like unto His glorious body, and then it will be seen as it was intended in the beginning, not a clog nor a hindrance, but a perfect vehicle and medium through which the soul would have perfect manifestation.

**1 Corinthians 15:39 All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one flesh of men, and another flesh of beasts, and another flesh of birds, and another of fish.** ([NASB 1995 - Lockman](#))

- Ge 1:20-26
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### PAUL SHIFTS ILLUSTRATION FROM "BOTANY" TO "ZOOLOGY"

**McGee** - Now he moves from the area of botany to zoology.

As an aside Paul deals a "death blow" to evolution. The flesh of men is separate and distinct from the flesh of fish. There is no progress of one type of flesh to another. Evolution is a Biblically indefensible lie from the pit of hell!

**MacDonald** - To illustrate the fact that the glory of the resurrection body will be different from the glory of our present bodies, the Apostle Paul points out that all flesh is not the same kind.

**All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one flesh of men, and another flesh of beasts, and another flesh of birds, and another of fish** - God gives each type of flesh its own distinctive quality. The animal kingdom points out the differences in bodies. Each of these bodies have been specifically designed by God for specific functions - some hibernate (beasts), some fly (birds) and some swim (fish). God is able to design flesh for whatever purpose He desires. Clearly, in light of these vast differences in flesh in God's creation, it is indisputably clear that God is able to design a body that is perfectly suited for the environment in which He places it (land, air, water). By analogy it is clear that God has the ability to create a resurrection body perfectly suited for the environment of Heaven and for eternity!

**Constable** explains the differences in flesh this way - A body can be genuinely fleshly and still subsist in different forms for different

environments. The fact that there are different kinds of bodies among animals should help us understand that there can also be different kinds of human bodies. Some human bodies are mortal and some are immortal. Some are corruptible and others incorruptible. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Hodge** adds "If even here, where the general conditions of life are the same, we see such diversity in animal organizations, flesh and blood appearing in so many forms, why should it be assumed that the body hereafter must be the same cumbrous vehicle of the soul that it is now?" ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**John MacArthur** - I have read that there are some six hundred octodecillion different combinations of amino acids. An octodecillion is 10 to the 108th power, or 1 followed by 108 zeros. Amino acids are the building blocks of all life. Not only does each type of plant and animal life have a distinct pattern of amino acids, but each individual plant, animal, and human being has its own unique grouping of them. No two flowers, snowflakes, seeds, blades of grass, or human beings—even identical twins—are exactly alike. Yet each is completely identified with its own species or kind. Those two facts make one of the strongest scientific evidences against evolution. No matter what we may eat, no matter how specialized or unbalanced our diet may be, and no matter what our environment may be, we will never change into another form of life. We may become healthier or more sickly, heavier or lighter, but we will never be anything but a human being and never any human being but the one we are. The biological codes are binding and unique. There is no repeatable or demonstrable scientific proof that one form of life has changed or could change into another. ([MNTC- 1 Corinthians](#))

#### Related Resources:

- [What are some flaws in the theory of evolution? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What does the Bible say about creation vs. evolution? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What is theistic evolution? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [How does creationism vs. evolution impact how a person views the world? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Evolution vs. Creationism — Article Index | GotQuestions.org](#)

**1 Corinthians 15:40** There are also heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is one, and the glory of the earthly is another. ([NASB 1995 - Lockman](#))

- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### ILLUSTRATION OF THE CELESTIAL AND TERRESTRIAL BODIES

**There are also heavenly bodies and earthly bodies ([soma](#)), but the glory of the heavenly is one, and the glory of the earthly is another** - Paul's point is to emphasize the marked difference between heavenly and earthly bodies (everything that lives on the earth) just as there were differences in flesh in v39. And so heavenly bodies shine but earthly bodies do not literally shine. However they have ability to speak and think and thus have a glory of their own.

**Paul Apple** - God Grants Each Type of Creation its Own Unique Glory.

**Vine** - the basic idea in the word *doxa*, glory, is that of manifestation. The glory of God is the manifestation of His Being. His character and His acts. As to the inanimate things here mentioned, the glory of the sun, moon and stars is the manifestation of their nature in their differing degrees of splendor and beauty. As to the stars, their differences in luster and brilliance are endless, and in this they testify to the infinite wisdom and inexhaustible power of God their Creator. The point in all this is not that there will be differing degrees of glory in the bodies of the saints in the resurrection, but that God, Who has arranged all things in nature in the differing degrees of glory, has power to bring about the state of glory to be manifested in the raised bodies of believers. Differences in degrees of glory in their glorified bodies is not in view. This is confirmed in what follows.

**Robertson and Plummer** - The God who made these myriads of differences in one and the same universe can be credited with inexhaustible power. It is monstrous to suppose that He cannot fit a body to spirit. Therefore we must not place any limit to God's power with regard either to the difference between our present and our future body, or to the relations between them. He has found a fit body for fish, fowl, cattle, and mortal man: why not for immortal man? Experience teaches that God finds a suitable body for every type of earthly life and every type of heavenly life. Experience cannot teach that there is a type of life for which no suitable body can be found. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Glory** ([1391](#)) **doxa** from **dokeo** = to think) in simple terms means to give a proper opinion or estimate of

something. Doxa is a manifestation of light radiance, brightness, splendor. A manifestation of God's excellent power glory, majesty (Ro 9:23, Lk 2:9, Acts 7:55, Ro 1:23) Glory is something that is a source of honor, fame, or admiration. It describes renown, a thing that is beautiful, impressive, or worthy of praise. It follows that the **glory** of God expresses all that He is in His Being and in His nature, character, power and acts. He is glorified when He is allowed to be seen as He really is. To be where God is will be glory. To be what God intended will be glory. To do what God purposed will be glory. **Doxa** in 1-2 Corinthians - 1 Co. 2:7; 1 Co. 2:8; 1 Co. 10:31; 1 Co. 11:7; 1 Co. 11:15; 1 Co. 15:40; 1 Co. 15:41; 1 Co. 15:43; 2 Co. 1:20; 2 Co. 3:7; 2 Co. 3:8; 2 Co. 3:9; 2 Co. 3:10; 2 Co. 3:11; 2 Co. 3:18; 2 Co. 4:4; 2 Co. 4:6; 2 Co. 4:15; 2 Co. 4:17; 2 Co. 6:8; 2 Co. 8:19; 2 Co. 8:23

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**Norman Geisler** - 1 CORINTHIANS 15:40–42—Does this support the idea that there are three kingdoms of glory one may inhabit in the next life?

MISINTERPRETATION: Mormons believe the reference to “celestial bodies” and “terrestrial bodies” in this passage (KJV) gives support to their view that all people will inhabit one of three kingdoms of glory in the next life—the Celestial Kingdom, the Terrestrial Kingdom, or the Telestial Kingdom (McConkie, 1966, 420). One's faithfulness in this life determines which kingdom one will end up in.

CORRECTING THE MISINTERPRETATION: This passage does not refer to three kingdoms of glory. First Corinthians 15:40–42 does not even make reference to the word telestial. This in itself disqualifies the passage as a support for the idea that there are three kingdoms.

The context of the passage very clearly has to do with resurrection bodies (see v. 35). Paul in this verse is talking about the heavenly (celestial) body as opposed to the earthly (terrestrial) body. He says the earthly body is fallen, temporal, imperfect, and weak (vv. 42–44), while the heavenly body will be eternal, perfect, and powerful (cf. 2 Cor. 5:1–4). (When Cultists Ask)

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**David Reed** - 1 Corinthians 15:40–42 There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars.... So also is the resurrection of the dead.

Mormons see in these verses confirmation of their belief in three heavenly destinations: the telestial kingdom, the terrestrial kingdom, and the celestial kingdom. Christ's atonement gave virtually all mankind general salvation which, in the Mormon view, means simply resurrection. Nonreligious people and even atheists are “saved” in this sense, but are resurrected to the lowest or telestial kingdom. Members of christendom's churches and other religious people who sought to please God but who never joined the LDS Church will be raised to life in the terrestrial kingdom. And faithful, obedient Mormons will reach the highest or celestial kingdom, where they may even become Gods.

These doctrines are taught in the “latter-day revelations” of Joseph Smith and other LDS leaders (particularly in Doctrine and Covenants, Section 76). But are they taught in the Bible, specifically in Paul's letter to the Corinthians? Not at all. A closer look at context and the words quoted above reveals that Paul was not talking about different kingdoms at all. Rather, he was talking about bodies. He was answering the question, “How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?” (1 Cor. 15:35). Using illustrations, he compared a seed planted in the ground to the body God gives the resulting plant. Next, he spoke of four different types of flesh: human, animal, fish, and bird (v. 39). Then he contrasted celestial (literally, heavenly) bodies with terrestrial (literally, earthly) bodies. If there is any doubt as to what Paul meant by celestial or heavenly bodies, verse 41 clarifies it with examples: the sun, the moon, and the stars. Then Paul went on to develop the point he was illustrating, namely that the resurrection body is greater than the body in which we die: “It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power” (v. 43).

Paul was thus writing about bodies, not about kingdoms. He contrasted earthly (terrestrial) bodies with heavenly (celestial) bodies, but he did not in any way teach that heaven was divided into kingdoms called celestial, terrestrial, and telestial-the latter being a word Joseph Smith evidently coined himself.

See also the discussions of Matthew 5:48 and Romans 8:16, 17. (Mormons Answered Verse by Verse)

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**1 Corinthians 15:41 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. (NASB 1995 - Lockman)**

- Ge 1:14 De 4:19 Job 31:26 Ps 8:3 19:4-6 148:3-5 Isa 24:23
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



## Related Passages:

Mt 13:43+ (SUN) "Then THE RIGHTEOUS WILL SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

Daniel 12:3+ (STARS) "Those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, **like the stars** forever and ever.

## THE DIFFERENCES OF THE GLORY OF CELESTIAL BODIES

**There is one glory (doxa) of the sun, and another glory (doxa) of the moon, and another glory (doxa) of the stars** - The key word in this passage is clearly **glory (doxa)**! The best exposition of this verse is to go outside your house on a cloudless night and gaze up into the sky where you see that the differences to which Paul alludes are breathtaking and should cause us to be filled with wonder and awe at the greatness of our God ([Play Indescribable](#) and you will see some pictures of celestial glory).. And while we can look at the moon at night, no one can gaze at the sun in its brightness less they be blinded. These differences are all the result of the work of the infinitely wise Creator, which prepares us for Paul's conclusion in v42.

**For star differs from star in glory (doxa)** - Our future resurrection bodies will differ from our present, just as one star differs from another. This is quite a comparison when you think about it. Today we build huge telescopes to look at the glory of the stars, but it seems that one day our bodies will have a similar awesome, incredible, eternal glory! O what a future every believer has to look forward to experiencing forever and ever. Amen.

**Robertson and Plummer** - the differences in light and lustre are endless. It is legitimate to apply these differences in the heavenly bodies to possible differences in the glories of the risen saints, and it is not impossible that the Apostle had this thought in his mind (MOST WRITERS DO NOT THINK THAT WAS PAUL'S INTENT). But his main argument is that God, who made all these known differences and connexions, may have made differences and connexions between our present and future bodies which are quite beyond our comprehension. Immense differences there are certain to be. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Alan Redpath** - He is teaching that the difference that exists here will exist forever in the glory. A human personality is not wiped out by disaster; it is preserved forever, with all its distinctions and differences. Just as we have differed in appearance here, so we will differ there. That is why we will know one another when we get to heaven.

**R C H Lenski** - Paul is not writing about the differences that will appear between the saints and the fact that some will shine in greater glory than others. This difference is referred to in other passages of Holy Writ, it is not mentioned in this verse. ([Commentary](#))

**Pulpit Commentary** agrees with Lenski - The point of the illustration is the difference between the earthly and the resurrection body; not the supposed differences between the saints themselves in glory. *This* is not a question under consideration, and St. Paul, as we have seen, is not in the habit of mixing up half a dozen different questions in the same immediate argument. St. Augustine says of the saints, "Their splendour is unequal; their heaven is one." This may be very true, but to deduce it from this verse is to press into the argument an illustration used for another purpose. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**William MacDonald** has an interesting comment on the **glory** of the resurrection body - Most commentators agree that Paul is still emphasizing that the glory of the resurrection body will be different from the glory of the body which we have on earth at the present time. They do not think that verse 41, for instance, indicates that in heaven there will be **differences of glory among believers themselves**. However, we tend to agree with Holsten that "the way in which Paul emphasizes the diversities of the heavenly bodies implies the supposition of an analogous difference of glory between the risen." **It is clear from other passages of Scripture that we shall not all be identical in heaven**. Although all will resemble the Lord Jesus morally, that is, in freedom from sin, it does not follow that we shall all look like the Lord Jesus physically. He will be distinctly recognizable as such throughout all eternity. Likewise, we believe that each individual Christian will be a distinct personality recognizable as such. But **there will be differences of reward granted at the Judgment Seat of Christ according to one's faithfulness in service**. While all will be supremely happy in heaven, some will have greater capacity for enjoying heaven. Just as there will be differences of suffering in hell, according to the sins that a man has committed, so there will be differences of enjoyment in heaven, according to what we have done as believers.

**Charles Hodge** - The apostle does not mean that as one star differs from another star in glory, so one risen believer will differ from another. **This, no doubt, is true**; but it is not what Paul here says or intimates. His object is simply to show the absurdity of the objection founded on the assumption that the body hereafter must be what it is here. He shows that it may be a body and yet differ as much from what it is now as the light of the sun differs from a piece of clay. He ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

1 Corinthians 15:42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable body, it is raised an imperishable [body]; (NASB 1995 - Lockman)

- **is** 1Co 15:50-54 Da 12:3 Mt 13:43 Php 3:20,21
- **perishable body**, Ge 3:19 Job 17:14 Ps 16:10 49:9,14 Isa 38:17 Ac 2:27,31 Ac 13:34-37 Ro 1:23 8:21
- **raised an imperishable body** 1Co 15:52-54 Lu 20:35,36 1Pe 1:4
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Luke 20:35; 36+ but those who are considered worthy (NO ONE IS WORTHY OUTSIDE OF BELIEF IN THE WORTHY ONE CHRIST JESUS) to attain to that age and **the resurrection from the dead**, neither marry nor are given in marriage; 36 for **they cannot even die anymore**, because they are like angels, and are sons of God, being **sons of the resurrection**.

Romans 8:20-21+ For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to **corruption** ([phthora](#)) into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

2 Timothy 1:10+ but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who **abolished death** and brought life and **immortality** ([aphtharsia](#)) to light through the gospel,

### THE RESURRECTED BODY PLANTED PERISHABLE, RAISED IMPERISHABLE

**So also is** (It is the same) **is the resurrection** ([anastasis](#)) **of the dead** - Paul now applies the preceding remarks so that just as the heavenly bodies differ from earthly bodies, so too the resurrection body will differ from the present (natural) body. Note that Paul is speaking only of the resurrection of believers here, not unbelievers. The preceding illustrations from nature, botany, zoology and astronomy, have prepared the reader for Paul's direct answer to the second question in 1 Cor 15:35 of what kind of body the resurrection body will be.

**R C H Lenski** - We who see all of this variety in the creatures which God called into being and placed before our eyes (1 Cor 15:39-41) ought to have no difficulty as to the form and the character of the bodies which God will bring forth from the graves at the resurrection. ([Commentary](#))

**Robertson and Plummer** - Hitherto the answer to the second question (1 Cor 15:35) has been indirect: it now becomes direct. The risen body is incorruptible, glorious, powerful, spiritual. It is quite obvious that the corpse which is 'sown' is none of these things. It is in corruption (even) before it reaches the grave ; it has lost all rights of citizenship ([atimia](#)), and, excepting decent burial, all rights of humanity; it is absolutely powerless, unable to move a limb. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**It is** (present tense - continually) **sown** ([speiro](#)) **a perishable** (ruined, corruptible) **body, it is** (divine passive and present tense - continually) **raised** ([egeiro](#)) **an imperishable body** - **Sown** is a metaphor which fits with Paul's previous illustration of literal sowing of plant seeds. Continuing this analogy the human body is like a "seed" sown into a grave. In the grave the body undergoes decomposition and decay. But even before the grave the body is subject to corruption, Paul explains that "our outer man is ([diaphtheiro](#) in the present tense - continually) **decaying**." (2 Cor 4:16+) In the grave of course the body is dead and continues to decay. But this prepares it for the divine miracle of arising with a different body, one that is **imperishable**. no longer subject to deterioration, but able to forever retain its original glorious state. It will experience no sickness, pain, disease, etc! The **imperishable** body will be permanent, durable, eternal, never growing old, never becoming tired, never becoming weary, forever and ever. Amen!

**Ray Pritchard** on a **perishable body** - Today our bodies are perishable, dishonorable, weak, and natural. If you want proof, just consider the five Bs of middle age: Baldness, Bifocals, Bridges, Bulges, and Bunions. Nothing works right. Our bodies wear out, slow down, decay, sag, groan, and even begin to smell bad. We brag about our strength but a tiny microbe can kill us. Sooner or later we grow old and our bodies begin to break down. Eventually they stop working altogether. No amount of Vitamin C or Siberian Ginseng can change that fact. At best, we can only slow down the aging process; we cannot delay it forever. ([1 Corinthians 15:35-58 Acorns to Oak Trees: How are Dead Raised?](#))

As **Spurgeon** says ""The righteous are put into their graves all weary and worn; but as such they will not rise. They go there with the

furrowed brow, the hollowed cheek, the wrinkled skin; they shall wake up in beauty and glory.” Hallelujah!

**MacArthur** - Death, of course, rapidly accelerates decay. Martha objected to Lazarus’s tomb being opened, because “by this time there will be a stench, for he has been dead four days” (John 11:39). The purpose of embalming is to retard deterioration of the body as long as possible. But even the remarkable Egyptian mummification could not prevent deterioration, much less restore life. ([MNTC- 1 Corinthians](#))

**Matthew Poole** - “There is nothing more uncomely, unlovely, and loathsome than a dead body; but it will not be so when it shall be raised again, then it shall be a beautiful, comely body. We shall rise in a full and perfect age, (as is generally thought) and without those defects and deformities which may here make our bodies appear unlovely.”

**Trapp** has an interesting note that there were Three glimpses of the body’s glory seen -- in Moses’ face, in Christ’s transfiguration, and in Stephen’s countenance.”

**Perishable** (5356)([phthora](#) from [phtheiro](#) = to shrivel or wither, spoil , ruin , deprave, corrupt , defile, to destroy by means of corrupting, to spoil as does milk. The basic idea of **phthora** is not a sudden destruction owing to external violence, but a dissolution brought about by internal decay. It describes decomposition which brings to mind the picture of loathsome decaying matter replete with maggots and other macabre microbes!  
**Phthora** - 8v - Ro 8:21; 1 Co. 15:42; 1 Co 15:50; Gal. 6:8 = "the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap **corruption**"; Col. 2:22; 2 Pe 1:4 = "having escaped the **corruption** that is in the world by lust"; 2 Pe 2:12; 2 Pe 2:19 = "they themselves are slaves of corruption"

**Imperishable** (861)([aphtharsia](#) from **a** = not + [phthartós](#) = corruptible from the verb [phtheiro](#) = to corrupt, shrivel, wither, spoil by any process, ruin , deprave, defile, destroy) is a state of not being subject to decay or death - immortality, incorruptibility (state of being free from physical decay), perpetuity. It describes that which is not subject to decay and control by sin. **Aphtharsia** defines the state of not being subject to decay, dissolution or interruption. It speaks of an unending existence, of that which is not capable of corruption. **Aphtharsia** indicates immunity to the decay (cf "sin") that infects all of creation. **Aphtharsia** - 7v - Ro 2:7; 1 Co. 15:42; 1 Co. 15:50; 1 Co. 15:53; 1 Co. 15:54; Eph. 6:24; 2 Ti 1:10

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**D L Moody** - AS I go into a cemetery I like to think of the time when the dead shall rise from their graves. We read part of this chapter in what we call the “burial service.” I think it is an unfortunate expression. Paul never talked of “burial.” He said the body was sown in corruption, sown in weakness, sown in dishonor, sown a natural body. If I bury a bushel of wheat, I never expect to see it again, but if I sow it, I expect results. Thank God, our friends are not buried; they are only sown! I like the Saxon name for the cemetery—“God’s acre.”

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## Raised In Glory

The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. —1 Corinthians 15:42

Today’s Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:42-49

Years ago, I heard a story about a man looking for flowers for spring planting. At the greenhouse he came across a golden chrysanthemum, bursting with blooms. To his surprise, it was hidden in a corner and growing in an old, dented rusty bucket.

“If this were my flower,” he said to himself, “I would place it in a beautiful pot and display it proudly! Why is it confined in this old bucket and hidden away in this concealed place?”

When he remarked to the owner about the flower, she explained, “Oh, I started the plant in that old bucket until it blossomed. But it’s just for a short time. Soon I’ll transplant it to my garden.”

The man laughed, and imagined such a scene in heaven. “There’s a beautiful one,” God will say, “the product of My lovingkindness and grace. Now it’s confined in a broken body and in obscurity, but soon, in My garden, how tall and lovely this soul will stand!”

So we may now be “planted” in bent and battered containers for a short time while our Lord beautifies our souls. But, “as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man” (1 Cor. 15:49). Then He will display His handiwork and our loveliness for all to see. This is our assurance and delight. By: David H. Roper ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

In bodies that will ne’er grow old,  
We’ll reign with Him through years untold;  
O precious thought: We all shall be

With Christ through all eternity.

—Watson

While God is preparing a place for us, He is preparing us for that place.

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### **The Best Is yet to Be - Vance Havner**

So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption: it is raised in incorruption. I Corinthians 15:42.

Aches and pains remind us that the bodies we got from old Adam are disintegrating. Some of them look very unsightly before they are laid away, and often we are acutely aware that "it is sown in corruption." But the Christian anticipates a new body "like unto his glorious body" as part of his salvation. Everything we have by the first Adam is marred and spoiled and subject to decay. But when we become sons of God by faith in the last Adam we are assured a new body incorruptible, beyond the reach of sin, disease, and death. This removes the sense of futility such as torments the aging man without hope in Christ. The best is yet to be! Lovely landscapes may wither, but a new earth looms ahead. Strong bodies may fail, but they only make way for new ones infinitely stronger. Loved ones go, but all who are in Christ are headed for a better reunion. "Christians never meet for the last time." Cheer up, my brother! This body may never die, for Jesus may come first. But at worst it is only sown in corruption for an incorruptible harvest. We can't lose!

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### **Lifelong But Temporary**

The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. —1 Corinthians 15:42-43

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:35-49

When Paul Schneider was 2 years old, a medical specialist said that he would never walk or have understandable speech because of brain damage that occurred at birth.

Paul proved the experts wrong. He not only learned to walk, but he also earned a college degree and spoke to audiences more than 300 times.

Closest to Paul's heart, though, was his love for Christ, the One who saved him from his sins and gave him the courage to persevere against enormous odds. And it was his hope in Christ that inspired the phrase he used to describe his cerebral palsy: "Lifelong but temporary."

Paul Schneider's outlook was rooted in 1 Corinthians 15. Because Jesus conquered sin and death and rose from the grave, He promises a new "spiritual body" to all who trust Him. This body will be free from all the imperfections of our current existence. It will be a transformed body, having abilities beyond anything we now know (Phil. 3:21).

In 1995 Paul Schneider entered the presence of Christ, finally free from his cerebral palsy. All Christians have the promise of receiving a new body at the resurrection. We may have a lifelong limitation that is physical, mental, emotional, or all three, but it is still only temporary. By: Dennis J. DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Can we think it pleases His loving heart  
To cause us a moment's pain?  
Ah, no! But He sees, through the present cross,  
The bliss of eternal gain.  
—Inglor

Heaven—no pain, all gain.

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### **The Butterfly**

Read: John 5:25-29

It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. —1 Corinthians 15:43

Outside my study window a beautiful monarch butterfly rested on a flower blossom. It fanned its wings slowly with exquisite grace. That stately monarch was once a repulsive green worm, feeding on milkweed leaves. Then it built a coffin for itself and hung from a twig. In time it emerged, transformed into a beautiful creature—that butterfly outside my study window.

The life cycle of the butterfly occurs in four stages: the egg, the larva, the chrysalis, and the adult. It begins with an egg—the seed of the butterfly, which hatches into an ugly worm. But that is not its destiny. The worm must “die” to give birth to the butterfly.

I see in the caterpillar a picture of sinful human beings who need the transformation of a spiritual new birth (John 3:3). The butterfly, released from its tomb in the chrysalis, illustrates the transformation that will occur when Jesus returns and changes our earthly bodies into glorious bodies fit for life in heaven (1 Corinthians 15:42-44).

So, the next time you see a butterfly, remember the change that Christ made in you when you put your faith in Him—then look forward with joy to the day of resurrection when your transformation will be complete! —M. R. De Haan, M.D. ([Our Daily Bread](#), Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

When through the portals of Glory I've passed,  
I shall be changed to His image at last;  
I shall be like Him in beauty to shine,  
Ever to live in His presence divine.  
—Brooks

Christ's resurrection is the guarantee of our own.

**1 Corinthians 15:43** it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; [NASB 1995 - Lockman](#))

- **dishonor** Da 12:1 Mt 13:43 Php 3:20,21
- **weakness** Job 14:10: Ps 102:23 2Co 13:4
- **in power** 1Co 6:14 Mt 22:29,30 Mk 12:24,25 2Co 13:14 Php 3:10
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Daniel 12:3+ **“Those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.**

Matthew 13:43+ “Then **THE RIGHTEOUS WILL SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN** in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

Philippians 3:20-21+ For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; 21 who will transform the body of **our humble state** into conformity with the body of His **glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.**

**COMMENT:** NOTE THAT LAST STATEMENT - The omnipotent Lord Jesus Christ can subject everything (no exceptions) and He will be able to supernaturally bring about the transformation ([metaschematizo](#)) of dead corpses to death conquerors!

Romans 8:29-30+ For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; 30 and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, **He also glorified** (Futuristic or proleptic aorist is used here to describe an event that has not taken place yet is seen as already completed! That is how certain we are to receive our future glorified resurrection bodies!)

Colossians 3:4+ When Christ, [*who is*] our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him **in glory.**

1 John 3:2+ Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. **We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.**

### **PRESENT DISHONOR, FUTURE GLORY PRESENT WEAKNESS, FUTURE POWER**

**It is** (present tense = continually) **sown** ([speiro](#)) **in dishonor** (without dignity), **it is raised** ([egeiro](#)) **in glory** ([doxa](#)) - The continual sowing of dead bodies in funeral after funeral is (or should be) a constant reminder of the curse of death pronounced by God when He declared "By the sweat of your face You will eat bread, **Till you return to the ground, Because from it you were taken; For**

**you are dust, And to dust you shall return.**" (Ge 3:19+, cf Eccl 3:20, Ps 104:14-16) **Raised** is present tense indicating all believers will continue to be raised in glory. **Raised** is in the passive voice (= divine passive) which indicates the resurrection is from an outside Source, which of course is God.

**MacArthur** on **dishonor** - The creature that was made perfect, and in the very image of his Creator, was made to manifest his Creator in all that he did. But through sin, that which was created to honor God became characterized instead by dishonor. We dishonor God by our inability to take advantage fully of what He has given us in His creation. We dishonor God by misusing and abusing the bodies through which He desires us to honor and serve Him. Even the most faithful believer dies with his body in a state of dishonor, a state of imperfection and incompleteness. ([MNTC- 1 Corinthians](#))

**Pulpit Commentary** on **dishonor** - "The awful and intolerable indignity of dust to dust."

**Kistemaker** has an interesting comment - The dissolution of the human body when committed to the grave is the ultimate humiliation for humans who were crowned with glory and honor to rule God's creation (Ps. 8:5b; Heb. 2:7b, 9). They will receive that exalted rank again when they are raised to newness of life. Paul writes that Christ Jesus will transform our humiliated bodies to conform them to his glorious body (Phil. 3:21).

**Charles Hodge** on **raised in glory** - It is raised in glory, i. e. in that resplendent brightness which diffuses light and awakens admiration. It is to be fashioned like unto the glorious body of the Son of God, Phil. 3:21+. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Goins:** This contrast addresses value or potential. We know that as sinful men and women we are dishonorable. At the fall our potential for pleasing, serving, and glorifying God was drastically reduced. Genesis tells us we were created in the image of God, designed to reflect his glory and perfection, created to honor him. But we know that sin is at work in us now. Even though we've been redeemed from the penalty of sin by Jesus Christ, we still struggle with fleshly patterns of sinful rebellion. Even the most faithful follower of Jesus Christ knows that his body, his intellect, his emotions, and his will are in a sense dishonorable or imperfect or incomplete. We live in a fallen, flawed world, and we reflect that fallenness. But we will one day be raised in glory, to use Paul's phrase. When we get to heaven we won't be sinful anymore. ([Our Resurrection Bodies](#))

**Alan Redpath** on **dishonor** and **weakness** - By the grave we have seen the corruption of the human body. No matter how ornate the funeral, and no matter how great an attempt may be made to take away some of the sting by something of fragrance, nevertheless at the graveside we know that there is dishonor. We have witnessed weakness, for as the body is put into the ground the processes of decay are already setting in and the body has to be hurried away.

**Dishonor** (819) **atimia** from **átimos** = without honor from **a** = negative + **time** = Honor, respect, reverence, esteem) is a noun which describes that which is literally not honorable, not worthy of respect, reverence or esteem. **Atimia** was sometimes used of loss of the rights of citizenship. A corpse has no rights!

**It is sown in weakness, it is raised**([egeiro](#)) **in power** - A corpse in the grave is the epitome of **weakness**. "The weakness which belonged to it in life, is perfected in death." (Hodge) The resurrection body will have supernatural power "with energy, endowed, it may be, with faculties of which we have now no conception." (Hodge [1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Robertson** Word Pictures on **weakness...power** - Lack of strength as shown in the victory of death. Death can never conquer this new body, "conformed to the body of His glory" (Phil. 3:21).

**MacDonald** - With the coming of old age, **weakness** increases until death itself strips a man of all strength whatever (ED: AT AGE 75 I CAN ATTEST TO THE TRUTH OF THIS STATEMENT!) In eternity, the body will not be subject to these sad limitations, but will be possessed of powers that it does not have at the present time. For instance, the Lord Jesus Christ in resurrection was able to enter a room where the doors were locked. (Jn 20:19) (Believer's Bible Commentary)

**MacArthur** - We are not told what that power will entail, but it will be immeasurable compared to what we now possess. We will no longer have to say that "the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Matt. 26:41). Anything our heavenly spirits determine to do our heavenly bodies will be able to accomplish. Martin Luther said, "As weak as it [the human body of believers] is now without all power and ability when it lies in the grave, just so strong will it eventually become when the time arrives, so that not a thing will be impossible for it if it has a mind for it, and it will be so light and agile that in an instant it can float here below on earth or above in heaven." ([MNTC- 1 Corinthians](#))

**Vine** - Every believer will have a body possessed of incorruptibility, glory and power.

**Fuller** - I have stood in a smith's forge and seen him put a rusty, cold, dull piece of iron into the fire, and, after a while, he hath taken the very same identical individual piece of iron out of the fire, but bright, sparkling. And thus it is with our bodies: they are laid down in the grave, dead, heavy, earthly; but at that general conflagration, this dead, heavy, earthly body shall arise living, lightsome, glorious.

**Weakness** (769) **astheneia** from **a** = without + **sthénos** = strength, bodily vigor) means literally without strength or bodily vigor = want of strength = lacking strength. It expresses powerlessness as those are who are without strength. Literally astheneia refers to bodily diseases or ailments (Lk 5:15, 13:11, 12, Jn 5:5, 11:4, 28:9). 23v - Matt. 8:17; Lk. 5:15; Lk. 8:2; Lk. 13:11; Lk. 13:12; Jn. 5:5; Jn. 11:4; Acts 28:9; Rom. 6:19; Rom. 8:26; 1 Co. 2:3; 1 Co. 15:43; 2 Co. 11:30; 2 Co. 12:5; 2 Co. 12:9; 2 Co. 12:10; 2 Co. 13:4; Gal. 4:13; 1 Tim. 5:23; Heb. 4:15; Heb. 5:2; Heb. 7:28; Heb. 11:34

**Power** (Miracles) (1411) **dunamis** from **dunamai** = to be able, to have power) power especially achieving power. It refers to intrinsic power or inherent ability, the power or ability to carry out some function, the potential for functioning in some way (power, might, strength, ability, capability), the power residing in a thing by virtue of its nature. **Dunamis** in 1-2 Corinthians - 1 Co. 1:18; 1 Co. 1:24; 1 Co. 2:4; 1 Co. 2:5; 1 Co. 4:19; 1 Co. 4:20; 1 Co. 5:4; 1 Co. 6:14; 1 Co. 12:10; 1 Co. 12:28; 1 Co. 12:29; 1 Co. 14:11; 1 Co. 15:24; 1 Co. 15:43; 1 Co. 15:56; 2 Co. 1:8; 2 Co. 4:7; 2 Co. 6:7; 2 Co. 8:3; 2 Co. 12:9; 2 Co. 12:12; 2 Co. 13:4;

**1 Corinthians 15:44 it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. (NASB 1995 - Lockman)**

Complete Jewish Bible - " When sown, it is an ordinary human body; when raised, it will be a body controlled by the Spirit. If there is an ordinary human body, there is also a body controlled by the Spirit."

- **spiritual** Lu 24:31, Joh 20:19,26
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **NATURAL BODY TRANSFORMED TO SPIRITUAL BODY**

**it is** (present tense = continually) **sown a natural body, it is** (divine passiv and present tense = continually) **raised** ([egeiro](#)) **a spiritual body. If there** (present tense = continually) **is a natural** ([psuchikos](#)) **body, there** (present tense = continually) **is also a spiritual body** - The **natural body** is suited for our short life in this present world, but the resurrection body will be a **spiritual body** suited for the world to come. At first glance **spiritual body** sounds like a **contradiction in terms** for we normally think of a "spirit" as something without real form, certainly something without "flesh on the bones." That is not what Paul is describing here. The truth is that this resurrection body is to be a very real body, but a body that is no longer under the sway of the fleshly desires or impulses that drive the natural body (and drives us crazy at times when we capitulate to its fallen desires!) No, the **spiritual body** is one dominated by the spirit, which many take to also be a reference to our spirit dominated by the Holy Spirit, so that the **spiritual body** will never again have either the desire or the capacity to fulfill those insatiable lusts of the flesh! I can hear some of you reading this note shouting "Hallelujah! Thank you Lord!" And I echo "Amen!"

**Vine** has an interesting note on **natural body** - In 1Cor 15:44 **natural** ([psuchikos](#)) might be translated "soul governed." The natural body is subject to the laws and conditions of the soul; it is an organism by which, through the soul, the self is expressed and developed and enters into relation with others. (Collected Writings)

**Vine** adds that the resurrection body will be **spiritual body** that "will be entirely controlled by the spirit, and will be the perfect instrument and expression of its will, and this because it will be completely animated and empowered by the Spirit of God." **Pulpit Commentary** adds the **natural body** "means a body only animated by the *psyche*, or natural life."

**Ray Pritchard** - our new bodies will be imperishable (indestructible), glorious (beautiful beyond all imagining), powerful (with abilities beyond our wildest dreams), and spiritual (made for intimate relationship with God). We will be raised with a body that is suitable for our new life. It will last forever with no decay, no wear and tear, no limitations, and no failures or defects of any kind. There will be no physical or mental or emotional handicaps. We will have bodies that are eternally alive. One writer says, "I expect to outlive the stars." So do I! ([1 Corinthians 15:35-58 Acorns to Oak Trees: How are Dead Raised?](#))

**Robertson and Plummer** - The former (**natural body**) was by nature subject to the laws and conditions of physical life (ψυχή), the latter will be controlled only by the spirit (πνεύμα), and this spirit will be in harmony with the spirit of God. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Bruce Barton** on **spiritual body** - Paul did not mean that this will be "spiritual" as opposed to physical or material, for that would contradict all that Paul has just written about resurrected bodies. Believers will not become "spirits." Instead, "spiritual" refers to a

body that suits a new, spiritual life, just as our present bodies (Greek psuchikon) suit our lives as "souls" (psuche). Each believer will no longer have a natural body, like Adam, designed to live on this earth; instead, each will have a spiritual body, like Christ had after his resurrection (15:48–49). (Life Application Commentary)

**Hunter & McShane** adds that "The expression "spiritual body" seems a paradox. How can a body be spiritual? It does not mean a body composed of spirit, but a body which expresses spirit. Just as the present body expresses the life of the soul, so that body will express the life of the spirit. It should be said that the prototype of the resurrection body is seen in the body of the Lord Jesus after He rose from the dead. ([What the Bible teaches – 1 and 2 Corinthians](#))

**Luke** describes **Jesus'** post-resurrection appearance to His disciples

While they were telling these things, He Himself stood in their midst (cf Jn 20:19-20) and said to them, "Peace be to you." 37 But they were startled and frightened and thought that they were seeing a spirit. 38 And He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? 39 "See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; **touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have**" (Luke 24:36-39+)

**Ryrie comments** - The evidences that Jesus' appearance was **not as a spirit's**: (1) the scars in His hands and feet, (2) His tangibleness in being handled, and (3) His ability to eat (Lk 24:43; Acts 10:41).

**John** describes **Jesus** in Heaven writing

And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a Lamb standing, as if slain (NET = "that appeared to have been killed"), having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth. (Rev 5:6+)

**Comment** - Note the phrase "**as if slain**," clearly indicates that John saw the slain Jesus. **Tony Garland** ([commentary](#)) writes **slain** is "perfect passive participle: "of animals, especially when killed as a sacrifice slaughter, slay; metaphorically, of Jesus' atoning death as the Lamb of God." By His one-time sacrifice, sin was rendered powerless to prevent those who trust in Him from right-standing before God (Heb. 9:26). It has been said, "the only man-made thing in heaven will be the scars of the Savior." Isaiah informs us, "His visage was marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men" (Isa. 52:14). Heaven and earth will pass away and the former things will pass (Rev. 21:1+, 4+), but will the scars of Messiah ever be erased? (ED: I SAY ABSOLUTELY NOT FOR THEY ARE THE SIGN OF THE COVENANT IN HIS BLOOD WHICH WILL ENDURE ETERNALLY) For they serve as a testimony of His love, His resurrection from death (John 20:20, 27), and His identity as Redeemer (Luke 24:30-31).

**Vincent on Natural body** - A natural body (σῶμα ψυχικόν). See on 1 Cor 2:14+. The word ψυχικόν natural occurs only twice outside this epistle; Jas. 3:15; Jude 19. The expression natural body signifies an organism animated by a ψυχή soul (see on Rom. 11:4); that phase of the immaterial principle in man which is more nearly allied to the σὰρξ flesh, and which characterizes the man as a mortal creature; while πνεῦμα spirit is that phase which looks Godward, and characterizes him as related to God. "It is a brief designation for the whole compass of the non-corporeal side of the earthly man" (Wendt). "In the earthly body the ψυχή soul, not the πνεῦμα spirit is that which conditions its constitution and its qualities, so that it is framed as the organ of the ψυχή. In the resurrection-body the πνεῦμα spirit, for whose life-activity it is the adequate organ, conditions its nature" (Meyer). Compare Plato: "The soul has the care of inanimate being everywhere, and traverses the whole heaven in divers forms appearing; when perfect and fully winged she soars upward, and is the ruler of the universe; while the imperfect soul loses her feathers, and drooping in her flight, at last settles on the solid ground—there, finding a home, she receives an earthly frame which appears to be self-moved, but is really moved by her power; and this composition of soul and body is called a living and mortal creature. For immortal no such union can be reasonably believed to be; although fancy, not having seen nor surely known the nature of God, may imagine an immortal creature having a body, and having also a soul which are united throughout all time" ("Phaedrus," 246). ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Vincent on spiritual body** - Spiritual body (σῶμα πνευματικόν). A body in which a divine πνεῦμα spirit supersedes the ψυχή soul, so that the resurrection-body is the fitting organ for its indwelling and work, and so is properly characterized as a spiritual body. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Distinguish** two types of bodies in 1Co 15:44

1. psuchikón = body governed by the soulish, natural, fallen instincts
2. pneumatikón = spiritual, governed by divine quality in man, the spirit.



Pastor Brian Bell's poem for his gravestone...

"Plant me in the earth  
but tis only for a spell,  
for soon to bloom forth  
is the new Brian Bell!"

**Benjamin Franklin** (who was a [Deist](#), not a true believer) wrote...

The body of  
B. Franklin, printer,  
(like the cover of an old book,  
its contents torn out and  
stripped of its lettering and gilding)  
lies here, food for worms.  
But the work shall not be lost;  
for it will (as he believed)  
appear once more,  
in a new and more elegant edition,  
revised and corrected  
by the Author. . .

**Natural** (5591) [psuchikos](#) from [psuche](#) = soul) is literally "**soulish**" and pertains to the **natural** man versus the **spiritual** nature of man. In Biblical usage this adjective relates to "the life of the natural world and whatever belongs to it, in contrast to the supernatural world." Psuchikos is that which pertains to the soul, a physical body which is suited to earthly life and is subject to sin. **Hiebert** says "the term does not refer to the gross lusts of the flesh but rather relates to the powers and endowments of unregenerated human nature, man as he is in Adam." **Psuchikos** means soulish, with affinity to natural sinful propensities, the person in whom the [sarx](#), the flesh, is more the ruling principle even as **psuchikós** and **psuche** is for the animalistic instincts. **Psuche** is the nonphysical element which makes one alive, conscious of the environment, and is to be distinguished from pneuma or spirit, which is a distinctive of man as the element of communication with God. **Vine** adds that **psuchikos** "literally signifies belonging to the soul (psuchē), man; it describes the man in Adam and what pertains to him." (1 Cor 2:14). **Cleon Rogers** adds that **Psuchikos** means "soulish, pertaining to the soul or life, pertaining to behavior which is typical of human nature, in contrast with that which is under the control of God's Spirit (1Cor 2:14). It describes the natural man who does not possess the Holy Spirit. It pertains to the natural life of men and animals alike; unspiritual (James 3:15) In Jude 1:19 psuchikos means worldly-minded. The word implies that these men follow their natural lusts and appetites without restraint or control." **BDAG** says **psuchikos** pertains "to the life of the natural world and whatever belongs to it, in contrast to the realm of experience whose central characteristic is pneuma (spirit)."

**Spiritual** (4152) [pneumatikos](#) from [pneuma](#) = wind, spirit <> in turn from **pneo** = to blow) is an adjective which means pertaining to the wind and then relating to the realm of the spirit referring to the inner, invisible sphere of a human being. Note that whenever you see an "-ikos", "-ika" or "-ikon" ending on a Greek word, it means characterized or controlled by. And so **pneumatikōs** means to be controlled by or characterized by the Spirit. Almost 50% of the uses are in 1 Corinthians. As **Barclay** says "the man who is **pneumatikos** is the man who is sensitive to the Spirit and whose life is guided by the Spirit." Vine has an interesting note that **pneumatikos** "always connotes the ideas of invisibility and of power...the purposes of God revealed in the gospel by the Holy Spirit, 1 Corinthians 2:13, and the words in which that revelation is expressed, are 'spiritual,' 1 Corinthians 2:13....The **spiritual man** is one who walks by the Spirit both in the sense of Galatians 5:16 and in that of Galatians 5:25, and who himself manifests the fruit of the Spirit." **Pneumatikos** refers to Jesus (1Cor 15:47), but primarily is used of impersonal things - law (Ro 7:14), gift (Ro 1:11), blessing (Eph 1:3), songs (Eph 5:19, Col 3:16), food (1Cor 10:13), understanding (Col 1:9 - as given by the Spirit). Believers are a spiritual (pneumatikos) house and offer spiritual sacrifices (1Pe 2:5). Pneumatikos - total 26x in 21v - Rom. 1:11; Rom. 7:14; Rom. 15:27; 1 Co. 2:13; 1 Co. 2:15; 1 Co. 3:1; 1 Co. 9:11; 1 Co. 10:3; 1 Co. 10:4; 1 Co. 12:1; 1 Co. 14:1; 1 Co. 14:37; 1 Co. 15:44; 1 Co. 15:46; Gal. 6:1; Eph. 1:3; Eph. 5:19; Eph. 6:12; Col. 1:9; Col. 3:16; 1 Pet. 2:5.

**Vine** goes on to add that ""According to the Scriptures, the 'spiritual' state of soul is normal for the believer, but to this state all believers do not attain, nor when it is attained is it always maintained. Thus

the Apostle, in 1 Corinthians 3:1-3 , suggests a contrast between this spiritual state and that of the babe in Christ, i.e., of the man who because of immaturity and inexperience has not yet reached spirituality, and that of the man who by permitting jealousy, and the strife to which jealousy always leads, has lost it. The spiritual state is reached by diligence in the Word of God and in prayer; it is maintained by obedience and self-judgment. Such as are led by the Spirit are spiritual, but, of course, spirituality is not a fixed or absolute condition, it admits of growth; indeed growth in 'the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,' 2 Peter 3:18 , is evidence of true spirituality."

**Guzik writes that** On all counts, the resurrection body wins!

- Incorruption triumphs over corruption
- Glory triumphs over dishonor
- Power triumphs over weakness
- Spiritual triumphs over natural

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**Norman Geisler** - 1 CORINTHIANS 15:44—Is the resurrection body material or immaterial?

MISINTERPRETATION: Paul declares that the resurrection body is a spiritual body (1 Cor. 15:44). Jehovah's Witnesses believe such verses indicate that Jesus was raised from the dead in a spirit body. They say, "It is true that Jesus appeared in physical form to his disciples after his resurrection. . . . Jesus evidently materialized bodies on these occasions" (Reasoning from the Scriptures, 1989, 215). But his resurrection body was a spirit body.

CORRECTING THE MISINTERPRETATION: A "spiritual" body denotes an immortal body, not an immaterial body. A "spiritual" body is one dominated by the spirit, not one devoid of matter. The Greek word pneumatikos (translated "spiritual" here) means a body directed by the spirit, as opposed to one under the dominion of the flesh. It is not ruled by flesh that perishes, but by the spirit that endures (1 Cor. 15:50–58). So "spiritual body" does not mean immaterial and invisible, but immortal and imperishable. Notice the parallels drawn by Paul:

#### **Presurrection body**

1. Earthly (v. 40)
2. Perishable (v. 42)
3. Weak (v. 43)
4. Natural (v. 44)
5. Mortal (v. 53)

#### **Postresurrection body**

1. Heavenly
2. Imperishable
3. Powerful
4. [Supernatural]
5. Immortal

The complete context shows that spiritual (pneumatikos) could be translated "supernatural" in contrast to "natural" from the parallels of perishable and imperishable, corruptible and incorruptible. Pneumatikos is translated "supernatural" in 1 Corinthians 10:4 when it speaks of the "supernatural rock that followed them in the wilderness" (RSV). In its translation of "spiritual" pneumatikos refers to physical objects. Again turning to 1 Corinthians 10:45, Paul spoke of the "spiritual rock" that followed Israel in the wilderness from which they got "spiritual drink" (1 Cor. 10:4). But the Old Testament story (Exod. 17; Num. 20) reveals that it was a physical rock from which they got literal water to drink. But the actual water they drank from that material rock was produced supernaturally. When Jesus supernaturally made bread for the five thousand (John 6), he made literal bread. However, this literal, material bread could have been called "spiritual" bread because of its supernatural source in the same way that the literal manna given to Israel is called "spiritual food"(1 Cor. 10:3).

Further, when Paul spoke about a "spiritual man" (1 Cor. 2:15) he obviously did not mean an invisible, immaterial man with no corporeal body. He was, as a matter of fact, speaking of a flesh and blood human being whose life is lived by the supernatural power of God, a literal person whose life is Spirit directed. A spiritual man is one who is taught by the Spirit and who receives the things that come from the Spirit of God (1 Cor. 2:13–14). The resurrection body can be called a "spiritual body" in much the same way we speak of the Bible as a "spiritual book." Regardless of their spiritual source and power, both the resurrection body and the Bible are material objects. (When Cultists Ask)

Characteristics of the Resurrection Body		
Description or Characteristic	Earthly Body	Resurrection Body
1. Ability to sustain (1 Cor 15:42)	<u>Perishable:</u> Subject to deterioration and finally death and decay.	<u>Imperishable:</u> Incapable of deterioration; the 2nd law of thermodynamics will no longer apply.
2. Value and potential for honoring and glorifying God. life over time. (1 Cor 15:43a)	<u>Dishonor:</u> Characterized by disgrace, shame, and indignity.	<u>Glory:</u> Characterized by excellence, honor, splendor, brightness, and blessedness.
3. Physical ability to carry out one's intended purpose. (1 Cor 15:43b)	<u>Weakness:</u> Fragile, feeble, liable to sickness and infirmity, lack of ability to restrain corrupt desires.	<u>Power:</u> Inherent strength or ability; capable of the highest service before God without weariness.
4. Intended sphere of existence. (1 Cor 15:44)	<u>Natural:</u> Limited to life in the fallen, earthly realm	<u>Spiritual:</u> Suited to life in an eternal and heavenly realm.
5. Basic orientation, tendency, or focus. (1 Cor 15:45)	<u>Adam-like:</u> Tending downward toward sinfulness and deterioration.	<u>Christ-like:</u> Tending upward toward righteousness and holiness.
Source: <a href="#">Steve Lewis</a>		

**Question** - [Will we be able to see and know our friends and family members in Heaven? Will we know each other in Heaven? \(Watch associated video\)](#)

**Answer:** Many people say that the first thing they want to do when they arrive in heaven is see all their friends and loved ones who have passed on before them. In eternity, there will be plenty of time to see, know, and spend time with our friends and family members. However, that will not be our primary focus in heaven. We will be far more occupied with worshiping God and enjoying the wonders of heaven. Our reunions with loved ones are more likely to be filled with recounting the grace and glory of God in our lives, His wondrous love, and His mighty works. We will rejoice all the more because we can praise and worship the Lord in the company of other believers, especially those we loved on earth.

**What does the Bible say about whether we will be able to recognize people in the afterlife?** King Saul recognized Samuel when the witch of Endor summoned Samuel from the realm of the dead (1 Samuel 28:8-17). When David's infant son died, David declared, "I will go to him, but he will not return to me" (2 Samuel 12:23). David assumed that he would be able to recognize his son in heaven, despite the fact that he died as a baby. In Luke 16:19-31, Abraham, Lazarus, and the rich man were all recognizable after death. At the transfiguration, Moses and Elijah were recognizable (Matthew 17:3-4). In these examples, the Bible does seem to indicate that we will be recognizable after death.

The Bible declares that when we arrive in heaven, we will "be like him [Jesus]; for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2). Just as our earthly bodies were of the first man Adam, so will our resurrection bodies be just like Christ's (1 Corinthians 15:47). "And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality" (1 Corinthians 15:49, 53). Many people recognized Jesus after His resurrection (John 20:16, 20; 21:12; 1 Corinthians 15:4-7). **If Jesus was recognizable in His glorified body, we also will be recognizable in our glorified bodies.** Being able to see our loved ones is a glorious aspect of heaven, but heaven is far more about God, and far less about us. What a pleasure it will be to be reunited with our loved ones and worship God with them for all eternity. [GotQuestions.org](#)

**Related Resource:**

- [Will we remember our earthly lives when we are in Heaven?](#)

1 Corinthians 15:45 So also it is written, "The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. ([NASB 1995 - Lockman](#))

- **The first** 1Co 15:47-49 Ge 2:7 Ro 5:12-14 Rev 16:3
- **living** Joh 1:4 4:10,14 5:21,25-29 6:33,39,40,54,57,63,68 10:10,28 Joh 11:25,26 14:6,19 17:2,3 Ac 3:15 Ro 5:17,21 8:2,10,11 Php 3:21 Col 3:4 1Jn 1:1-3 5:11,12 Rev 21:6 22:1,17
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Romans 5:12-14+ Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned— 13 for until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. 14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.

### TWO PROTOTYPES: ADAM FOR NATURAL BODY JESUS FOR RESURRECTION BODY

Paul is still addressing the question in 1 Cor 15:35 "And with what kind of body do they come?" and in this section he will teach that the resurrection body of the Lord Jesus Christ is the prototype for the believer's resurrection body.

**So also it is written** - **Written** is [grapho](#) in the perfect tense indicating written down on record in the past and remaining on record, denoting the abiding authoritative character of that which was written (i.e., "it stands written"). **Written** is in the passive voice which is the divine passive for it was the Holy Spirit Who prompted/inspired Moses (cf 2 Peter 1:21+) to write this truth down for generations to come that they might understand that Genesis is God's Word and it still stands.

Creationist **Dr Henry Morris** comments that "Paul here quotes Genesis 2:7, again confirming the historicity of the special creation of Adam and, therefore, of the Genesis record of creation as a whole." ([Defender's Study Bible](#))

#### Moses wrote

Genesis 2:7 Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a **living** (Hebrew - [chay](#); Lxx = [zao](#) in present tense) **being** (Hebrew = [nephesh](#); Lxx = [psuche](#))

**The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL** ([psuche](#)) - In simple terms God breathed a soul ([psuche](#)) into **the first man Adam**, who in turn gave natural life to the entire human race. In short, every human being is descended from Adam. Because we bear Adam's image and have been "infected" with his "sin virus," (Ro 5:12+) we all are destined to die twice, physically in this life and spiritually forever in the next life.

**Dr Henry Morris** comments "This is a clear affirmation that Adam was, indeed, the first man, thus refuting the various quasi-evolutionary theories involving pre-Adamite men. ([Defender's Study Bible](#))

**David Guzik** - The first perfect man, Adam, gave us one kind of body. The second perfect man, Jesus the last Adam, can give us another kind of body ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Ray Stedman** - Paul says there are really only two men who have ever lived in all of history, and both of them he calls "Adam." There is the **first Adam and the last Adam**. Do not call him "the second Adam" (ED: HOWEVER SEE PAUL'S DESIGNATION "THE SECOND MAN" IN 1 Cor 15:47) because that would allow for a third and a fourth and a fifth. There are only two -- the first Adam, and the last Adam, Jesus. The only other human being to head up a race is Jesus. The first Adam, Paul says, was made a living soul. He had a body made from the dust, and into that body of dust God himself, a Spirit, breathed a breath, and the joining together of spirit and body produced another phenomenon called the "soul," the personality. It is the presence of a spirit in a body that creates the soul and allows a person to function as a human being with mind, emotion, and will. That is what the first Adam was. Now, in the fall, the Holy Spirit that dwelt in the human spirit of Adam was withdrawn, and the human spirit was as though it was lifeless and dead. Man, therefore, was governed by his soul, the highest part of his being, which can feel and touch and taste and reason and think, but it has no contact with anything beyond and above. It is "dead in trespasses and sins," ( Ephesians 2:1+). We were all born that way. Every human being is a son or daughter of the first Adam by nature. ([The New Body: What Is It Like?](#))

**The last** ([eschatos](#)) **Adam became a life-giving spirit** - **Last Adam** is a rabbinic expression used for the Messiah. Paul's point is clear that through the first Adam we receive our natural bodies and through the last Adam we will receive our spiritual resurrection

bodies. While Adam gave natural life to all mankind, Jesus gave supernatural life or spiritual life to all who would believe in Him. Those who believe in Jesus bear His image and are destined to die only once, but then live forever.

**John** alludes to the last Adam's power as a life-giving spirit...

"For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the **Son also gives life to whom He wishes.**" (John 5:21 )

Paul adds these words about Christ as a life-giving spirit...

Romans 8:2+ For the law of **the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus** has set you free from the law of sin and of death.....11+ But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead **will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.**

**Pulpit Commentary** - Christ is "a quickening," i.e. a life giving, "Spirit," here mainly in the sense that we shall only be raised by "the power of his resurrection" (John 5:24, 25), but also in the sense that his Spirit dwelleth in us, and is our true Life. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Glenn Spencer** - The first Adam was given the breath of life. Christ, the last Adam, has the power to give life.

**A T Robertson** Word Pictures - Christ is the crown of humanity and has power to give us the new body.

**Stedman** comments then "came a last Adam. Jesus, a life-giving Spirit, came, and as a Spirit he indwells, by faith, our human spirits when we receive him, when we open up our life to him. He regenerates our human spirit, and he is now, from that vantage point within us, beginning to impart life to the soul again, to recapture the mind, the emotions and the will and bring them back under subjection to his Lordship. So we begin to experience in our life, right now, the joy of being once again in right relationship with the God who made us. He is a life-giving Spirit, and he is waiting to impart life to the "earth suit" as well and to make it into a "heaven suit," designed for the heavens." ([1 Corinthians 15:35-49 The New Body: What Is It Like?](#))

In Romans Paul contrasts Adam with Jesus writing

For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ. (Ro 5:17+)

**Dr Henry Morris** comments on the last Adam. The "last Adam," was the Lord Jesus. As in Romans 5:12-19, the divinely inspired apostle showed Adam to be a contrasting type of Christ. Both were true men, yet their bodies were formed directly by God without genetic inheritance from human parents. Adam was the first man made a living soul, the federal head of the human race; the Lord Jesus was the first begotten from the dead, the captain of our salvation, the first man made a life-giving spirit. Adam brought sin and death into the world; Christ brought everlasting righteousness and eternal life. ([Defender's Study Bible](#))

**Thomas Constable** - The natural body is physical, the product of Adam who received life from God (Gen. 2:7). That life resides in a body characterized as "soulish" (i.e., alive with material and immaterial components). It eventually dies. However the resurrection body is spiritual, the product of Jesus Christ, the second Adam, who gives new life. That life will inhabit a body that will never die. Paul called it spiritual because it is ready for the spiritual rather than the physical realm. Moreover it comes to us from a spirit being, Jesus Christ, rather than a physical being, Adam. One can assume full "spiritual" existence, including a spiritual body, only as Christ did, namely by resurrection. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**C. H. MacIntosh** - Jesus kept close to Scripture, and thus conquered: without any other weapon, save the sword of the Spirit, He stood in the conflict, and gained a glorious triumph. What a contrast to the first Adam! The one had every thing to plead against him. The garden, with all its delights, in the one case; the wilderness, with all its privations, in the other: confidence in Satan, in the one case, confidence in God in the other: complete defeat in the one case; complete victory in the other. Blessed forever be the God of all grace, Who has laid our help on One so mighty to conquer, mighty to save!

**Soul** (5590) ([psuche](#) or [psyche](#) from [psucho](#) = to breathe, blow, English = psychology, "study of the soul") is the breath, then that which breathes, the individual, animated creature. However the discerning reader must understand that psuche is one of those Greek words that can have several meanings, the exact nuance being determined by the context. It follows that one cannot simply select of the three main meanings of psuche and insert it in a given passage for it may not be appropriate to the given context. The meaning of **psuche** is also contingent upon whether one is a dichotomist or trichotomist. Consult Greek lexicons for more lengthy definitions of psuche as this definition is only a brief overview. (Click an excellent article on [Soul](#) in the Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology; see also ISBE article on [Soul](#))

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**Norman Geisler** - 1 CORINTHIANS 15:45—Was Christ a life-giving spirit after his resurrection, or did he have a physical body?

MISINTERPRETATION: Paul asserts here that Christ was made a “life-giving spirit” after his resurrection. Some—including the Jehovah’s Witnesses—have cited this passage to prove that Jesus had no physical resurrection body (Aid to Bible Understanding, 1971, 1395).

CORRECTING THE MISINTERPRETATION: “Life-giving spirit” does not speak of the nature of Christ’s resurrection body, but of the divine origin of the resurrection. Jesus’ physical body came back to life only by the power of God (cf. Rom. 1:4). So Paul is speaking about its spiritual source, not its physical substance as a material body. See also comments on 1 Corinthians 15:44.

If “spirit” describes the nature of Christ’s resurrection body, then Adam, with whom he is contrasted, must not have had a soul, since he is described as “of the earth, made of dust” (v. 47). But the Bible clearly says that Adam was “a living being [soul]” (Gen. 2:7).

Christ’s resurrection body is called “spiritual body” (v. 44) which, as discussed under 1 Corinthians 15:44, is the same word used by Paul to describe material food and a literal rock (1 Cor. 10:4). It is called a “body” (soma), which always means a physical body when referring to an individual human being.

In summation, the resurrection body is called “spiritual” and “life-giving spirit” because its source is the spiritual realm, not because its substance is immaterial. Christ’s supernatural resurrection body is “from heaven,” as Adam’s natural body was “of the earth” (v. 47). But just as the one from “earth” also has an immaterial soul, even so the One from “heaven” also has a material body. (When Cultists Ask)

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**Question:** [What does it mean that Jesus is the second Adam?](#)

**Answer:** The Apostle Paul tells us in his first letter to the church in Corinth, “The first man Adam became a living being; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit. The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual. The first man was of the dust of the earth, the second man from heaven. As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the man from heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven” (1 Corinthians 15:45-49).

Paul is here pointing out the difference between two kinds of bodies, i.e., the natural and the spiritual. Genesis 2:7 speaks of the first man, Adam, becoming a living person. Adam was made from the dust of the ground and given the breath of life from God. Every human being since that time shares the same characteristics. However, the last Adam or the “second Adam”—that is, Christ—is a life-giving Spirit. Just as Adam was the first of the human race, so Christ is the first of those who will be raised from the dead to eternal life. Because Christ rose from the dead, He is “a life-giving spirit” who entered into a new form of existence. He is the source of the spiritual life that will result in believers’ resurrection. Christ’s new glorified human body now suits His new, glorified, spiritual life—just as Adam’s human body was suitable to his natural life. When believers are resurrected, God will give them transformed, eternal bodies suited to eternal life.

Paul tells us in verse 46 that the natural came first and after that the spiritual. People have natural life first; that is, they are born into this earth and live here. Only from there do they then obtain spiritual life. Paul is telling us that the natural man, Adam, came first on this earth and was made from the dust of the earth. While it is true that Christ has existed from eternity past, He is here called the second man or second Adam because He came from heaven to earth many years after Adam. Christ came as a human baby with a body like all other humans, but He did not originate from the dust of the earth as had Adam. He “came from heaven.”

Then Paul goes on: “As was the earthly man [Adam], so are those who are of the earth; and as is the man from heaven [Christ], so also are those who are of heaven. And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven” (1 Corinthians 15:48-49). Because all humanity is bound up with Adam, so every human being has an earthly body just like Adam’s. Earthly bodies are fitted for life on this earth, yet they are limited by death, disease, and weakness because of sin which we’ve seen was first brought into the world by Adam.

However, the good news is that believers can know with certainty that their heavenly bodies will be just like Christ’s—imperishable, eternal, glorious, and filled with power. At this time, all are like Adam; one day, all believers will be like Christ (Philippians 3:21). The Apostle John wrote to the believers, “Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is” (1 John 3:2). [GotQuestions.org](#)

**Related Resource:**

- Richard B. Gaffin, Jr. -- "['Life-Giving Spirit': Probing the Center of Paul's Pneumatology.](#)" *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 41:4 (December 1998):573-89.

- **but the natural** Ro 6:6 Eph 4:22-24 Col 3:9,10
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## DIFFERENT ORDER FOR NATURAL AND SPIRITUAL

**Kistemaker** suggests that "After Paul's reference to the Scriptures, he returns to the wording of verse 44, where he used the word body. Now he omits the word but implies it. This means that verse 45 with its quotation from an Old Testament Scripture passage should be understood as a parenthetical comment. (BNTC-1 Cor)

**However, the spiritual ([pneumatikos](#)) is not first, but the natural ([psuchikos](#)); then (time phrase) the spiritual ([pneumatikos](#))** - The **natural** body is first because it has to die to give rise to the **spiritual** body, the resurrection body. Paul had earlier stated that what you sow does not come to life unless it dies. (1 Cor 15:36) "The imperfect precedes the perfect" (Pulpit Commentary) "Therefore the lower moral stage must precede the higher." (Robertson and Plummer)

**Hunter & McShane** - Paul insists on the normal order that obtains, that the natural always comes before the spiritual. This is clearly observed in the following: natural life before spiritual life; natural body before spiritual body; first man before the second man; Adam before Christ.. ([What the Bible teaches – 1 and 2 Corinthians](#))

**Stedman** - The Mormon church teaches that we were once spirit beings who then came to earth and became men, but this verse flatly contradicts that. It is not the spiritual which is first, it is the physical. We came into existence on a physical level, but designed by God, beyond that, is the spiritual. That is next, and death is but a stop in that process, and necessary to it. So now we are in a state of transition, as Paul goes on to describe,

**Vine** - this is a principle relating to the development of human life; it begins with the merely natural and subsequently receives the spiritual.

**Lenski** - What is briefly and pointedly summarized here is more fully developed in the following verses: first Adam, then Christ; first those who belong to Adam, then those who belong to Christ. Paul has no philosophy of the matter, he records simply the historical facts. ([Commentary](#))

**Hodge** - This does not mean simply that the natural body precedes the spiritual body. But it announces, as it were, a general law. The lower precedes the higher; the imperfect the perfect. This is true in all the works of God, in which there is a development. Adam's earthly state was to be preparatory to a heavenly one. The present life is like a seed time, the harvest is hereafter. The natural comes before the spiritual; as Calvin says, we are born before we are regenerated, we live before we rise. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Warren Wiersbe** - First Corinthians 15:46 states an important biblical principle: first the "natural" (earthly), and then the "spiritual" (heavenly). The first birth gives us that which is natural, but the second birth gives us that which is spiritual. God rejects the first birth, the natural, and says, "You must be born again!" He rejected Cain and chose Abel. He rejected Abraham's firstborn, Ishmael, and chose Isaac, the second-born. He rejected Esau and chose Jacob. If we depend on our first birth, we shall be condemned forever; but if we experience the new birth, we shall be blessed forever. (BEC)

NET 1 Corinthians 15:47 The first man is from the earth, made of dust; the second man is from heaven.

NLT 1 Corinthians 15:47 Adam, the first man, was made from the dust of the earth, while Christ, the second man, came from heaven.

ESV 1 Corinthians 15:47 The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven.

NIV 1 Corinthians 15:47 The first man was of the dust of the earth, the second man from heaven.

- **first** 1Co 15:45 Ge 2:7 Ge 3:19 Joh 3:13,31 2Co 5:1
- **the second man** Isa 9:6 Jer 23:6 Mt 1:23 Lu 1:16,17 2:11 Joh 3:12,13,31 6:33 Ac 10:36 Eph 4:9-11 1Ti 3:16
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## Related Passages:

John 3:13+ "No one has ascended into heaven, but **He who descended from heaven**: the Son of Man.

John 3:31+ "**He who comes from above is above all**, he who is of the earth is from the earth and speaks of the earth. **He who comes from heaven is above all**. (AS DISCUSSED BELOW WHILE PASSAGES LIKE THIS COULD SUPPORT "FROM HEAVEN" AS RELATED TO THE INCARNATION, NOT ALL COMMENTATORS AGREE.)

## DIFFERENT ORIGIN FOR FIRST AND SECOND MAN

**The first man is from the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven-** From earth, earthy recalls God's creation of Adam from the dust of the ground (Ge 2:7, cf Ge 3:19+). The point is that Adam's characteristics were earthly.

**Leon Morris** - Though he appeared on earth, and lived and died and rose again on earth, he is not to be thought of as originating from the earth, as did Adam. He is from heaven. Some see here a backward glance to the incarnation and some a forward look to the second advent ([R&P below](#)). But Paul is surely not looking specifically at either. He is contrasting Christ's heavenly origin with Adam's earthly one. (TNTC-1 Corinthians)

**MacArthur** - Christ, called the **second man** because He has produced a spiritual race, existed eternally before He became a man. He lived on earth in a natural body, but He came from heaven. Adam was tied to earth; Christ was tied to heaven. ([MNTC- 1 Corinthians](#))

**Hodge** - The text, however, simply asserts the heavenly origin of Christ. Adam was of the earth; Christ was from heaven; comp. John 3:13. Adam, therefore, had a body suited to the earth; Christ has a body suited to heaven. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Schreiner** - In saying that **the second man is from heaven**, Paul probably does not have in mind the incarnation (NOTE THIS DIFFERS FROM MACARTHUR AND HODGE ABOVE), nor is he denying that Jesus was a man of dust. Instead, in accord with the context of the chapter, he considers Jesus to be the resurrected Lord. He is the heavenly man in that he is now seated at God's right hand as the resurrected Lord of all. All people born into the world are made of dust, but those who are united with Christ also become heavenly people. Still, their heavenly existence is not yet realized. (1 Corinthians, 2018: An Introduction and Commentary)

**Robertson and Plummer** agree with **Schreiner** on interpretation of **the second man is from heaven** - This refers to the Second Advent rather than to the Incarnation. The Apostle is answering the question, 'With what kind of a body do they come?' It was  $\xi\ \omicron\ \rho\alpha\upsilon\omicron$ , (from heaven) e caelo, that the Risen Lord appeared to St Paul. From the Ascension to the Return, Christ is  $\xi\ \omicron\ \rho\alpha\upsilon\omicron$  (from heaven) in His relation to mankind. They are still 'of earth,' He is now 'of heaven.' ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**1 Corinthians 15:48 As is the earthy, so also are those who are earthy; and as is the heavenly, so also are those who are heavenly.** ([NASB 1995 - Lockman](#))

Amplified Now those who are made of the dust are like him who was first made of the dust (earthly-minded); and as is [the Man] from heaven, so also [are those] who are of heaven (heavenly-minded).

NET 1 Corinthians 15:48 Like the one made of dust, so too are those made of dust, and like the one from heaven, so too those who are heavenly.

NLT 1 Corinthians 15:48 Earthly people are like the earthly man, and heavenly people are like the heavenly man.

ESV 1 Corinthians 15:48 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.

NIV 1 Corinthians 15:48 As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the man from heaven, so also are those who are of heaven.

Easy to Read Version All people belong to the earth. They are like that first man of earth. But those who belong to heaven are like that man of heaven.

- earthy 1Co 15:21,22 Ge 5:3 Job 14:4 Joh 3:6 Ro 5:12-21



- **and as** Php 3:20-21
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Philippians 3:20-21+ For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; 21 Who will transform the body of our humble state into **conformity with the body of His glory**, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

Ephesians 2:6+ and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

**As is the earthy, so also are those who are earthy-** This refers to our natural descent from Adam. Keeping in mind that Paul is still explaining the resurrection, this would seem to point not only to the earthy origin but to the earthy quality of life which will return to the earth ("dust").

**and as is the heavenly, so also are those who are heavenly-** The heavenly refers to Christ. The point appears that those who are associated with Christ share the character of His life.

**Robertson and Plummer** - Each race has the attributes of its Head. As a consequence of this law (καί), we who once wore the likeness of the earthly Adam shall hereafter wear that of the glorified Christ. What Adam was, made of dust to be dissolved into dust again, such are all who share his life; and what Christ is, risen and eternally glorified, such will be all those who share His life. A body, conditioned by psuche, derived from Adam, will be transformed into a body conditioned by pneuma, derived from Christ. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Guzik** - From the first Adam, we all are made of dust, but from the last Adam we can be made heavenly. For believers, the promise is sure: we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Spurgeon - Morning and Evening** - The head and members are of one nature, and not like that monstrous image which Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream. The head was of fine gold, but the belly and thighs were of brass, the legs of iron, and the feet, part of iron and part of clay. Christ's mystical body is no absurd combination of opposites; the members were mortal, and therefore Jesus died; the glorified head is immortal, and therefore the body is immortal too, for thus the record stands, "Because I live, ye shall live also." As is our loving Head, such is the body, and every member in particular. A chosen Head and chosen members; an accepted Head, and accepted members; a living Head, and living members. If the head be pure gold, all the parts of the body are of pure gold also. Thus is there a double union of nature as a basis for the closest communion. Pause here, devout reader, and see if thou canst without ecstatic amazement, contemplate the infinite condescension of the Son of God in thus exalting thy wretchedness into blessed union with his glory. Thou art so mean that in remembrance of thy mortality, thou mayest say to corruption, "Thou art my father," and to the worm, "Thou art my sister"; and yet in Christ thou art so honoured that thou canst say to the Almighty, "Abba, Father," and to the Incarnate God, "Thou art my brother and my husband." Surely if relationships to ancient and noble families make men think highly of themselves, we have whereof to glory over the heads of them all. Let the poorest and most despised believer lay hold upon this privilege; let not a senseless indolence make him negligent to trace his pedigree, and let him suffer no foolish attachment to present vanities to occupy his thoughts to the exclusion of this glorious, this heavenly honour of union with Christ.

**1 Corinthians 15:49** Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the image of the heavenly. [NASB 1995 - Lockman](#)

Amplified And just as we have borne the image [of the man] of dust, so shall we and so let us also bear the image [of the Man] of heaven.

- **as** Ge 5:3
- **we will** Mt 13:43 Ro 8:29 2Co 3:18 4:10,11 1Jn 3:2
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Genesis 5:3 When Adam had lived one hundred and thirty years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, according to his image, and named him Seth.

1 Cor 11:7+ For a man ought not to have his head covered, since **he is the image and glory of God**; but the woman is the glory of man.

2 Cor 3:18+ But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are (present tense - continually) being (divine passive) transformed ([metamorphoo](#)) into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

## **OUR FUTURE HEAVENLY IMAGE**

**Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the image of the heavenly-** We look and act and talk and think like Adam. All have been born into the image of Adam, but all who have been born again are of His image, are growing in likeness to that image (2 Cor 3:18+) and will one day will fully attain that image (1 Jn 3:2+) which will coincide with reception of our resurrection bodies.

**John** describes believer's bearing the image of the heavenly

Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be (BELIEVERS TODAY LOOK NO DIFFERENT THAN UNBELIEVERS BUT THAT WILL CHANGE FOR). **We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.** (1 John 3:2+)

**Stedman** - What a hope! What a difference that makes to everything in life! It transforms the way you act, the way you think. It transforms your dreams, your aspirations, what you do with your time. Everything is changed. ([The New Body: What Is It Like?](#))

**NET Bible** has "let us also bear" in place of "we will also bear." (See [technical note below](#))

**Hodge** on have borne - **We have borne** translates the verb phoreō, which is more intensive than the more usual pherō. Whereas the latter means simply 'to bear', the former conveys the idea of bearing continually or habitually (it is often used of wearing clothes; cf. v. 53). It is thus a natural word to use here, where Paul conveys the thought of our habitual state.....The bearing in question is seen in the whole of life, not simply in some parts. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Schreiner** - The word **image** means that believers have participated fully in the reality of being people of dust; but in the future they shall also bear the image of the heavenly man. They will share fully in the likeness of the man of heaven; thus they will be given a body that is imperishable and incorruptible. (TNTC-1 Cor)

**W E Vine** - the word eikōn, an **image**, involves the double idea of representation and manifestation. In each of the cases now mentioned there is a representation derived from the prototype. Adam, as a prototype, was a man of dust and, having been morally a fallen being, he and his descendants, all likewise moral failures, return physically to dust. Believers, in their glorified state, will not only resemble Him but will represent Him, as to what He, their Heavenly Prototype, is in Himself, both in His spiritual body and in His moral character. God has foreordained us to be "conformed to the image of His Son ..., and whom He foreordained ... them He also glorified" (Rom. 8:30), a verse which shows that this perfect state will be a work of Divine grace. (Collected Writings)

**MacArthur** - Just as we will exchange Adam's natural body for Christ's spiritual body, we will also exchange Adam's image for Christ's. ([MNTC- 1 Corinthians](#))

**Glenn Spencer** - We have borne the image of the earthly man, Adam. By him sin entered the world and stamped its awful mark upon every human. Man bears the mark and burden of sin. On the other hand, those who know Christ, the second Adam, have had their sin removed and have become a new creation. Therefore, in the resurrection we will also bear the image of the heavenly. ( Expository Pulpit Series – 1 Corinthians: Divine Help for a Divided Church)

**Hunter & McShane** - The meaning is clear: as we have borne the image of the earthly in this world, we shall bear the image of the heavenly in the next world. It is quite staggering to think that from Adam there have descended millions of people like him, possessing the same body and the same nature; yet some have told us that no two are exactly alike. Considering that recognition is usually facial, this is a tremendous feat of the Creator. So in the resurrection world, we shall have bodies like His body, enjoy the life that is His to the full; yet each shall be recognisable as a distinct personality. We shall then be conformed to the image of His Son (Rom 8:29).. ([What the Bible teaches – 1 and 2 Corinthians](#))

**Guzik** - Since we will bear the image of the heavenly Man, the best example we have of what a resurrection body will be like is to see what Jesus' resurrection body was like. The resurrection body of Jesus was material and could eat (Luke 24:39–43), yet it was not bound by the laws of nature (Luke 24:31, 24:36–37). ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

[Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers](#) (if it reads "let us also bear") - The words transport the thoughts of the reader to the future glory, and, at the same moment, show a light on present duty. The resurrection life is to be begun in us even now.

**MacArthur** has a good summation of believers receiving a resurrection body like Christ - From Jesus' post-resurrection

appearances we get some idea of the greatness, power, and wonder of what our own resurrection bodies will be like. Jesus appeared and disappeared at will, reappearing again at another place far distant. He could go through walls or closed doors, and yet also could eat, drink, sit, talk, and be seen by those who He wanted to see Him. He was remarkably the same, yet even more remarkably different. After His ascension, the angel told the amazed disciples, "This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11+). The body the disciples saw after Jesus' resurrection is the same body that will be seen when He returns again. Just as with our Lord, our bodies, which are now perishable, dishonored, weak, and natural, will be raised into bodies that are imperishable, glorious, powerful, and spiritual. That which hindered our service and manifestation of God will now be the marvelous channel of fulfillment. We will have His own power in which to serve and praise Him, and His own glory by which to manifest and magnify Him. "Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (Matt. 13:43+). In heaven we will radiate like the sun, in the blazing and magnificent glory which the Lord will graciously share with those who are His. Christ will "transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself" (Phil. 3:21+). We cannot imagine exactly what that will be like. Even our present spiritual eyes cannot envision our future spiritual bodies. "Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is" (1 John 3:2+). We will not see our own resurrected bodies, or even have our own resurrected bodies, until we first see Christ's. ([MNTC- 1 Corinthians](#))

**Image** (1504) **eikon** properly, "mirror-like representation," i.e. what is very close in resemblance (like a "high-definition" projection, as defined by the context). **Eikon** is an artistic representation, as one might see on a coin or statue (an image or a likeness, as in Mt 22:20). **Eikon** can also refer to a visible manifestation of an invisible and heavenly reality form (see Heb 10:1+) **eikon** exactly reflects its source (what it directly corresponds to). In this passage **eikon** "is used of man being 'the image of God' (1Cor 11:7). It can denote simply representation (as in the eikōn of the Emperor on a coin), or it can denote something more exact. Here it will be the image that corresponds to and reproduces the original." (Hodge) Eikon - 20v - Matt. 22:20; Mk. 12:16; Lk. 20:24; Rom. 1:23; Rom. 8:29; 1 Co. 11:7; 1 Co. 15:49; 2 Co. 3:18; 2 Co. 4:4; Col. 1:15; Col. 3:10; Heb. 10:1; Rev. 13:14; Rev. 13:15; Rev. 14:9; Rev. 14:11; Rev. 15:2; Rev. 16:2; Rev. 19:20; Rev. 20:4

**NET Technical Note** - A few significant witnesses have the future indicative φορέσομεν (phoresomen, "we will bear"; B I 6 630 1881 al sa) instead of the aorist subjunctive φορέσωμεν (phoresōmen, "let us bear"; ?46 κ A C D F G Ψ 075 0243 33 1739 ? latt bo). If the original reading is the future tense, then "we will bear" would be a guarantee that believers would be like Jesus (and unlike Adam) in the resurrection. If the aorist subjunctive is original, then "let us bear" would be a command to show forth the image of Jesus, i.e., to live as citizens of the kingdom that believers will one day inherit. The future indicative is not widespread geographically. At the same time, it fits the context well: Not only are there indicatives in this section (especially vv. 42–49), but the conjunction καί (kai) introducing the comparative καθώς (kathōs) seems best to connect to the preceding by furthering the same argument (what is, not what ought to be). For this reason, though, the future indicative could be a reading thus motivated by an early scribe. In light of the extremely weighty evidence for the aorist subjunctive, it is probably best to regard the aorist subjunctive as original. This connects well with v. 50, for there Paul makes a pronouncement that seems to presuppose some sort of exhortation. G. D. Fee (First Corinthians [NICNT], 795) argues for the originality of the subjunctive, stating that "it is nearly impossible to account for anyone's having changed a clearly understandable future to the hortatory subjunctive so early and so often that it made its way into every textual history as the predominant reading." The subjunctive makes a great deal of sense in view of the occasion of 1 Corinthians. Paul wrote to combat an over-realized eschatology in which some of the Corinthians evidently believed they were experiencing all the benefits of the resurrection body in the present, and thus that their behavior did not matter. If the subjunctive is the correct reading, it seems Paul makes two points: (1) that the resurrection is a bodily one, as distinct from an out-of-body experience, and (2) that one's behavior in the interim does make a difference (see 15:32–34, 58).

**Robertson and Plummer add this technical note** - If, with the best editors, we follow the greatly preponderating external evidence and read φορέσωμεν rather than φορέσομεν, 'let us wear' or 'let us put on for wear' rather than 'we shall wear,' the meaning will be that the attaining to the glorified body **depends upon our own effort**: see Goudge, p. 155. "But not only the context and the whole tenor of the argument are in favour of the future, but the hortative subjunctive is here singularly out of place and unlooked for" (Ellicott). ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

1 Corinthians 15:50 Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. ([NASB 1995 - Lockman](#))

- this 1Co 1:12 7:29 2Co 9:6 Ga 3:17 5:16 Eph 4:17 Col 2:4

- that 1Co 6:13 Mt 16:17 Joh 3:3-6 2Co 5:1
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

1 Corinthians 6:9-11+ Or do you not know that **the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God**? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, 10 nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, **will inherit the kingdom of God.** 11 Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God. (COMMENT: HERE PAUL SPEAKS OF UNBELIEVERS WHO WILL NOT ENTER THE KINGDOM OF GOD. THAT IS NOT WHAT HE REFERS TO BY "FLESH AND BLOOD" AND "PERISHABLE" IN 1 Cor 15:50 - HE IS ADDRESSING BELIEVERS).

## ONLY IMPERISHABLE INHERITS THE KINGDOM OF GOD

**Robertson and Plummer** - The two objections (1 Cor 15:35) are now answered. How is resurrection possible after the body has been dissolved in the grave? **Answer**; The difficulty is the other way: resurrection would be impossible without such dissolution, for it is dissolution that frees the principle of new life. Then what kind of a body do the risen have, if the present body is not restored? **Answer**; A body similar to that of the Risen Lord, i.e. a body as suitable to the spiritual condition of the new life as a material body is to the present physical condition. But a further question may be raised. What will happen to those believers who are alive when the Lord comes? The radical translation from ψυχικόν to πνευματικόν must take place, whether through death or not. Mortal must become immortal. God will make the victory over death in all cases complete. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Vine** echoes R&P - the two questions raised in verse 36 have been completely answered. As to the first, it has been shown that, instead of resurrection being impossible on account of the condition of the body after death, that very condition is essentially preliminary to resurrection, for it involves the principle of a new life. And as to the second, the resurrection body is to be in the likeness of that of the risen Lord. But a further question arises, namely, what is to take place in the case of believers who are alive when Christ comes. The statement in verse 50, while confirming what has preceded, prepares the way for the answer to this question. (Collected Writings)

**Now I** (present tense - continually) **say this, brethren** ([adelphos](#)),- In addressing them as **brethren** he is speaking to those who are saved.

**That flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom** ([basileia](#)) **of God** - (See [Kingdom of God](#) but in the present passage it is equivalent to the eternal state) **Cannot** is *ou dunatai* ([dunamai](#)) which means absolutely continually never have the power, ability or capacity to **inherit the Kingdom of God**. What Paul has just said in verse 49 is preparatory to what he now states. In context, **flesh and blood** is those who are in their natural ([psuchikos](#)), bodies that are perishing and sin-stained. His point is that the natural state of men while suited for life on earth is not suited for life in the Kingdom of God ([re-read](#) 1 Cor 15:42-44).

**Guzik** - Paul is not saying, "material things cannot inherit the kingdom of God," because Jesus' resurrection body was a material body. Flesh and blood, in this context, means "our present bodies." Jesus' resurrection body was not a "pure spirit" body, but a material body described as flesh and bones (Luke 24:39) instead of flesh and blood. This may seem like a small distinction to us, but it must be an important distinction to God. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Stedman on flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom** ([basileia](#)) **of God** - That may sound like theological language, but what it is saying, practically, is, "There is no way to achieve enduring value in God's eyes by utilizing your natural, normal, human resources." That is what "flesh and blood" means. That sounds strange, does it not? What Paul says, in effect, is: "Nothing that wins the approval or the applause of men has any value at all in the sight of God." This includes all the Hollywood Oscars, all the athletic trophies, all the academic degrees, all the Nobel Prizes, or achievements of a lifetime of labor. None of these can ever impress God in the least degree. That is frightening, is it not? ([The Victory Of The Mystery](#))

**Nor does the perishable** ([phthora](#)) **inherit the imperishable** ([aphtharsia](#)) - As alluded to above, **perishable** is not speaking of moral or ethical corruption but only of the natural body and in context refers to those who are still living. Absolutely nothing that is **perishable** can inherit that which **imperishable** and the **Kingdom of God** is eternally imperishable. Paul's is reiterating his previous point that our **perishable** bodies must be made different! They must attain to the state of resurrection bodies, bodies like Christ.

The writer of Hebrews even describes Christ's on earth as in a body **offlesh and blood** (Heb 2:14+), a perishable body which had to "perish" on the Cross before He could return to His Father in Heaven!

**Imperishable** is used by Paul in 2 Timothy 1:10+ writing that salvation from eternity past "has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and **immortality** ([aphtharsia](#)) to light through the gospel." It follows that only those who have attained to immortality will be allowed entrance into the **Kingdom of God**.

**Robertson and Plummer** - A perishable nature cannot really have possession of an imperishable Kingdom. For the Kingdom an incorruptible body wholly controlled by spirit is necessary, and this 'flesh and blood' cannot be....If living flesh cannot inherit, how much less dead and corrupted flesh. Our present bodies, whether living or dead, are absolutely unfitted for the Kingdom: there must be a transformation. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

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**Norman Geisler** - 1 CORINTHIANS 15:50—If flesh and blood cannot enter heaven, then how can there be a physical resurrection?

MISINTERPRETATION: According to this verse, "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." Hence, Jesus must have had a spiritual resurrection, since flesh and blood bodies cannot exist in heaven (Aid to Bible Understanding, 1971, 1395). Mortality and corruption belong to the fleshly body. The resurrection body is immortal and incorruptible because it is by nature a spiritual body.

CORRECTING THE MISINTERPRETATION: To conclude from this phrase that the resurrection body will not be a body of physical flesh is without biblical justification. The very next phrase omitted from the above quotation clearly indicates that Paul is speaking not of flesh as such, but of corruptible flesh. For he adds, "nor does corruption inherit the incorruption" (v. 50 NKJV). So, Paul is not affirming that the resurrection body will not have flesh; he is saying that it will not have perishable flesh.

In order to convince the frightened disciples that he was not an immaterial spirit (Luke 24:37), Jesus emphatically told them, "Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have" (Luke 24:39 NIV). Peter declared that the resurrection body would be the same body of flesh that went into the tomb and never saw corruption (Acts 2:31). Paul also reaffirmed this truth in a parallel passage (Acts 13:35). And John implies that it is against Christ to deny that he remains "in the flesh" even after his resurrection (1 John 4:2; 2 John 7).

This conclusion cannot be avoided by claiming that Jesus' resurrection body had flesh and bones, but not flesh and blood. For if it had flesh and bones, then it was a literal, material body, whether or not it had blood. Flesh and bones stresses the solidity of Jesus' physical postresurrection body. They are more obvious signs of tangibility than blood, which cannot be as easily seen or touched. The phrase flesh and blood in this context apparently means "mortal flesh and blood," that is, a mere human being. This is supported by parallel uses in the New Testament. When Jesus said to Peter, "Flesh and blood has not revealed this to you" (Matt. 16:17 KJV), he could not have been referring to the mere substance of the body as such, which obviously could not reveal that he was the Son of God. Rather, the most natural interpretation of 1 Corinthians 15:50 seems to be that a human being, as an earth-bound and perishable creature, cannot have a place in God's glorious, heavenly kingdom. (When Cultists Ask)

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## When The End Is A Beginning

Jesus Christ . . . has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. —2 Timothy 1:10

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:50-58

Our faith in Jesus Christ ought to make a difference in the way we live—and in the way we die.

God wants us to live with zest and happiness. Indeed, Jesus said He came to offer us abundant life (Jn. 10:10). Paul too affirmed that God "gives us richly all things to enjoy" (1 Tim. 6:17).

Yet we can't escape the fact that our days on earth are numbered. So it is wise to think about our inevitable appointment with death (Heb. 9:27).

Is our attitude toward our departure from this world like that of famous scientist Marie Curie, who with her husband Pierre discovered radium? When he was accidentally killed, she lamented, "It is the end of everything, everything, everything!"

Our attitude should be radically different. Because of our trust in the death-conquering Savior, we can say as a young German theologian did the night before the Nazis hanged him in 1945, "For me, this is the beginning."

For the believer, death is the end of all pain, loneliness, and sorrow, the end of whatever has made this life less than abundant, and the beginning of unimaginable blessing (Rev. 21:1-6). That prospect enables us to exclaim, "O Death, where is your sting?" (1 Cor. 15:55). By: Vernon Grounds ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

To Him I trust my soul, my dust,  
When flesh and spirit sever;  
The Christ we sing has plucked the sting  
Away from death forever.  
—Anon.

Christ is the difference between hope and hopelessness.

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## The Upside Of Dying

Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory. —John 17:24

Today's Scripture: John 17:20-26

A Sunday school teacher asked some 5-year-olds a series of questions to help them realize that trusting in Jesus is the only way to get to heaven. He asked, "If I sell everything I have and give the money to the church, would that get me into heaven?" "No," they answered. "How about if I keep everything clean in and around the church?" Another "No." "If I love my family, am kind to animals, and give candy to every child I meet, will that get me to heaven?" Another unanimous "No!" Then he asked, "What will get me into heaven?" A little boy shouted, "You have to be dead!"

This was hardly the answer the teacher expected, but the youngster was right. The Bible tells us that we all must leave our flesh-and-blood bodies (1 Corinthians 15:50-52). Unless we are alive when Jesus returns, we all must die before entering His presence.

British preacher Charles Haddon Spurgeon captured this truth in a sermon titled "Why They Leave Us." He pointed out that Jesus' prayer in John 17:24 is answered every time a Christian dies. The person leaves his body and enters the presence of his Savior, where he beholds His glory. What a comfort for the believer! It reveals the upside of dying. Is that your confidence? By: Herbert Vander Lugt ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

The death of people whom we love  
Brings sorrow and deep pain;  
But if our loved ones know the Lord,  
Our loss becomes their gain.  
—Sper

When Christians die, they have just begun to live.

**1 Corinthians 15:51 Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, [NASB 1995 - Lockman](#)**

- **I tell** 1Co 2:7 4:1 13:2 Eph 1:9 3:3 5:32
- **We will not** 1Co 15:6,18,20 1Th 4:14-17
- **changed** Php 3:21
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

2 Cor 4:16-18+ Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our **outer man is decaying**, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. 17 For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an **eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison**, 18 while we look not at the things which are seen, but **at the things which are not seen**; for the things which are seen are temporal, but **the things which are not seen are eternal** (E.G., OUR RESURRECTION BODIES AND SINLESS LIFE ETERNAL WITH CHRIST).

2 Corinthians 5:4-10+ For indeed while we are in this **tent** (OUR MORTAL, PHYSICAL BODY), we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed but to be clothed (WITH OUR IMMORTAL "CLOTHES," OUR RESURRECTION BODIES), so that what is mortal will be swallowed up by life (BY IMMORTAL LIFE IN OUR RESURRECTION BODIES - WHEN WE DIE WE WILL BE IN ESSENCE "SWALLOWED UP" BY PARTICIPATION IN THE RESURRECTION LIFE OF CHRIST). 5 Now He who prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave to us the Spirit as a pledge ([arrabon](#) - cf Eph 1:14, 2 Cor 1:22). 6 Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the (MORTAL, PHYSICAL) body **we are absent from the Lord**- 7 for we walk by faith (ESPECIALLY REGARDING OUR

FUTURE BODY), not by sight— 8 we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord. 9 Therefore (BASED ON THIS TRUTH) we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing ([euairestos](#) - cf Ro 12:1-2+, Eph 5:10, Heb 13:21) to Him. 10 For (TERM OF EXPLANATION) we must ([dei](#)) all (NO EXCEPTIONS) appear before the judgment seat ([bema](#)) of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed ([komizo](#)) for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad ([phaulos](#), **NOT** [kakos](#) AS IN KJV)

Phil 3:20-21+ For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; 21 Who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

## **NOT ALL SLEEP BUT ALL ARE CHANGED!**

Paul anticipates a question which is so obvious he does not even need to record it. If the perishable bodies of believers cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, what will happen to believers who are still in their perishable bodies when Christ returns? To address this question Paul begins with a word used only here in this first letter. And so Paul writes...

**Behold** is the second person singular aorist middle imperative of *eidon* which means to see, perceive, look at. In the NT *idou* is used as a demonstrative particle that draws attention to what follows. *Idou* in the [middle voice](#) means "you yourself look, see, perceive!" The [aorist imperative](#) is a command emphasizing "Do it now! Don't delay!" **Spurgeon** reminds us that "**Behold** is a word of wonder; it is intended to excite admiration. Wherever you see it hung out in Scripture, it is like an ancient sign-board, signifying that there are rich wares within, or like the hands which solid readers have observed in the margin of the older Puritanic books, drawing attention to something particularly worthy of observation." I would add, **behold** is like a divine highlighter, a divine underlining of an especially striking or important text regarding which the current text supremely qualifies! Paul is saying to the Corinthians and to all believers of all ages "Listen up, all ye who would seek comfort in the mercies of Jehovah!"

**Robertson and Plummer** call **behold** - Emphatic introduction of information of great moment. This mystery of the sudden transformation of the living has been revealed to him. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep** ([koimao](#)) - Paul has described one avenue of entrance by which believers can enter into the Kingdom of God and that is through death, but now he will reveal to them the second way into the Kingdom for the believers who do not die. Both will undergo a great transformation. In English the word **mystery** usually means something that is not fully understood and which baffles the understanding. In marked contrast, a **mystery** in the context of the New Testament writings is quite the opposite, for it is something that was not previously known but which has now been made known to believers by God's gracious revelation ("**I tell you...**"). It is called a **mystery** because it was hidden from view and understanding in the past (especially the Old Testament) but now has been revealed by the Spirit in the New Testament writings. It follows that the truth Paul is teaching in this next section is new revelation to the Corinthians. While the resurrection was alluded to in the OT, the specific details Paul describes in this section were not alluded to.

**Mystery** ([3466](#)) [mysterion](#); from **mustes** = one initiated [as into the Greco-Roman "mystery" religions] from **mueo** = to close or shut) in the NT is a truth never previously known, and a truth which human intellect could never discover, but one which has now been made known by divine revelation. **Mysterion** in the Bible means those truths which are part of God's plan and can only be understood as He reveals them by His Spirit through His Word. In Paul's day **mysterion** was a technical term utilized by the "mystery religions" which referred to a secrets concealed by strange customs and ceremonies and confided only to those initiated into the "mystery cult". **Mysterion** embraced ideas such as "a secret rite," "secret teaching," and "a divine mystery which is beyond human comprehension." **Hastings** writes that in stark contrast to the pagan mystery religions, what Paul "calls a **mystery** is always, indeed, a truth known only to the *initiated*, but the *initiated* for St. Paul are the whole body of believers in Jesus.. Mysterion in 1 Corinthians - 1 Co. 2:7; 1 Co. 4:1; 1 Co. 13:2; 1 Co. 14:2; 1 Co. 15:51

**We will not all sleep** ([koimao](#)) - Notice he uses the personal pronoun **we**, so he includes himself in this statement. This would imply that Paul did not necessarily think that he would physically die. The implication is that he was living in anticipation that he might indeed experience the change which he goes on to describe. In other words Paul lived his life with sense of [imminency](#). (cf similar attitude in 1 Th 4:15+ = "we who are alive and remain" describing the rapture) This is Paul's fourth and last use of [koimao](#) in the Resurrection Chapter (1 Co. 15:6; 1 Co. 15:18; 1 Co. 15:20; 1 Co. 15:51) and as in the previous passages he uses sleep as a euphemism for the believer's death. When we fall asleep in Jesus, we are immediately absent from the body and at home with the Lord (2 Cor 5:8+) Even though being "absent from the body" is not as good as being in our future resurrection body, it is still

something we can anticipate with joy, for "to depart, and to be with Christ...is far better" (Phil 1:23+) and "To die" for the Christian "is gain" (Phil 1:21+). In heaven with Christ, our spirits--though without physical bodies will be distinct and recognizable, in some way still bearing our likenesses. For example, this was true of the spirits of Samuel and Moses (1 Sa 28:11-14; Mt 17:3), and also, in Christ's parable, of the spirits of Abraham and Lazarus (Lk 16:22-25+). And so when we fall asleep in Jesus we will not yet have our resurrection bodies but that is what Paul will now describe for both those who have fallen asleep and have not fallen asleep in Jesus.

**Robertson and Plummer** on Paul's use of **we** - The first person plural does not necessarily imply that St Paul felt confident of living till the Second Advent; but it does imply *expectation* of doing so in company with most of those whom he is addressing. (Compare [Imminent/Imminency](#)) ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**But** - Term of contrast. And O what a marvelous contrast it will be! All do not sleep but all will be changed.

**We will all be changed** - Again note the plural pronoun **we**, Paul definitely including himself in this change. **All** means all without exception. But actually there is one important "exception" and that is this "all" excludes "all" who refuse to believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior and Redeemer. They will not be changed, but will only change locations from this temporal home to their eternal home. In context **changed** refers especially to those believers who are living with Christ returns, but at that time even those who have died will also be changed at that time. In other words, all believers will receive their resurrection bodies at the time of the return of Christ.

**Ray Stedman** - There is a generation of Christians that is never going to die. Scripture constantly anticipates this. There are some who will not even have to pass through the portals of death, such as we know it, but will instantly, while they are walking around, suddenly, without warning, be changed -- "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." [The Victory Of The Mystery](#)

**Changed** (exchange) (236)([allasso](#) from [allos](#) = another numerically but of the same kind Acts 4.12, contrasted with heteros another of a different kind) has the literally meaning of to make otherwise. The basic sense is "to make other than it is." It means to to change, to cause one thing to cease and another to take its place, to exchange one thing for another. To make something different. To alter. **Allasso** is used 6 times in the NT - Acts 6:14+ (Stephen accused of changing the customs of the law); Ro 1:23+ (**exchanged** the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures); 1Co 15:51, 52+ (speaking of our future "change" of our bodies, exchanging "earth suits" for "heavenly suits"! = glorification); Gal 4:20+ (change tone of speaking); Heb 1:12+ (speaking of changing of creation as we now know it for "the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat!" 2 Peter 3:12 and be followed by a "a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away." Rev 21:1+).. In the Septuagint **allassō** describes Laban's "changing" of Jacob's wages (Ge 31:7), or of someone's changing clothes (Ge 35:2, note the cultic significance, cf. Ge 41:14). The Hebrew of Ex 13:13+ suggests allassō denotes "exchange" in the sense of "redeem" (cf. Lev 27:27+). Apostate Israel exchanged their glory for idols (Jer 2:11; cf. Ps 106:20)

**Classic Greek** - The verb allassō denotes "I change, transform, become another," or "exchange." **Allassō** is quite common in classical Greek, where it can have as many as five distinct uses (Liddell-Scott). Basically it refers to "change, alter," but this could carry over into different areas of life. Thus it could mean "to trade or exchange" in the language of commerce, or "to have dealings" in general. A sense of "replacement" seems possible in some cases. One thing can be "given in exchange" for something else. Passively, perhaps related to this last sense, it means "be reconciled." ([Complete Biblical Library - Incredible Resource](#))

**Allasso** is used for 8 different words in the **Septuagint** - [הַפְּחָח](#) hāphakh (2015), Change (Jer 13:23). [חָלַף](#) chālîphāh (2487), Change of clothing, set of clothing (Gn 45:22, Jgs 14:13). [חָלַף](#) chālaph (2498), Qal: pass away quickly, transgress (Ps 102:26, Isa 24:5); piel: to change (Gen 41:14, 2 Sa 12:20); hiphil: change (Ge 31:7, 35:2). [מָוַר](#) mûr (4171), Substitute (Lev 27:10,33). [מָנָה](#) mănāh (4487), Muster, raise (1 Ki 20:25 [21:25]). [פָּדָה](#) pādâh (6299), Redeem (Ex 13:13, Lv 27:27). [שָׁנָה](#) shānāh (8138), To change (Jer 52:33). [שָׁנָה](#) shēnāh (8133), To change, alter (Ezra 6:11,12 — Aramaic).

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**Ray Pritchard** sums up 1 Corinthians 15:51-58 writing "There is so much good news in these verses. Consider this simple outline regarding the transformation of the saints:

1. The Number: "We will **all** be changed"
2. The Result: "We will all be **changed**"
3. The Time: "At the **last** trump"
4. The Speed: "In a flash, in the **twinkling** of an eye"



5. The Chronology:

- A. **Trumpet** sounds
- B. **Dead** raised
- C. **Living** transformed

1 Cor 15:58 tells us what this truth should mean on a daily basis. We should stand firm. Keep on believing what you have always believed. Don't let death steal your faith. Keep on encouraging each other. Keep on serving the Lord. And keep your eye on the prize.

**Here are five statements that summarize the teaching of 1 Corinthians 15.**

- 1) The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the foundational truth of Christianity. Everything else we believe stands or falls on that great truth. We must never compromise this doctrine. It is entirely non-negotiable.
- 2) Our resurrection depends entirely on his. If he was raised, then we will be raised too. The fact that 2000 years have passed means nothing since God dwells in eternity.
- 3) Our resurrection bodies will be radically different from our present bodies yet intimately related to them. As the mighty oak rests in the acorn, even so our resurrection bodies will be much different in every respect, yet related to who we are in this present life. I can promise you this: You'll never regret being resurrected and you'll never ask for your old body back.
- 4) When Christ returns, both living and dead Christians will receive their resurrection bodies and death will finally be defeated. Between now and then death may seem to win many temporary victories, but our ultimate victory was assured on Easter Sunday morning 2000 years ago.
- 5) These truths ought to encourage us to stand firm and serve God joyfully, knowing that our labor is not in vain in the Lord.

While studying for this sermon I ran across a wonderful phrase from the Pulpit Commentary. It lifts my heart every time I read it. There will be "victory on the last battlefield." Life is a series of battles for all of us and we all "take it on the chin" sooner or later. But in the last battle, the struggle with death, there is victory for the children of God. My mind goes back to a few of the saints who have left us in death during the 11 years I have pastored this church. The list includes Bob Bruce, Sr., Ruth Hall, Len Hoppe, Gus Hemwall, Byron Powell, Oceile Poage, Sara Spurny, Marion Jenkins, Fred Hartman, Mr. and Mrs. Longinow, Gary Olson, and Stan Utigard. These dear brothers and sisters now rest in the arms of Jesus. Death has taken them from us but death cannot keep them forever. A better day is coming. A few years ago Philip Yancey wrote a column for Christianity Today called "The Day I'll Get My Friends Back." Here is part of what he said:

I believe in the Resurrection primarily because I have gotten to know God. I know that God is love, and I also know that we human beings want to keep alive those whom we love. I do not let my friends die; they live on in my memory and my heart long after I have stopped seeing them. For whatever reason-again, I imagine, human freedom lies at the core-God allows a planet where a man in the prime of life dies scuba diving and a woman is killed in a fiery crash on the way to a missions conference. But I believe that God is not satisfied with such a blighted planet. If I did not believe this, I would not believe in a loving God. Divine love will find a way to overcome. "Death, be not proud," wrote John Donne: God will not let death win.

He's right. God will not let death win. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow expressed the same truth in his poem "[God's Acre](#)." Here are the first and last stanzas:

I like that ancient Saxon phrase, which calls  
The burial-ground God's-Acre! It is just;  
It consecrates each grave within its walls,  
And breathes a benison o'er the sleeping dust.

With thy rude ploughshare, Death, turn up the sod,  
And spread the furrow for the seed we sow;  
This is the field and Acre of our God,  
This is the place where human harvests grow.

What an image that is: "the place where human harvests grow." Go to any graveyard where Christians are buried and there you will find "God's acre." Take off your shoes. It is holy ground. Human harvests are growing there. I close with the words of Thomas Watson: "We are more sure to arise out of our graves than out of our beds. Oh! how precious is the dust of a believer!" Amen. ([1](#))

**The Resurrection in Nature** - Some years ago I kept a marine aquarium. As I stood looking at it one summer day I saw on the surface of the water a tiny creature, half fish, half snake, not an inch long, writhing as in mortal agony. With convulsive efforts it bent its head to tail, now on this side, now on that, springing in circles with a force simply wonderful in a creature so small. I was stretching out my hands to remove it lest it should sink and die and pollute the clear waters, when, lo, in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye, its skin split from end to end, and there sprang out a delicate fly with slender legs and pale lavender wings. Balancing itself for one instant on its discarded skin, it preened its gossamer wings and then flew out of an open window. The impression made upon me was deep and overpowering. I learned that nature was everywhere hinting at the truth of the resurrection. —Moody Monthly

**1 Corinthians 15:52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. (NASB 1995 - Lockman)**

- **a moment** Ex 33:5 Nu 16:21,45 Ps 73:19 2Pe 3:10
- **last** Ex 19:16 20:18 Nu 10:4 Isa 18:3 27:13 Eze 33:3,6 Zec 9:14 Rev 8:2,13 Rev 9:13,14
- **for** Mt 24:31 Joh 5:25 1Th 4:16
- **the dead** 1Co 15:42,50
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Matthew 24:29-31+ “But immediately after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 30 “And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory. 31 “And He will send forth His angels with **A GREAT TRUMPET** and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.

Revelation 10:7+ but in the days of the voice of the **seventh angel**, when he is about to sound, then the mystery of God is finished, as He preached to His servants the prophets.

Revelation 11:15+ Then (TIME PHRASE - ASK "WHEN IS THEN?" SEE Rev 11:13+ A SPECIFIC DRAMATIC EVENT) the seventh angel sounded (THE TRUMPET) and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever.”

**Comment:** While this trumpet is the last of the 7 trumpet judgments, and marks the beginning of the end with the last 7 bowl judgments, IT IS NOT THE LAST TRUMPET Paul is referring to in this passage. See discussion below for more detail.

John 14:3 “If I go and prepare a place for you, **I will come again and receive you to Myself** (THE RAPTURE), that where I am, there you may be also.

Acts 1:11+ They also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, **will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven**”

Titus 2:13+ (BELIEVERS ARE TO BE [\[prosdchomai](#) in present tense] CONTINUALLY ) **looking for** the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus,



A [slow-motion](#) example of a blinking human eye

### IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE

The [blink of an eye](#) is an idiom which means very quickly, in a short time like an eye [blinking](#).

**in a moment** - In an "atom" of time describing the sudden rapidity of the resurrection and transformation of our corrupting bodies

(either in grave or those alive on earth for their bodies are also daily corrupting).

**Moment** (823) (**atomos** from **a** = negative + **tome** = a cut from **temno** = to cut, divide) literally means indivisible, something too small to be cut and gives us our word atom as if it could not be "divided" or split (which of course it was and the result was the atom bomb!). **BDAG** - atomos is viewed as such a unit that it cannot be cut, esp. because of smallness (e.g. particle of matter, un-compounded word) In context of time, it means an indivisible point in time. In classical Greek the primary meaning of atomos is "indivisible" due to smallness or that which is not subject to being cut. In ancient times atomos was understood as the smallest building block of the physical universe. **Atomos** was also applied to time in the classical usage and referred to the smallest possible amount of time. Symmachus, in his Greek translation of the Old Testament for the Jews at the end of the Second Century A.D., used atomos in Isaiah 54:8 to translate, "in a **moment** of anger," although it is **not** used in the Septuagint.

**In the twinkling of an eye**- You just blinked your eye. Did you realize that you blinked? Of course not (I am assuming you don't have any foreign objects in your eye)! The blink was so fast that you were unaware you blinked. And it was so rapid that it did not impair the sight of whatever you were looking at. It is one of the fastest speeds known to our human experience. That is how it will be when Christ returns. It will transpire so suddenly and so completely that we will not even be aware of it happening. One moment here and mortal. The next moment with Christ and immortal. And in that state forever and ever. Amen.

**THOUGHT** - This picture begs a sobering question. Are you sure you are a believer? If not study the 5 sobering chapters of 1 John, the purpose of which is stated in 1 John 5:13+ "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that (purpose) **you may know that you have eternal life.**" John could not have been clearer! God wants His children to know beyond a shadow of a doubt that they possess eternal life. But 1 John also seeks to expose any person who thinks they are a true believer and they are not. So if you have some doubts ask the Spirit of Truth to illuminate the truth in 1 John so that you know whether you are in Christ or still in Adam, lost and deceived by sin and Satan. 1 John also has a sobering passage for believers (I shudder every time I read this passage) which says "Now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming." (1 Jn 2:28+) My prayer is that if you discover you are not a believer according to the description in 1 John, that you repent and confess Christ as your Savior and Lord (Ro 10:9-10+), for the glory of God. In Jesus' Name. Amen. Jesus Himself gave a sobering warning in Matthew 7:21-23+ declaring

"Not everyone who says to Me, '**Lord, Lord,**' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does (present tense - habitually, albeit not perfectly for that is possible only when we reach glory) the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. 22 "Many will say to Me on that day, '**Lord, Lord,** did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' 23 "And then I will declare to them, '**I never knew you; DEPART** (command) FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE ((present tense) LAWLESSNESS.'

**Twinkling** (4493) (**rhipe**) means a rapid movement as a rapid throwing movement jerk; of the eye wink, twinkling, blink. In classical Greek literature rhipē refers to any rapid movement that is completed quickly and effectively. The throw of a javelin, the flap of wings, the rush of flames or of the wind, the twinkling of lights. **BDAG** - a throwing, the swing or force by which someth. is thrust forward'. The focus on sudden speed readily becomes the major semantic component in ref. to a variety of objects: rapid movement, e.g. of the eyes; the 'casting' of a glance takes an extremely short time: **Liddell-Scott** - the swing or force with which anything is thrown, Lat. impetus, the flight of a javelin, II. the sweep or rush of the N. wind, of a storm, Aesch.; the rush of fire, II. a flapping of wings, Aesch.; of the buzz of a gnat's wing, Id.; of quivering light, Soph.; of the lyre's quivering notes; of any rapid movement, metaphorically of gusts of passion, in the twinkling of an eye, N.T.

**At the last (eschatos) trumpet for the trumpet will sound** - The trumpet in the Old Testament, signaled the appearance of God (cf. Ex. 19:16). Note that Paul does not have an "and" here, which would strongly suggest that the **moment**, the **twinkling** and the **trumpet** are simultaneous. There will be no prior warning to alert you to get ready as in the words of that classic spiritual [People Get Ready](#) "You will either be ready or you will be left behind (aka "be right or you will be left")! It will happen "in the blink of an eye." One moment those alive are on earth, and the next moment they are in the air with all the previous dead resurrected believers and all instantaneously clothed with new bodies! While it might be tempting to identify **the last trumpet** as the Seventh Trumpet judgment in Rev 11:15+, this event in 1 Corinthians 15 clearly refers to a different '**last trumpet.**' So the question is are there any other trumpets described in the Scripture that could be related? And the answer is yes, for Paul describes another **trumpet** in the passage dealing with the Rapture in 1 Thessalonians 4 where we read

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep (BELIEVERS WHO HAVE

ALREADY DIED IN CHRIST), so that you will not grieve as do the rest (THE UNSAVED WORLD) who have **no hope** (CHRIST IS NOT THEIR HOPE SO THEY ARE "HOPELESS!"). 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again (I.E., BELIEVE THE GOSPEL - 1 Cor 15:1-8), even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus (THEY RETURN WITH CHRIST BUT DO NOT YET HAVE THEIR RESURRECTION BODIES). 15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord (NOTE PAUL USES "WE WHO ARE ALIVE" INDICATING HE WAS LOOKING FOR THE LORD'S RETURN EVEN IN HIS DAY), will not precede those who have fallen asleep (THOSE BELIEVERS WHO HAVE DIED). 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a **shout**, with the **voice of the archangel** and with the **trumpet of God** (THERE IT IS - THIS IS THE "LAST TRUMPET"), and the dead in Christ will rise first (THEIR DEAD BODIES ARE RESURRECTED). 17 Then we who are alive and remain **will be caught up** (Gk - [harpazo](#); Latin - rapturo) together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air (DEAD AND LIVING GO UP IN THE AIR TOGETHER), and so we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore **comfort** one another with these words. (1 Thes 4:13-18+)

This trumpet is probably called **last** because it in effect brings an end to the Church age as it raptures the church from earth. Strictly speaking it is not the **last trumpet** mentioned in Scripture, for John describes the [seven trumpet](#) Judgments in the Revelation.

**Ironside** says that the **last trumpet** was a figure of speech that came from the Roman military, when they broke camp. The first trumpet meant, "strike the tents and prepare to leave"; the second trumpet meant, "fall into line"; the third and last trumpet meant "march away." This last trumpet describes the Christian's "marching orders" at the rapture of the Church

**Stedman** - That is the great event, the great change that is coming. I believe, as I have already stated, that this occurs for every one of us when we step out of time into eternity, but it will also occur when Jesus steps back out of eternity into time ([The Victory Of The Mystery](#))

**Robertson and Plummer** - The marvellous change from death to life and from mortal to immortal will not be a long process, but instantaneous; and it will be final. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**And the dead will be raised** ([egeiro](#)) **imperishable** - In the grave the dead bodies are decomposed, decayed, perishing, but when they are raised, they are in a state that is no longer subject to decay or death. They are **raised imperishable** and immortal.

**ILLUSTRATION** - During the Civil War a group of soldiers had to spend a winter night without tents in an open field. During the night it snowed several inches, and at dawn the chaplain reported a strange sight. The snow-covered soldiers looked like the mounds of new graves, and when the bugle sounded reveille a man immediately rose from each mound of snow, dramatically reminding the chaplain of this passage from 1 Corinthians. (John MacArthur)

**And we will be changed** ([allasso](#)) - This is part of the mystery, all (living or dead) will receive a "Divine Makeover." Sometimes things can be changed for the worse, but that is not the case for now the corruptible bodies are forever changed for the better (the best). Presumably this change occurs when the resurrected bodies of dead saints go into the air with the bodies of the living saints. At that time in an instant all the bodies of the believers are immediately changed into the imperishable, immortal bodies that each person will retain throughout eternity.

**Paul Apple** notes that Solomon looks at life under the sun; but the Apostle Paul takes us to the next level - that of what awaits after death.

The fate of the sons of men and the fate of beasts is the same. As one dies, so dies the other. Indeed they all have the same breath and there is no advantage for man over beast. For all is vanity. All go to the same place. All come from the dust, and all return to the dust. Eccl.3:19-21

A soldier said, "When I die do not sound taps over my grave, but reveille—the morning call, the summons to rise."

When that great Christian scientist, Sir Michael Faraday, was dying, some journalists questioned him as to his speculations for a life after death. "Speculations!" said he, "I know nothing about speculations. I'm resting on certainties. 'I know that my Redeemer liveth,' and because He lives, I shall live also."

**Adrian Rogers** - Someone has said that the average person blinks somewhere between 10,000 to 20,000 times a day. In one of those times, Jesus could return! That is an awesome thought....In that scrap yard, there was a great magnet on a crane that would pick up metal. If you swung that magnet across the ground, not every piece of metal would rise — only that which was made of iron. Why is that? Because the iron has the same nature as the magnet. In the same way, if you have the same nature as Jesus Christ, then when He comes again, you're going up whether you're beneath the ground or on top of the ground. Simply said, if you've been heaven-born you will be heaven-bound.

**Left Behind?** - I read a cute but true story. In a certain Bible College, it was the habit of six young men to gather for a prayer meeting right at the crack of dawn each day. They would kneel and pray in a special room at the end of their floor in a dormitory. One of these college students would always fall asleep while praying. The others thought they would play a practical joke on him, so one morning they planted a fellow student with a trumpet outside the window of the room in which they prayed. They all knelt to pray and the young man fell asleep on his knees as always. The others quietly got off their knees and tiptoed away, hiding in the last room way down the hall. The trumpeter then gave a huge blast on the trumpet. The young man awakened from his sleep to find his friends had all disappeared. He concluded that the rapture had taken place and he was left behind. He began to shake and sweat. He got up, ran down the hall and looked in every room but found no one. When he came to the last room and found his friends doubled up with laughter, the young man literally passed out on the spot due to fear. What kind of fear will grip the unsaved when the rapture does occur and they are left only to face the angry wrath of God? - Jack Arnold

**Related Resources:**

- [What are the seven trumpets of Revelation? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Is the last trumpet of 1 Thessalonians 4 the same as the seventh trumpet of Revelation? | GotQuestions.org](#)

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**Question: [What is the difference between the Rapture and the Second Coming?](#)**

**Answer:** The rapture and the second coming of Christ are often confused. Sometimes it is difficult to determine whether a scripture verse is referring to the rapture or the second coming. However, in studying end-times Bible prophecy, it is very important to differentiate between the two.

The rapture is when Jesus Christ returns to remove the church (all believers in Christ) from the earth. The rapture is described in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and 1 Corinthians 15:50-54. Believers who have died will have their bodies resurrected and, along with believers who are still living, will meet the Lord in the air. This will all occur in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye. The second coming is when Jesus returns to defeat the Antichrist, destroy evil, and establish His millennial kingdom. The second coming is described in Revelation 19:11-16.

The important differences between the rapture and second coming are as follows:

- 1) At the rapture, believers meet the Lord in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:17). At the second coming, believers return with the Lord to the earth (Revelation 19:14).
- 2) The second coming occurs after the great and terrible tribulation (Revelation chapters 6–19). The rapture occurs before the tribulation (1 Thessalonians 5:9; Revelation 3:10).
- 3) The rapture is the removal of believers from the earth as an act of deliverance (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17, 5:9). The second coming includes the removal of unbelievers as an act of judgment (Matthew 24:40-41).
- 4) The rapture will be secret and instant (1 Corinthians 15:50-54). The second coming will be visible to all (Revelation 1:7; Matthew 24:29-30).
- 5) The second coming of Christ will not occur until after certain other end-times events take place (2 Thessalonians 2:4; Matthew 24:15-30; Revelation chapters 6–18). The rapture is imminent; it could take place at any moment (Titus 2:13; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:50-54+).

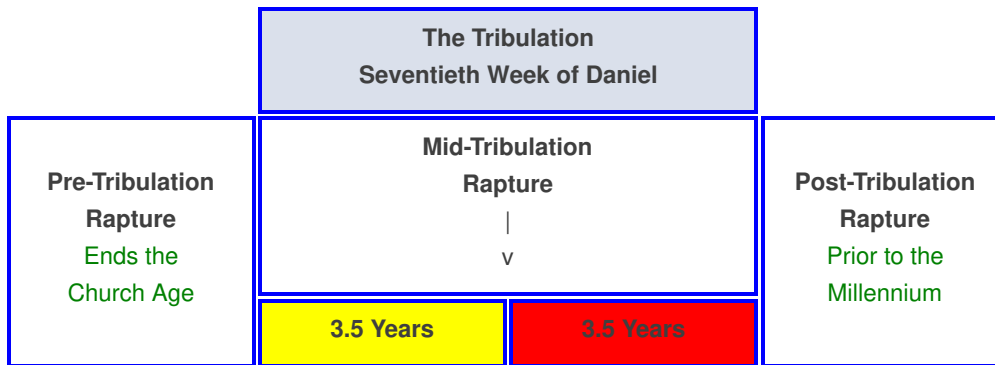
Why is it important to keep the rapture and the second coming distinct?

- 1) If the rapture and the second coming are the same event, believers will have to go through the tribulation (1 Thessalonians 5:9; Revelation 3:10).
- 2) If the rapture and the second coming are the same event, the return of Christ is not imminent—there are many things which must occur before He can return (Matthew 24:4-30).
- 3) In describing the tribulation period, Revelation chapters 6–19 nowhere mentions the church. During the tribulation—also called “the time of trouble for Jacob” (Jeremiah 30:7)—God will again turn His primary attention to Israel (Romans 11:17-31). (See also [Richard Mayhue's article](#))

The rapture and second coming are similar but separate events. Both involve Jesus returning. Both are end-times events. However, it is crucially important to recognize the differences. In summary, the rapture is the return of Christ in the clouds to remove all believers from the earth before the time of God’s wrath. The second coming is the return of Christ to the earth to bring the tribulation to an end and to defeat the Antichrist and his evil world empire.

## WHEN DOES THE RAPTURE OCCUR?

Pre-Tribulation, Mid-Tribulation, Post-Tribulation?



As discussed earlier, "tribulation" is the term commonly applied to the seven year period representing Daniel's 70th Week (Da 9:27-note), in spite of the fact that specific designation of the seven year period is never specifically referred to as **The Tribulation**. Jesus did identify the last 3.5 years of the seven year period as the **Great Tribulation** (Matthew 24:21, cp Re 7:14-note). Nevertheless, because the term **Tribulation** is so firmly entrenched in Christian teaching on the end times, it will be retained as a general reference to the Seventieth Week of Daniel.

**Showers** comments on why the views of the timing of the Rapture are so divergent among well meaning Christians - Why then do Christians come to different conclusions regarding the time of the Rapture of the church? The Scriptures do not give a specific statement concerning the time of this event. As a result, every person who studies the subject of the Rapture is forced to look for inferences of its time from different details presented in the Bible. (Showers, R. E. (1995). Maranatha Our Lord, Come! Bellmawr, New Jersey: The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, Inc) (See also his article [The Imminent Coming of Christ](#) and related [article](#), [article 2](#))

### Related Resources:

- [The Order of Resurrections](#)
- [First and Second Resurrections](#)
- [Discussion of the Timing of Various Resurrections in Scripture - Gotquestions.org](#)
- [What is the first resurrection? What is the second resurrection? Gotquestions.org](#)
- [What is the concept of a secret rapture? Gotquestions.org](#)
- [What are the strengths and weaknesses of the pre-wrath view of the rapture? Gotquestions.org](#)
- [What is the rapture of the church? Gotquestions.org](#)
- [How can I be ready to be caught up in the rapture? Gotquestions.org](#)
- [What are the strengths and weaknesses of the pretribulational view of the rapture \(pretribulationism\)? Gotquestions.org](#)
- [How can I be sure I won't be left behind in the rapture? Gotquestions.org](#)
- [What are the strengths and weaknesses of the post-tribulational view of the rapture \(posttribulationism\)? Gotquestions.org](#)
- [When is the Rapture going to occur in relation to the Tribulation? Gotquestions.org](#)
- [Will there be a second chance for salvation after the Rapture? Gotquestions.org](#)

## PRE-TRIBULATION RAPTURE

In regard to the timing of the Rapture, the most commonly held view among evangelicals is that the Rapture will be **Pre-Tribulation**. This view holds that Christ does not actually set foot on earth but that believers meet Him in the air as described in 1Th 4:13-18. At the end of the Tribulation, when the Lord returns, Christians who have been raptured will come with the Lord (see notes beginning at Re 19:11-note; Re 19:14-note).

Observations which favor a Pre-Tribulation Rapture are listed below for your consideration. It should be noted that virtually all of these observations are of the indirect nature. In other words, there is no single passage of Scripture that unequivocally makes the statement "Jesus will return to rapture His Church before (or during the middle or after) the Seventieth Week of Daniel."

Nevertheless, in my opinion, the weight of "circumstantial" evidence makes a strong case for a pre-tribulation rapture. And yet as believers we will disagree over the timing of the rapture, but we should not let such disagreements produce divisions, the exact effect

the enemy would seek to produce in the Body of Christ. The prayer of our Lord before He was crucified was for His disciples to be "perfected in unity (brought to complete unity), that the world may know that Thou didst send Me, and didst love them, even as Thou didst love Me." (Jn 17:23)

One thing all believers can agree on without reservation or argument is that **Jesus will return** (Bridegroom ) and will gather His Church (His Bride) to Himself and we will all be together in perfect union and harmony forever (1Th 4:18-note)! (see Tony Garland's discussion of [Marriage of the Lamb](#) especially [The Jewish Wedding Analogy](#)) Therefore the glorious truth that unites us, is far greater and more profound than the issues which might separate us, and so now as those who are called to live with an eternal mindset as **aliens and strangers** (1Pe 2:11-note), let us agree to amicably, lovingly disagree! With that introduction, the arguments for a mid-tribulation or post-tribulation rapture will not be discussed at any length and the interested reader is referred to other resources that deal more completely with the topic of the rapture, specifically the timing of this event.

See also paper by Richard L Mayhue - [Why a Pretribulation Rapture?](#)

1) **There are numerous allusions in Jesus' messages to the Seven Churches that His return could be imminent**(see note on [Imminency](#)) **and at any moment**. The point is that Jesus could return at any time and that nothing must transpire before He comes. Note also that another truth inherent in the teaching of imminency is that Christ's return will be sudden and unexpected. If the Rapture were to be mid-tribulation, the day of His return could be accurately calculated from date of the signing of the covenant between Antichrist and Israel, which signals the beginning of the Tribulation (Da 9:27-note).

**Remember** (present imperative - command to make this your lifestyle!) therefore from where you have fallen, and **repent** (aorist imperative - Do it now! Don't delay! It is urgent!) and **do** (aorist imperative - Do it now! Don't delay! It is urgent!) the deeds you did at first; or else **I am coming to you**, and will remove your lampstand out of its place-- unless you repent. (Re 2:5-[note](#))

**Repent** (aorist imperative - Do it now! Don't delay! It is urgent!) therefore; or else **I am coming to you quickly**, and I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth. (Re 2:16-[note](#))

'Nevertheless what you have, **hold fast** (aorist imperative - Do it now! Don't delay! It is urgent!) until **I come**. (Re 2:15-[note](#))

'**Remember** (present imperative - command to make this your lifestyle!) therefore what you have received and heard; and **keep** (present imperative - command to make this your lifestyle to keep in view, so as to watch over, give watchful care, continually guarding!) it, and **repent** (aorist imperative - Do it now! Don't delay! It is urgent!). If therefore you will not wake up, **I will come like a thief**, and **you will not know at what hour I will come upon you**. (Re 3:3-[note](#))

**I am coming quickly; hold fast** (present imperative - command to make this your lifestyle!) what you have, in order that no one take your crown. (Re 3:11-[note](#))

**Comment:** Salvation cannot be lost, but a reward can be - see 1Co 3:15; 2John 8.

2) **Jesus message to the Church at Philadelphia is stated in such a way as to convey the sense of a future predictive, protective aspect.**

[Revelation 3:10](#) Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep **(tereo)** you from **(ek)** the **hour** of testing, that **hour** which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell upon the earth ([earth dwellers](#) is a unique term {not oikeo the usual verb = to dwell but katoikeo = to settle down, a more "intense" or committed dwelling, signifying that they are fixated on earth with absolutely no desire to be heaven bound} John uses **katoikeo** repeatedly {some 10 times beginning in Re 6:10-[note](#) through the last use in Rev 17:8-[note](#)} in Revelation 6-19 to describe **unbelievers** who remain on earth during that period and steadfastly refuse to repent and believe the gospel. In Rev 13:8-[note](#) and Rev 13:14-[note](#) these individuals are specifically defined as those "whose name has not been written in the book of life"). (Rev 3:10-[note](#))

**Comment:** Admittedly Re 3:10-[note](#) is hotly debated in regard to whether or not it supports a pre-tribulation rapture. Without going into great detail, the debate is primarily focused on Jesus' intended meaning in His phrase "*I will keep you from the hour of testing*", some (especially those that favor a post-tribulation rapture) interpret this to mean Jesus will keep us "*through*" the testing, while the pre-tribulation camp interprets this phrase to mean that He will take the Church "*out of*" the time of testing. Despite attempts to suggest otherwise, the Greek preposition **ek** does have the meaning of **out of** or **from**. If Jesus had used other prepositions such as **dia** which means **through** and **en** which means **in** either of these prepositions would favor the post-tribulation view that the church was destined for wrath (this subject is discussed below - see 1Th 1:10-note; 1Th 5:9-note). If you are interested in more in depth discussion on the preposition **ek** relative to Rev

3:10-[note](#) see the article entitled [The Rapture in Revelation 3:10 by Jeffrey L Townsend](#) - This is the same article that is in Bibliotheca Sacra Volume 137: Page 252, July-Sept, 1980) (Townsend also discusses John 17:15b at length, where Jesus asks His Father to "*keep {tereo} them from {ek} the evil*").

Also note the fact that multitudes of believers will be martyred during the last 3.5 years of the Great Tribulation (see Rev 7:9-[note](#); Rev 7:14-[note](#)) would hardly support the premise that Jesus "keeps" (guards, protects) believers during the Seven Year Tribulation, specifically the horrific last 3.5 years when the Antichrist rules the world (Rev 13:16-[note](#); Rev 13:17-[note](#); Rev 13:18-[note](#)).

In regard to the phrase **the hour of testing**, notice that in Greek the definite article "the" (tes) precedes **hour** which is a reference not just to any time of testing (believers are always being tested) but to a very specific identifiable period of testing. Jesus did not further identify this specific time, but in the **context** (context is critical for accurate interpretation) of the book of Revelation and with the knowledge that there is a very specific time of testing coming upon the entire world, the **Seventieth Week of Daniel** (Da 9:27-note), it is very reasonable to conclude that this figurative use of **the hour** (i.e., it is clearly not a literal 60 minute time period) refers to the time of the Tribulation. It is notable that there are some 12 uses of the word **hour** in the Revelation, chapter 14 having two uses that are relevant to this discussion...

[Revelation 14:7](#) and he (another angel flying in midheaven having an eternal gospel to preach to the entire world - see Re 14:6-[note](#)) said with a loud voice, "Fear God, and give Him glory, because the **hour** of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters." (Re 14:7-[note](#))... **15** And another angel came out of the temple, crying out with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, "Put in your sickle and reap, because the **hour** to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is ripe." (Re 14:15-[note](#)).

**Comment:** These verses are chronologically at the **midpoint of the tribulation** (as determined by close observation and literal interpretation of the Revelation) and therefore would in fact lend some support to a **mid-tribulation rapture**, for the **hour** that the angelic messengers are referring to is God's final outpouring of wrath during the last 3.5 year **Great Tribulation**. On the other hand, this truth does not exclude a pre-tribulation rapture, although it would argue against a post-tribulation rapture.

Notice who is the object of this world wide testing - the [earth dwellers](#), not the faithful. Again this observation regarding the recipients of the testing is indirect support for the fact that the church will not be present. To be sure, many peoples will come to know Christ during the tribulation period (Re 7:9-[note](#); Re 7:14-[note](#)) and especially the **Great Tribulation**, but they are not benefactors of God's promise in Rev 3:10-[note](#) to keep them from **the hour of testing**. In fact, the world wide testing is undoubtedly an "impetus" that God's Spirit uses to awaken their dead souls to receive the life giving Gospel proclaimed throughout the world by the angel in mid-heaven (Rev 14:6-7-[note](#)). However, even as they receive Christ and refuse Antichrist, they do so with the realization that they will mark themselves as targets who are subject to martyrdom at the hands of the Antichrist!

**Townsend** sums up the arguments that Re 3:10-[note](#) supports a **pre-tribulation rapture** noting that...

Although **Revelation 3:10** describes the result of the rapture (i.e., the position and status of the church during the tribulation) and not the rapture itself, the details of the **hour of testing** just mentioned establish the Pretribulation rapture as the most logical deduction from this verse. The promise of preservation is **from** a period of time which will envelope the **whole world**. Only a Pretribulation rapture would remove the church completely from the earth and its time continuum. Thus the Pretribulation rapture is found to be a proper logical deduction from the data found in Rev 3:10-[note](#). ([Ibid](#))

To reiterate, although Rev 3:10-[note](#) supports a pre-tribulation rapture, it does not dogmatically make that statement and it is therefore open to honest criticism by those who hold other viewpoints on the timing of the Rapture.

**Keith Essex** has the following quote that summarizes thoughts on the rapture in Revelation 3:10 -

**Gerald Stanton** derives four facts from Rev 3:10.

**First**, this promise applies not only to one local assembly existing in the days of the apostle John but to the entire church of



Jesus Christ. The constant refrain in all seven messages from Christ to these churches is "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches" (Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22).

**Second**, the trial which is coming is not local, but is "about to come upon the whole world." The persecutions of the past were usually limited to one country or area. This trial must refer to the tribulation to come when all the world will be "amazed and follow after the beast" (Rev 13:3), and all who worship him will come under the wrath of God (Rev 13:8; 14:9–11).

**Third**, "those who dwell on the earth" (**katoikeo**) is not a suitable description for the members of the church (cf. Phil 3:20; Heb 11:13) (Ed: See study of this verb **katoikeo**).

**Fourth**, the grammar of τηρῆω εκ (**tereo** εκ), though not conclusive, favors 'removal from' the hour of trial. **Stanton** concludes, "In the words "I come quickly" [Rev 3:11] may be seen the rapture, and the reference to "thy crown" [Rev 3:11] suggests the **Bema seat judgment** to follow. "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." Here, then, is a promise which clearly indicates the pre-tribulation rapture of the Church." (See Keith Essex's 25 page well documented paper [The Rapture and the Book of Revelation - TMSJ 13/2, Fall, 2002, pages 215-239](#))

### 3). In Revelation 2-3 we see repeated references to what the Spirit says to the churches...

He who **has an ear, let him hear** what the Spirit says to the churches. (Re 2:7-[note](#); Re 2:11-[note](#); Re 2:17-[note](#); Re 2:29-[note](#); Re 3:6-[note](#); Re 3:13-[note](#); Re 3:22-[note](#))

In Rev 4:1-[note](#), John begins with the time phrase **after these things**. What things? In context, the things Jesus has just said to the Churches in Revelation 2-3. And then in Re 13:9-[note](#) John records a statement very similar to that Jesus had stated to each church...

If anyone **has an ear, let him hear**.

Notice, that conspicuously missing from this phrase in Rev 13:9-[note](#) are the words **what the Spirit says to the churches**

In short, although, the phrase in Re 13:9-[note](#) is similar to the phrases in Revelation 2-3, there is no reference to the Church. The implication is that the Church is not present, having been removed from earth prior to the onset of the Tribulation.

### 4). After Revelation 4, John presents two "new groups" inaugurated to accomplish God's work of ministry

In Re 11:3ff-[note](#) we see God's two witnesses and in Re 7:4f-[note](#) we see 144,000 Jews sealed and protected. If the Church is present during the Tribulation, why is she not also mentioned as God's instrument for the proclamation of the Gospel? And if the Church is present, why isn't she sealed, especially in view of the fact that she is to be kept from the **hour of testing which is about to come upon the whole world** (Re 3:10-[note](#))? The answers to these questions support the conclusion that the Church is not present on earth after Revelation 4 and that God provides other witnesses who can testify to the truth of the Gospel.

### 5). The Lord's return would not surprise the Church if the rapture were either mid- or post-tribulation.

Why? The answer becomes clear from review of Da 9:27-note for when the Antichrist brokers a covenant with Israel, believers could theoretically begin to mark off time and thus the day of the Lord's return could be known with certainty. But in the Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24-25) Jesus Himself taught...

of that day and hour (of the return of Christ) no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. (Matthew 24:36,37)

Much of the rest of the Olivet discourse is an urgent exhortation to always be ready and watching for Christ's return, an exhortation that would be contradictory and unnecessary if we knew in advance the day of His coming. The **initial phase** of the coming of Christ to rapture His Bride, the Church, therefore, is always imminent (see note on [Imminency](#)). For those who come to faith in Christ in the Great Tribulation, they can know to some degree the time of the Lord's return.

**John Piper** (who I respect greatly) favors a post-tribulation rapture ([Definitions and Observations Concerning the Second Coming of Christ - Scroll down to "Arguments for Post-tribulationism"](#)) but in his comments on Luke 13:24ff he makes this comment regarding our need to strive to enter through the narrow door...

Jesus warned that the days just before **His Second Coming** would be in many ways **very normal**. It will be, Jesus says, like the days of Noah before the flood came and swept people away who were utterly unsuspecting

**Comment:** If one believes in a Post-Tribulation Rapture, it hardly seems possible that the days of the last half of the Tribulation would be "**very normal**!"

In addition if Jesus raptures all believers at the end of the Tribulation, who is left to populate the Millennial Kingdom? This would also seem to be a strong logical argument against a post-tribulation rapture.

STEPS IN A JEWISH WEDDING**		
Step	Description	Scriptures
<b>Marriage Covenant</b>	The father pays for the bride and establishes the marriage covenant.	Ac 20:28; 1Co 6:19,20;11:25 Ep 5:25, 26,27
<b>Bridal Chamber Prepared</b>	The son returns to his father's house and prepares the bridal chamber.	Jn 6:62; 14:2; Ac 1:9, 10, 11
<b>Bride Fetched</b>	At a time determined by the father (Mt 24:36), the groom fetches the bride to bring her to his father's house. "Although the bride was expecting her groom to come for her, she did not know the time of his coming. As a result, the groom's arrival was preceded by a shout, which forewarned the bride to be prepared for his coming.	Jn 14:3; 1Th 4:13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18
<b>Bride Cleansed</b>	The bride undergoes ritual cleansing prior to the wedding ceremony.	1Co 3:12, 13, 14, 15; Re 19:7, 8
<b>Wedding Ceremony</b>	The private wedding ceremony.	Re 19:7
<b>Consummation</b>	In the privacy of the bridal chamber the bride and groom consummate the marriage.	Re 19:7
<b>Marriage Feast</b>	The celebratory marriage feast to which many are invited.	Mt 22:1-14; 25:1-13; Lk 12:36

\*\*From Tony Garland's discussion of [Marriage of the Lamb](#) specifically [The Jewish Wedding Analogy](#)

6) **The Church has been looking for and expecting Jesus to return at any moment ever since His ascension** (see [Imminency](#)). This point is similar to point #1.

In his letter to the Thessalonians Paul writes that...

they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, and to wait (**present tense** = keep on waiting expectantly, waiting with a sense of anticipation as the habit of their life) for His Son from heaven, Whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, Who delivers us **from** (ek = out of - cp point #2 above) **the wrath** to come. (1Th 1:9-note; 1Th 1:10-note)

**Comment:** Although believers fully recognize the seriousness of God's wrath against sin, they rest in the glorious truth of the gospel that Christ delivers His own **from (ek)** or **out of** the coming wrath. Some expositors favor this deliverance as a reference to rescue from the eternal wrath of God in the Lake of fire. However, in the context of Paul's eschatological teaching that the Day of the Lord is associated with unbelievers who are in darkness (1Th 5:1, 2, 3 -note), it seems more likely that in 1Th 1:10-note **the specific wrath** (definite article is present) refers to the Tribulation which overlaps with the Day of the Lord. As Paul explained in 1 Thessalonians 5:9 God has not destined believers for **wrath**. The Tribulation is certainly a time of wrath, especially the last 3.5 years of the Great Tribulation (where the word **wrath** is heavily concentrated, 9/11 uses in Revelation occurring from chapter 11 onward which describes the last 3.5 years) And here in 1Th 1:10-note Paul emphasized that Jesus delivers believers from the **wrath** to come which would correlate with a Pre-Tribulation Rapture.

Now, admittedly, this same reasoning could be used to support the premise of a **Mid-Tribulation Rapture**, because this timing would also effect a rescue of believers from the Great Tribulation or last 3.5 years during which mankind will experience the primary outpouring of God's wrath. However, one of the greatest arguments against a **Mid-Tribulation Rapture** is that the time of the "initial phase" of Christ's return (as opposed to the "second phase" usually referred to as **The Second Coming** at the end of the

Great Tribulation) to rapture the church could be calculated by using the date the Antichrist secured the covenant with Israel and adding 1260 days, 42 months or 3.5 years to that date (Seventieth Week of Daniel or notes Da 9:27-note). The upshot is that for the first 3.5 years believers would have no sense of Christ's **imminent** return such as Paul described!

The Thessalonians and Paul himself (as well as Silas and Timothy) fully expected to meet the Lord in the air as indicated by his use of the first person plural pronoun in the following verses...

For this **we** (Paul and the Thessalonian believers) say to you by the word of the Lord, that **we** (Paul and the Thessalonian believers) who are alive, and remain until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep... Then **we** (Paul and the Thessalonian believers) who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus **we** shall always be with the Lord. (See 1Th 4:15-note; 1Th 4:17-note)

**Comment:** It is significant to note in these relatively early years of his ministry, Paul considered it likely that he, himself, would be living when Christ returned. This divinely inspired conviction proves that the rapture has always been imminent, not contingent on other events that must come first. That is why Jesus urged His disciples always to be watchful and ready for His return - Matthew 24:42,44.

**7) Another observation that indirectly favors a Pre-Tribulation Rapture is the fact that the Church is repeatedly instructed to watch for Christ and never for the Antichrist.**

**8) Another "argument from silence" is the complete absence of any statement of rapture in the closing days of Daniel's Seventieth Week**

**9) Another line of indirect evidence favoring a Pre-Tribulation Rapture is the Jewish focus of Daniel's Seventieth Week.**

In other words the tribulation, the Seventieth Week of Daniel, is primarily focused on Daniel's people, the Jews, (Da 9:24-note) and thus it is not surprising that there is no mention of the **Church** after **Revelation 2-3**. This notable absence of Christ's Bride, the Church from **Revelation 4-18**, is most logically explained by her Pre-Tribulation Rapture by her Bridegroom and the subsequent renewal of Jehovah's redemptive program for His beloved "Wife", **Israel** (as He describes her in Je 31:32, Is 54:5, Ho 2:19). As an aside, some argue that although the term "**church**" is not present in Rev 4-18, the term "**saints**" is present and they are one in the same. Saints however is simply a generic term for believers of all ages {e.g., "**saints**" is a common term in Daniel for believers and has no specific reference to the entity of the "church" which is composed of saints} and does not prove the church is present in Rev 4-18.

**10) Where is the church mentioned in Revelation 6-19?** It is fascinating that John mentions 7 literal churches (granted they probably have symbolic meanings also) in Revelation 2-3 and then after describing the incredible scene in Heaven in Rev 4-5 makes absolutely not a "peep" about the Church in Revelation 6-19! Not one word about the Church in the Day of the LORD'S wrath! And to say that John's mention of "Israel" in Revelation 7:4 is a reference to the Church borders on the absurd to ridiculous, for even the immediate context lists **twelve tribes** all with names of tribes that composed the **nation of Israel** in the OT. Beloved, if this is not Israel and these are not tribes, then it follows one can make ANY passage in Scripture mean anything he wants it to mean! So again, the literal Church of Jesus Christ is not literally mentioned on earth in Revelation 6-19 which clearly describe the final outpouring of the wrath of God on the sinful, rebellious, God-hating world!

**11) Reasoning from Isaiah 65:17-25 - W A Criswell** (Baptist preacher of the past) makes a point I have never heard in support of a pre-tribulation (could also apply to mid-tribulation) rapture. Criswell is commenting on Isaiah 65:17-25, an interesting passage in its own right which appears to merge the New Heaven and New Earth with descriptions of the Millennial age and writes...

Isaiah 65:17-25 describe the Millennium. The suggestion that some may die during the Millennium argues for a pre-tribulation Rapture. If the Rapture were at the end of the Tribulation, all who entered the Millennium would have glorified bodies. (INTERESTING!!!)

**David Levy** explains the **Jewish focus of Daniel's 70th Week** writing that...

it is clear from Scripture that the **Church** and **Israel** are not identical. God has a separate program for each, especially during the Tribulation period. This is indicated in Daniel 9 (Da 9:24-note; Da 9:25-note; Da 9:26-note; Da 9:27-note), a key passage giving an overview of the Tribulation. The angel Gabriel informed Daniel about God's future program for **Israel** ("*for your people and your holy city*" Da 9:24-note). Gabriel said that God would deal with Israel for seventy weeks of seven years each, or four hundred ninety years. Those years are divided into three sections. The first seven weeks of years (49 years) deal with the return of the Jewish people from Babylon and the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem. The second section of sixty-two weeks (434 years)

covers the rebuilding of Jerusalem until the Messiah is cut off (Jesus' crucifixion). Between the end of the sixty-nine weeks (483 years) and the beginning of the seventieth week is a **gap** of at least two thousand years (The so-called "Church Age", during which Christ builds His Body, the Church). ([The Rapture Question - The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, Inc](#)) (Bolding added)

**Comment:** In other words what **Levy** is saying is that the Seventieth Week is primarily for the Jews, not for the Church, so the Church is taken out of the picture. For 2000 years God has placed Israel on the "back burner" while the Church Age has flourished. But when the Bridegroom returns to rapture His Bride, God renews His plan for Israel, culminating with the Seventieth Week of Daniel.

Gabriel explains to Daniel that the "last week" is primarily about Israel and the Jewish people declaring that...

Many (Jews) will be purged, purified and refined; but the wicked will act wickedly, and none of the wicked will understand, but those who have insight will understand. (this group represents the remnant, the "all of Israel" who will be saved {Ro 11:26-note}, the 1/3 that are brought through the fires of the Great Tribulation {see Zech 12:10, 13:8, 9}, which will bring to an end the time of punishment for God's wife {see Je 31:32, Is 54:5, Ho 2:19}, Israel, who will finally be purified, so that all the Jews entering into the Millennium represent genuine believers in Messiah. Yes, Gentiles will be saved during the Seventieth Week of Daniel but the primary purpose of this refining fire is to purge the dross of unbelief from Israel.) (Daniel 12:10)

As alluded to above, some evidence favors a **Mid-Tribulation Rapture** occurring prior to the Great Tribulation in the last 3.5 years. One argument often given in support is that the Seventh Trumpet in Re 11:15 ([note](#)) is the same as the "last trumpet" Paul mentions in 1Co 15:52, but this is not supported by a careful analysis of parallel passages ([click for discussion](#))

**David Levy** summarizes the various views writing that...

Despite this proliferation of views, Christians need not be confused regarding the correct teaching of Scripture. The **Pretribulation Rapture** interpretation is the strongest position because it takes a **literal interpretation** (see Read the Bible Literally) of key Scriptures bearing on the Rapture of the church. Most advocates of a **Posttribulation Rapture** (see John MacArthur's comments on Post-Tribulation Rapture) do not interpret Scripture literally but allegorically (see discussion of Interpretation), making the interpreter, not the Scripture, the final authority. Also, although some of the other positions claim to maintain that the Rapture of the church is imminent, only **pretribulationists** hold that Christ's imminent return is a signless event. And lastly, the **pretribulation** view is the only view that consistently separates God's program for the church from His program for Israel. ([Ibid](#))

**Richard Mayhue** in his article in the Master's Seminary Journal's article [Why a Pretribulation rapture?](#) asks and answers the question...

#### **Will the "Rapture" Be Pre, Mid, or Post in a Time Relationship to Daniel's Seventieth Week?...**

The following seven evidences point to a pretribulation rapture. In this writer's opinion, they create a far more compelling case than the reasoning given for any other time of the rapture...

- (1) The Church Is Not Mentioned in Revelation 6-18 as Being on Earth
- (2) The Rapture Is Rendered Inconsequential if It Is Posttribulation
- (3) The Epistles Contain No Preparatory Warnings of an Impending Tribulation for Church-Age Believers
- (4) First Thes 4:13-18 Demands a Pretribulation Rapture
- (5) John 14:1-3 Parallels 1 Thess 4:13-18
- (6) The Nature of Events at Christ's Posttribulation Coming Differs from That of the Rapture
- (7) Rev 3:10 Promises That the Church Will Be Removed Prior to Daniel's Seventieth Week

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#### **Rapture Related Resources:**

- [Table comparing Rapture vs Second Coming;](#)
- [The Rapture Question - Andy Woods](#)
- [Up With the Son - 30' Video Summary of the Rapture](#) - Andy Woods

- [Why a Pretribulational Rapture?](#) - Richard Mayhue
- [The Rapture and the Book of Revelation](#) - Keith Essex
- [The Rapture in Revelation 3:10](#) - Jeffrey L Townsend
- [The Apocalypse Of John And The Rapture Of The Church: A Reevaluation](#) - 60 page article
- [Is The Return of Christ Premillennial?](#) - Dr John Walvoord
- [New Testament Words for the Lord's Coming](#) - Dr John Walvoord
- [The Rapture and the Day of the Lord in 1 Thessalonians 5](#) - Dr John Walvoord
- [The Rapture: A Message for Controversy - Will the Church go through the Tribulation?](#) - (audio and transcript) Bill McRae
- [The Rapture: A Message of Comfort \(1 Thessalonians 4:13-18\)](#) - (audio and transcript) Bill McRae
- [The Rapture: The Signs of His Coming, Part Two - The Condition of the Professing Church \(Revelation 17\)](#) - (audio and transcript) Bill McRae
- [The Rapture: The Signs of His Coming, Part One - 7 signs](#) (Daniel 9, Matthew 24)
- [What is the rapture of the church?](#)
- [How can I be ready to be caught up in the rapture?](#)
- [How can I be sure I won't be left behind in the rapture?](#)
- [Will there be a partial rapture?](#)
- [What are the strengths and weaknesses of the pretribulational view of the rapture \(pretribulationism\)?](#)
- [What are the strengths and weaknesses of the posttribulational view of the rapture \(posttribulationism\)?](#)
- [What are the strengths and weaknesses of the pre-wrath view of the rapture?](#)
- [When is the Rapture going to occur in relation to the Tribulation?](#)
- [Yes, Christians Can Believe in a Pre-Tribulation Rapture \(page 2\)](#)
- [What is the Tribulation? How do we know the Tribulation will last seven years?](#)
- [Who are the dead in Christ in 1 Thessalonians 4:16?](#)

**1 Corinthians 15:53 For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. [NASB 1995 - Lockman](#)**

- **put on** Ro 13:12-14 2Co 5:2-4 Ga 3:27 Eph 4:24 1Jn 3:2
- See also The Resurrection of Christ
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

1 Peter 1:3-5+ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a **living hope** (THAT WE WILL BE RESURRECTED) through the **resurrection of Jesus Christ** from the dead, 4 to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

2 Cor 5:2-4+ For indeed in this house (OUR CORRUPTIBLE, MORTAL BODIES) we groan, longing **to be clothed** with our dwelling from heaven (OUR IMMORTAL, INCORRUPTIBLE RESURRECTION BODIES), 3 inasmuch as we, having put it on, will not be found naked. 4 For indeed while we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed but to be clothed, so that what is mortal will be swallowed up by life.

Galatians 3:27+ For all of you who were baptized into Christ have **clothed yourselves with Christ**

Revelation 19:14+ And the armies which are in heaven, **clothed in fine linen, white and clean** (RESURRECTION BODIES), were following Him on white horses.

imm

[Fountain of Eternal Life](#)

### PUTTING ON OUR NEW "SUIT"

I love the picture of that statue reaching upward toward the heavens for it reminds me that one day we will be going upward to our heavenly home and that blessed hope should motivate us to "lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles

us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of faith, Who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Hebrews 12:1-2+) (Play [Run Like Heaven](#))

**For this perishable must put on the imperishable ([phthora](#)), and this mortal must put on immortality** - These are two of the most striking contrasts in the entire Bible. This **perishable** is our mortal body which is daily **decaying** (2 Cor 4:16+) as a result of the God ordained natural process of aging, but is also decaying due to the corrupting influences of sin (2 Pe 1:4+ = "the **corruption** [[phthora](#)] which is in the world by lust", Gal 6:8+ = "the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap **corruption** [[phthora](#)]", cf Pr 22:8, Jer 12:13, Hos 10:13, 2 Pe 2:19+). The **imperishable** of course is our new resurrection body, not subject to the manifold vagaries the aging process, not falling apart or in any way decaying (this is difficult to imagine but is every believer's hope, not "hope so," but "hope sure!" Hallelujah!). This **mortal** is our physical body, our "earth suit" which will soon be jettisoned for our "heaven suit" as we **put on immortality**.

And notice the word "**MUST**" is used twice, this verb ([dei](#)) indicating this is not an optional change but an absolutely essential change. It is a necessity, not an option. Paul has already laid down the rule that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable." (1 Cor 15:50) Thus perishable, mortal bodies **MUST** be transformed into imperishable, immortal bodies, for only such supernaturally transformed bodies are suitable for the supernatural Kingdom of God. In light of this glorious truth take a worshipful moment to Rejoice and again I say Rejoice...

### **[Rejoice, the Lord is King:](#)**

Your Lord and King adore!  
Rejoice, give thanks and sing,  
And triumph evermore.  
Lift up your heart,  
Lift up your voice!  
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

Jesus, the Savior, reigns,  
The God of truth and love;  
When He has purged our stains,  
He took his seat above;  
Lift up your heart,  
Lift up your voice!  
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

His kingdom cannot fail,  
He rules o'er earth and heav'n;

### **The keys of death and hell Are to our Jesus giv'n:**

Lift up your heart,  
Lift up your voice!  
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

### **Rejoice in glorious hope! Our Lord and judge shall come And take His servants up To their eternal home:**

Lift up your heart,  
Lift up your voice!  
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!  
—Charles Wesley

The verb **put on** gives us a great word picture for it was used for putting on a garment. What a beautiful picture of every believer whose fleshly works were "filthy rags" (Isa 64:6) but who will one day (soon) be clothed with "garments of salvation," (Isa 61:10) wrapped with "a robe of (Christ's) righteousness" (Isa 61:10) and "the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness" (Isa 61:3KJV) and we will forever be clothed "in fine linen, bright and clean" (Rev 19:7<sup>±</sup>) and "continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name." (Heb 13:15+).

**Perishable** ([5349](#)) [phthartos](#) from [phthairo](#) = to destroy from [phthino](#) = waste) is that which is subject to corruption, rot, withering, decay or decomposition. The basic idea is that which is short lived, or that which has

a brief life or significance.

**Put on...put on** (1746) **enduo** from **en** = in + **dúo** = to sink, go in or under, to put on) means literally to clothe or dress someone and to put on as a garment, to cause to get into a garment (eg, Lk 15:22 where the father says "quickly bring out the best robe and **put it on** him... "). In Luke 24:49- Jesus promises his disciples even in these mortal bodies "behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until **you are clothed with power** from on high (SPEAKING OF THE SPIRIT)." **Enduo** in the Septuagint refers to the Spirit coming upon an individual (2 Chr 24:20; cf. 1 Chr 12:18). As believers we are commanded to "**put on** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) the Lord Jesus Christ." (Ro 13:14+) **Enduo** - 27v - Matt. 6:25; Matt. 22:11; Matt. 27:31; Mk. 1:6; Mk. 6:9; Mk. 15:20; Lk. 8:27; Lk. 12:22; Lk. 15:22; Lk. 24:49; Acts 12:21; Rom. 13:12; Rom. 13:14; 1 Co. 15:53; 1 Co. 15:54; 2 Co. 5:3; Gal. 3:27; Eph. 4:24; Eph. 6:11; Eph. 6:14; Col. 3:10; Col. 3:12; 1 Thess. 5:8; 2 Tim. 3:6; Rev. 1:13; Rev. 15:6; Rev. 19:14

**Imperishable** (862) (**aphthartos** from **a** = not, + **phtheiro** = to shrivel or wither, spoil, ruin, deprave, to destroy by corrupting and so to bring into a worse state) is an adjective which describes that which is not subject or liable to decay and death and thus is in a sense immortal. **Aphthartos** is that which is not corruptible or not liable to corruption or decay. It describes that which is impervious to corruption. Synonyms include immortal, incorruptible, imperishable. God is not liable to corruption or decay (incorruptible God - Ro 1:23+), especially when compared to man-made idols which are liable to decay and corruption (and to cause corruption of those who worship them!). **Aphthartos** is used 8 times in the NT - Mark 16:8; Ro 1:23; 1Co 9:25; 1 Cor 15:52; 1Ti 1:17; 1Pe 1:4, 23; 3:4

Earlier in this letter Paul used **aphthartos** to describe the **imperishable wreath** (crown) believers will be awarded for finishing the race and not being disqualified! (read and ponder the comments on our once in a lifetime race! described in 1 Cor 9:24-27, cf Heb 12:1-2+ - be motivated to run by listening to this Scriptural song "[Run like Heaven](#)")

**Immortality** (110) (**athanasia** from **a** = negative + **thanatos** = death) means an endless existence, the antithesis of that which is subject to death. Only 3 NT uses - 1 Co. 15:53; 1 Co. 15:54; 1 Ti 6:16 God "alone possesses **immortality** and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen."

**Gilbrant** - Very plainly **athanasia** means "**immortality**" (from a negating alpha [1] prefix and thanatos, "death"). A second, though less common classical meaning was an "antidote" (Liddell-Scott). The concept of "immortality" is less than simple, however. "**Immortality**" in Greek thought was the property of the gods, not humankind, although the debate continues as to whether the human soul was regarded as immortal in Greek thought (Bultmann, "thanatos," Kittel, 3:22,23). **Plato** considered the **immortality** of the soul essential to his teaching ([Phaedrus 240a](#)). Whatever the case, "**immortality**" did not merely concern duration; it also involved a certain amount of enhanced quality of life, what Bultmann refers to as "divinisation" (ibid.). Because death was viewed as inevitable, it was very important to the Greeks for man to enjoy the only life he had, the earthly life (Schmithals, "Death," Colin Brown, 1:431). This is expressed in the proverb which Paul quoted in 1 Corinthians 15:32, "**Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.**" The Greek way of thinking had, however, also purer aspects in the view of death and immortality. Thus many philosophers emphasized strongly that a good life had as its fulfillment a good death. In this way they tried to remove some of the fear of death. And as a prolongation of this, the thought came concerning the immortality of the soul, with recompense and retribution in a life to come. Such ideas had their origin within Greek mysticism of Pythagoras. The first one to take up the theme for a thorough discussion was [Plato](#). During the Hellenistic period, such a view of immortality became more extended but was never fully accepted. Those who maintained this view considered death as the deliverance of the soul from the body. The immortal was freed from the mortal.

**Septuagint Usage** - Athanasia does not occur in the canonical books of the Septuagint, but does occur in the apocryphal writings whose Hellenistic influence is undisputed. It occurs five times in the Wisdom of Solomon and twice in 4 Maccabees. In Wisdom of Solomon 3:4 "immortality" is associated with the afterlife. The "souls" of the righteous may have appeared to have died (3:1,2), but in actuality, what seemed to be punishment was actually the attainment of immortality. This was not mere endurance; it involved "great good" (RSV, 3:5) and "power" (cf. 3:8; cf. 4 Maccabees 14:5 of immortality received because of torture; 16:13). Immortality came as a result of partaking of Wisdom (8:13,17). Although not mirroring a total adoption of Greek thought, these writings do reflect how Hellenistic Judaism was colored,

at least partly, by Greek thought. However, Greek influence should not be overestimated. In particular, orthodox Judaism inside Palestine certainly was more guided by Old Testament thoughts. Here it is quite interesting to observe that the **Sadducees**, who were the most open to contact with the Greco-Roman culture, were the ones who not only denied resurrection, but also eternal life, punishment or reward after death, and even the existence of a spirit world (cf. Acts 23:6-8). The **Pharisees**, on the other hand, who represented the orthodox view, believed in all this on the basis of the Old Testament Scriptures. It would, therefore, be a total misunderstanding to think that faith in immortality should have crept into Judaism from Greek sources. Even if the Septuagint does not use the particular word *athanasia*, the whole Old Testament teaching of the only, living and eternal God, its teaching on the afterlife for both the godly and the wicked in *sh'ôl*, and its teaching of a resurrection of the righteous and unrighteous, was the background for the immortality belief which is clearly shown in the New Testament.

**New Testament Usage** - There are only three occurrences of *athanasia* in the New Testament and all of these are attributed to the apostle Paul. Twice in the first letter to Corinth, in the same context, Paul described mysteries pertaining to the resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:53,54). The event is depicted in "putting on" (*enduō* [1730]) terminology (cf. Galatians 3:27; Ephesians 4:24; 6:11,14; Colossians 3:10; 1 Thessalonians 5:8). Paul said that it is necessary (*dei* [1158]) for the "mortal" (*thnētos* [2326]) to "put on" "immortality" (*athanasia*). He seemed to be contrasting the present "natural" body with the "spiritual" body to be received at the *parousia* (3814) or "coming" of Jesus. The natural bodies of those alive at the *Parousia*, subject to death and thus not immortal, will be changed into "immortal" bodies, not subject to death.

That the word "**immortality**" is used so seldom may indicate that the idea of immortality was considered to be inferior to the main idea of life and eternal life. In the same manner, the idea of immortality then receives qualitative content, not just a quantitative extension. It does not only stand for an existence past death but an existence in communion with God, where man will share the immortality of God himself and His eternal life.

Paul said in 1 Timothy 6:16 that God alone has immortality. This corresponds with the words of Jesus in John 5:26 where He said that the Father has "life in himself," and that He also has given the Son to have life in himself. Man has not "life in himself," but when participating in the eternal life of God, he also participates in the immortality of God. The fact that God "owns" immortality expresses His eternal being, an existence which cannot be affected by death or perishableness. Such an immortality man does not own and can only achieve when in communion with God. An existence outside of communion with God cannot be defined as immortality, but on the contrary as eternal death.

In the New Testament the body is described as mortal, and thus stands opposed to the soul of man, which cannot cease to exist. While the body is dead without spirit (James 2:26), it cannot be said that the soul is dead without the body. Thus it cannot be wrong to say that the New Testament teaches that man has an immortal soul. The soul or the spirit is that which carries the personality of man, and man's personal existence proceeds beyond death. This is also evident from what the New Testament teaches concerning a conscious intermediate state between the death and the resurrection (Luke 16:22,23,43). Paul did not interpret the intermediate state as an unconscious condition of rest. On the contrary he signified the condition of the deceased believer as a richer life and a higher kind of companionship with God (2 Corinthians 5:6; Philippians 1:22,23).

There is thus an essential difference between the Greek speculations concerning the immortality of the soul and the immortality as expressed in the Bible. According to the writers of the Bible, the soul is not an immortal part of man which shall continue its separate existence apart from the body. In fact, the New Testament does not differ between body and soul as between that which is material and that which is spiritual, because the animated body is here, as in the Old Testament, a revelation of God-given life. In the entire Bible, there is therefore the thought of immortality being connected with the hope of resurrection. It is the entire man, body, soul, and spirit which shall inherit immortality. The Scripture does not know any immortality for man which consists in deliverance from, or rather, loss of body. On the contrary, the immortality of man is connected with the redemption of the body (Romans 8:23). This mortal must put on immortality (1 Corinthians 15:54,55).

Thus in the New Testament the thought of immortality is bound together with the hope of resurrection and eternal life in Jesus Christ. The apostles had met Jesus after the Resurrection, thus they did not need any other proof of the immortality of man. That is why they spoke little of immortality, and more of the



resurrection of Christ and its consequences for the believer. (See 1 Corinthians 15:1-22.) Christ is risen from the dead and dies no more. The believers' union with Christ means that they forever shall live together with Him. The resurrection of the believers is considered to be a fruit of the resurrection of Christ (Ephesians 2:5,6; Philippians 3:20,21).

Thus immortality, considered as eternal life in communion with God, has its source in the Redemption. But it is also evident that the Scripture teaches an eternal existence for man that has the creation as its foundation. There is something irrevocable concerning the work of creation, and God has placed eternity in the hearts of men (Ecclesiastes 3:11-14). Sin can destroy man's connection of life with God, but it does not deprive man of his existence. If one understands the expression "immortality" as eternal existence, then it is evident that the Scripture teaches the immortality of the soul and man. The Old Testament as well as the New Testament speaks of a double exit from this earthly life and of a resurrection of both the just and the unjust (Matthew 11:20-24; 24:32-46; John 5:29). The resurrection of the ungodly does not have its basis in Redemption but in Christ's authority to judge.

Immortality as taught in the New Testament is finally founded on the belief in God (Mark 12:27). In this connection the great "either-or" is also put forth in the New Testament: eternal glory or eternal perdition. These final results already start here in time by the communion with God or separation from God (John 5:24; 3:18; Galatians 6:7,8). ([Complete Biblical Library - Incredible Resource](#))

#### Related Resource:

- [Is it true that the bodies of some saints are incorruptible? | GotQuestions.org](#) (Short answer - NO!!!)

## THE BELIEVER'S WARDROBE OLD AND NEW

**Paul** uses of **enduo** are all figurative describing the putting on of "ethical, moral or spiritual" garments. And what a "**wardrobe**" he lays out for believers in his epistles...

### THE ARMOR OF LIGHT

Romans 13:12 The night is almost gone, and the day is at hand. Let us therefore lay aside (cast off, drop, fling away, renounce) the deeds of darkness (all the filthy garments of worldliness—that is, everything associated with unrighteousness and evil -- in the context of Col 3:10 this would include **lying**) and **put on** the armor of light. (See notes)

### CHRIST HIMSELF AS OUR GARMENT

**Galatians 3:27** For all of you who were baptized into Christ **have clothed yourselves** with Christ.

**Comment:** This putting on refers to salvation, at which time the Spirit replaced our filthy rags of sin with the righteousness of Christ - this is now and forever our new position before God. He sees us in Christ's righteousness - the theologians refer to this as positional truth = past tense salvation = justification.

**Romans 13:14+** But **put on** (our practice = present tense salvation = progressive sanctification - put Him on each morning and every moment of the day - aorist imperative [middle voice = you initiate the action and participate in the result = put Him *yourself*] ) **the Lord Jesus Christ**, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.

### THE NEW SELF

Ephesians 4:24 and **put on** (not a command - aorist tense) the **new self**, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

**Comment:** As discussed in the **notes** there is debate between excellent commentators, some favoring this putting on as indicative of positional truth and others favoring it as calling for this to be our practice - progressive sanctification or present tense salvation.

Colossians 3:10+ and **have put on** (past tense salvation = positional sanctification = our position now and forever in Christ - see our practice in Col 3:12) the **new self** who is being renewed to a true knowledge

according to the image of the One Who created him (See )

Colossians 3:12+ And so, as those who have been chosen of God (cf notes Eph 1:5), holy and beloved, **put on** (present tense salvation = progressive sanctification = our practice - a command be clothed [middle voice = clothe *yourself*] now = aorist imperative) a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

### THE BREASTPLATE OF FAITH AND LOVE

**1 Thessalonians 5:8+** But since we are of the day, let us be sober, **having put on** (at the time of our new birth = justification = our position = past tense salvation) the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation.

### IMPERISHABLE, IMMORTAL GARMENTS

**1 Corinthians 15:53** For this perishable must **put on** (glorification = future tense salvation) the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 But when this perishable will have **put on** the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory.

What a "**wardrobe**" God has made available for believers! We're the "best dressed" folks in the world and most of us don't even know it! And the best is yet to come for John writes...

### GARMENTS OF FINE LINEN, WHITE AND CLEAN...

**Revelation 19:14+** And the armies (this is us, those redeemed by the blood of the Lamb) which are in heaven, **clothed** (enduo) in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him (the Lamb = Faithful and True = the Word of God) on white horses.

**Comment:** This incredible historical event will occur at the end of the 7 year period, Daniel's Seventieth Week, and marks the defeat of the antichrist and his armies and the inception of Messiah's Millennial Reign

The garments believers are now wearing (figuratively, spiritually) are a picture of every believer's vital mystical spiritual union with Christ which began at the time of regeneration (the new birth). All believers have been irrevocably, intimately united with Christ at the moment of salvation (past tense salvation = positional sanctification = justification = the new birth). Every believer now stands (our position) before God clothed with Christ's righteousness, complete in Christ.

**1 Corinthians 15:54** But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP in victory. ([NASB 1995 - Lockman](#))

- **mortal** Ro 2:7 6:12 8:11 2Co 4:11 2Th 1:10
- **Death** Isa 25:8 Lu 20:36 Heb 2:14,15 Rev 20:14 21:4
- See also The Resurrection of Christ
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Hebrews 2:14-15+ Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the **power of death**, that is, the devil, 15 and **might free those** who through **fear of death** were subject to slavery all their lives.

Revelation 20:14+ Then **death** and Hades **were thrown into the lake of fire**. This is the second death, the lake of fire.

**Comment** - It is ironic that death is thrown into the place of the second death. That is death swallowed up by the second death!

### DEATH SWALLOWED UP FOREVER

But when this perishable ([phthartos](#)) will have put on the imperishable ([phthora](#)), and this mortal will have put on immortality ([athanasia](#)) - Paul repeats the glorious description of the resurrected body from 1 Cor 15:53. Note he adds the important time phrase

**WHEN** ([hotan](#))

**Robertson and Plummer** on the **when** - As soon as it (**WHEN**) takes place, (**ED: THE WHEN GIVES RISE TO THE NEXT TIME PHRASE "THEN"**) **then**, at **that solemn moment and in this mysterious way, the prophetic utterance which stands written** (Isaiah 25:8) **will have its realization**, and "the farthest-reaching of all O.T. prophecies" will become an accomplished fact (γενήσεται). In Isa. 25:8 it is said that God will swallow up death—the death which came by the hand of the Assyrian. In the Prophet's vision the deliverance from death is limited by the necessities of his own age. The Apostle's view is much wider. He knows that all death will be swallowed up now that Christ has conquered death by rising again. The doom pronounced upon Adam (Gen. 3:19) is removed; and the result (ες) is victory, absolute and everlasting triumph. Death is annihilated, and God is all in all. This thought makes the Apostle burst out into a song of triumph of death which is a free adaptation of another prophetic utterance. ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Then** ([tote](#)) is another important marker of time in this case showing sequence. Paul is saying when the bodies of all believers are transformed into imperishable, immortal bodies, this transformation signals the defeat of **death** and the [culmination](#) of the victory over **death**.

In Romans 6:9 Paul teaches that "death no longer is master over" Christ but at the present time, Death is master over mankind and is our "mortal" enemy. While believers do not need to fear death any longer, death still attacks families, taking loved ones at young ages, taking fathers who are the breadwinners, etc. In this passage Paul is saying that coincident with the transformation of believers bodies, Death will cease to defeat us and is itself the defeated

**Will come about the saying that is written, "DEATH([thanatos](#)) IS SWALLOWED UP in victory** - When believers receive their resurrection bodies, then this saying will be true. **Death** is personified as a defeated enemy. **Swallowed up** means swallowed completely. Paul is quoting from Isa 25:8 "He will swallow up death for all time" where the Semitic phrase **for all time** means forever, permanently, successfully. Thus Paul's idea is that this speaks of an eternal victory.

**R C H Lenski - Death** is not merely destroyed so that it cannot do further harm while all of the harm which it has wrought on God's children remains. The tornado is not merely checked so that no additional homes are wrecked while those that were wrecked still lie in ruin.... Death and all of its apparent victories are undone for God's children. What looks like a victory for death and like a defeat for us when our bodies die and decay shall be utterly reversed so that death dies in absolute defeat and our bodies live again in absolute victory ([Commentary](#))

**Ray Stedman** comments on these great passages signaling the final defeat of death - Standing beside the grave of a Christian whom I just buried, I have often felt like that. Though there was sorrow as loved ones bade good-bye to someone they loved, nevertheless I have often sensed an electric excitement, and seen a radiant hope pervading the whole group. Their hearts and mine were saying, "O, death, where is your sting? O, Hades, where is your victory?" I have been at funeral services where the whole congregation stood at the end and, led by a thundering organ, sang the "Hallelujah Chorus." I thought it an appropriate expression of what people were feeling at that moment. [The Victory Of The Mystery](#)

So when my latest breath  
Shall rend the veil in twain,  
By death I shall escape from death  
And life eternal gain.  
—Montgomery

**Guzik - Death is swallowed up in victory:** A resurrected body is not a resuscitated corpse. It is a new order of life that will never die again. Death is defeated by resurrection.. Freud was wrong when he said: "And finally there is the painful riddle of death, for which no remedy at all has yet been found, nor probably ever will be." Compare that with Paul's triumphant declaration, "Death is swallowed up in victory"! ([1 Corinthians 15 Commentary](#))

**Swallowed** ([2666](#)) [katapino](#) from **katá** = down + **pínō** = to drink) means literally to drink down, and so to swallow and to swallow up completely. "**Devour**" means to cause something to pass through the mouth and into the stomach--to gulp down. Figuratively **katapino** means to cause the complete and sudden destruction of someone or something. **Friberg** - (1) literally drink or gulp down, swallow; (a) of the ground absorbing liquids take in (Rev 12.16); (b) of animals devour; used as part of a metaphor to denote the devil's activity against someone completely overpower, bring under control (1Pe 5.8); (2) figuratively overcome, destroy; (a) of waves of water overflowing someone drown (Heb 11.29); (b) of heavy and continual sorrow happening to someone overwhelm, prevail over, overcome (2Cor 2.7); (c) of one force putting an end to another force absorb completely, cause the end of (2Cor 5.4)

Classical Greek uses *katapinō* in the general sense of "to gulp down" or "to swallow." The use of the word may

or may not have a negative or destructive connotation, depending on the context. The Septuagint uses katapinō with its negative connotations in mind. Katapinō is used to translate the Hebrew bāla' and has the meaning of "to swallow up" or "to destroy." Usually man is the object of this action because of his wickedness or disobedience (Exodus 15:12; Numbers 16:30; Jonah 2:1).

**Victory** (3534) (**nikos** related to **nike** = victory) means victory and is used 4x in NT = Matt. 12:20; 1 Co. 15:54; 1 Co. 15:55, 1 Cor 15:57 and the first 3 verses use nikos in quotations from the Old Testament; however, the Septuagint does not actually use **nikos** in any of the passages quoted. **Nike** is the common Greek word for "victory" in classical Greek, there is a preference for its later form and related term **nikos** in the Septuagint and in the New Testament (cf. Liddell-Scott). In the Septuagint of 2 Sa 2:26

A little girl whose baby brother had just died asked her mother where baby had gone. "To be with Jesus," replied the mother. A few days later, talking to a friend, the mother said, "I am so grieved to have lost my baby." The little girl heard her, and, remembering what her mother had told her, looked up into her face and asked, "Mother, is a thing lost when you know where it is?" "No, of course not." "Well, then, how can baby be lost when he has gone to be with Jesus?" Her mother never forgot this. It was the truth.

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**Our Living Saviour** - Vital Christian experience comes from knowing Jesus as the living Saviour. Two irreligious young men were discussing the resurrection, telling each other why it was impossible for them to accept the doctrine. Then a deacon of a near-by church walked by, and in a joking way one of the young fellows called to him, "Say, Deacon, tell us why you believe that Jesus rose again." "Well," he answered, "one reason is that I was talking with Him for half an hour this very morning." We may all experience proof of the resurrection of Christ in the acknowledging of His living presence in our lives. No one who knows Jesus personally questions the resurrection.—Watchman-Examiner

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## In His Presence

Death is swallowed up in victory. — 1 Corinthians 15:54

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:50-58

As the congregation around me sang the final verse of "Amazing Grace," I couldn't sing. I found myself instead wiping tears from my eyes as I stared at John Newton's words, "When we've been there 10,000 years, . . . we've no less days to sing God's praise than when we'd first begun."

At that moment I wasn't interested in 10,000 years in heaven. All I could think of was that my 17-year-old daughter was already there. Melissa, who just a few months earlier had been looking forward to her senior year of high school, was in heaven. She was already experiencing an eternity that we can only talk and sing about.

When Melissa was killed in a car accident in the spring of 2002, heaven took on new meaning for our family. Because our bright, beautiful teen had trusted Jesus Christ as her Savior, we knew she was there. As Paul said, "Death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Corinthians 15:54). To us, heaven became even more real. We knew that as we talked with God, we were talking to Someone who had our Melissa in His presence.

The reality of heaven is one of the Bible's most glorious truths. It's a real place where our loved ones live in the presence of our great God, forever serving Him and singing His praises—all because of His amazing grace! By: Dave Branon ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

### [When we've been there ten thousand years,](#)

Bright shining as the sun,  
We've no less days to sing God's praise  
Than when we'd first begun.  
—Newton

Christians never say goodbye to each other for the last time.

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**1 Corinthians 15:55 "O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?" [NASB 1995 - Lockman](#)**

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- **O death** Ho 13:14
- **sting** Ac 9:5 Rev 9:10 \*Gr:
- grave or, hell, Lu 16:23 Ac 2:27 Rev 20:13,14 \*Gr:

- **is thy victory** Job 18:13,14 Ps 49:8-15 89:48 Ec 2:15,16 3:19 8:8 9:5,6 Ro 5:14
- See also The Resurrection of Christ
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

Hosea 13:14 Shall I ransom them from the power of Sheol? Shall I redeem them from death? O Death, where are your thorns? O Sheol, where is your sting? Compassion will be hidden from My sight.

### DEATH'S DEFEAT

**Utley** writes that "Verses 54 and 55 are obviously Paul's way of taunting mankind's last great enemy—death, which has been completely vanquished in Christ's resurrection from the dead and His followers having been freed from sin's penalty (**ED**: eternal death, and sin's power) and awaiting a certain resurrection themselves."

"**O DEATH** ([thanatos](#)), **WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH** ([thanatos](#)), **WHERE IS YOUR STING** - Paul is quoting freely from Hos 13:14 (see [Related Passages](#) above). It is almost as if Paul is taunting or mocking death personified because he knows death is a defeated enemy. **Sting** is a fascinating picture which represents death as a venomous creature, a scorpion or a hornet, which is rendered harmless. In the next verse Paul explains that "the sting of death is sin." **MacArthur** adds "To continue with that metaphor, Paul implies that death left its **sting** in Christ (WHO BECAME SIN FOR US), as a bee leaves its stinger in its victim. Christ bore the whole of death's **sting** in order that we would have to bear none of it." ([MNTC- 1 Corinthians](#)) While death is a defeated enemy, even believers still feel the "**sting**," because they die physically. However, death does not result in defeat for a Christian for the "worst thing that can happen to him is actually the best thing!" For the Christian death in effect opens the door for the believer to enter into the presence of Jesus (2 Cor 5:8)

Oh, death of Christ—the death of fear!

The death of condemnation!

Oh, life! His gift to trusting souls—

Eternal, free salvation!

—F. Hess

Another way to look at this is from the perspective of saints who live to the rapture and thus never even experience the "sting" of physical death in this life.

And the phrase "O death where is your victory" would be the chant of all saints who have been raised and now experience resurrection bodies immune to attacks by the enemy death.

**John MacArthur** has a quote that pictures death as a "preacher"

"There is a preacher of the old school but he speaks as boldly as ever. He is not popular, though the world is his parish and he travels every part of the globe and speaks in every language. He visits the poor, calls upon the rich, preaches to people of every religion and no religion, and the subject of his sermon is always the same. He is an eloquent preacher, often stirring feelings which no other preacher could, and bringing tears to eyes that never weep. His arguments none are able to refute, nor is there any heart that has remained unmoved by the force of this appeals. He shatters life with his message. Most people hate him; everyone fears him. His name? **Death**. Every tombstone is his pulpit, every newspaper prints his text, and someday every one of you will be his sermon." ([MNTC- 1 Corinthians](#))

Paul says in this verse in effect that Death's "sermons" have been brought to a screeching halt.

**Spurgeon** - The grave—what is it? It is the bath in which the Christian puts the clothes of his body to have them washed and cleansed. Death—what is it? It is the waiting-room where we robe ourselves for immortality; it is the place where the body, like Esther, bathes itself in spices that it may be fit for the embrace of its Lord.

**Trapp** on Paul's two questions - This is the sharpest and the shrillest note, the boldest and the bravest challenge, that ever man rang in the ears of death ... Death is here out-braved, called craven to his face, and bidden to do his worst."

**Spurgeon** - "I will not fear thee, death, why should I? Thou lookest like a dragon, but thy sting is gone. Thy teeth are broken, oh old lion, wherefore should I fear thee? I know thou art no more able to destroy me, but thou art sent as a messenger to conduct me to the golden gate wherein I shall enter and see my Saviour's unveiled face for ever. Expiring saints have often said that their last beds have been the best they have ever slept upon." ...For those who are not in Jesus Christ, death still has its **sting**. "The **sting of death**

lay in this, that we had sinned and were summoned to appear before the God whom we had offended. This is the sting of death to you, unconverted ones, not that you are dying, but that after death is the judgment, and that you must stand before the Judge of the quick and dead to receive a sentence for the sins which you have committed in your body against him."

Only the fear of God can remove the fear of death.

Play "**O DEATH WHERE IS THY STING**" from [Handel's Messiah](#). Then listen to **Brahm's Requiem** which is a memorial to Christ's victory over death - [this movement blew me away](#) (and [here](#))! If this does not bring tears of joy and thanksgiving as you ponder the reality of your future glory with Christ, I do not know what will! And you do not have to understand German to grasp the power of Christ's victory over death! All I could think was "Thank You Lord Jesus Christ for defeating Death for me forever and ever. Amen and amen" (**NOTE**: Unlike traditional requiems which offer prayers for the dead, **Brahms' German Requiem** is focused on offering comfort to the living! Hallelujah!)

**Sting** (2759)(**kentron** from **kenteo** = to prick) describes a sharp, pointed instrument used for piercing to hurt or kill. It describes anything by which a puncture is made. In Acts 26:14+ Jesus told Paul "It is hard for you to kick against the goads" or to continue to offer resistance the divine call to salvation like did an unruly ox resisting the goad.

**Kentron** - 4x in NT - Acts 26:14; 1 Co. 15:55; 1 Co. 15:56; Rev. 9:10<sub>+</sub> = "They have tails like scorpions, and stings" 3 uses in the Septuagint - Pr 26:3; Hos. 5:12; Hos. 13:14 = "O Death, where are your thorns? O Sheol, where is your sting?"

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**Adrian Rogers** - One day, a mother and her two children were in the park having a wonderful time. They were enjoying the outdoors until a big bumblebee landed on little Brother and then stung him! He began to cry and scream like any child would as the wound on his arm became swollen. The bee was still buzzing around, and his little sister was petrified. The mother comforted her daughter by saying, "Darling, wait a minute." As she was wiping Brother's tears away, she said, "Look down here on your brother's arm." Right in the middle of that swelling was the bumblebee's stinger. "You see that, Sweetheart? That bee can buzz and fight you, but he can't hurt you. You see, he can only sting once and he has left his stinger in your brother."

While death is a decided fact, Death is also a defeated foe. We are able to laugh in the face of Death if we know the Lord Jesus Christ. I want to tell you, friend, Death may buzz around you and frighten you, but our elder brother, the Lord Jesus, bears that sting. Jesus took the sting out of Death, and He has given us a hope that is steadfast and sure.

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### **Robert Morgan - The Boys and the Bee**

Scripture pervaded the life of M. R. DeHaan, founder of the Radio Bible Class, and was seldom far from his thoughts. In his early years, Dr. DeHaan kept bees, and one day his young sons Marv and Richard went with him to raid the hives. One of the bees zeroed in on Richard and, attacking him like a dive bomber, stung him just above the eye. The boy swatted frantically at the bee, then fell to the ground in agony, kicking and screaming.

The same bee headed toward Marv and buzzed around his head. The terrified boy also hit the ground, rolling and screaming, hiding his head in the grass and crying for help.

Dr. DeHaan rushed over to Marv, picked him up, and told him to stop crying. "The bee is harmless," he said. "It can't hurt you. It has lost its sting." The two then went over to check on Richard. There stuck in the brow above his eye was a little black stinger. DeHaan removed the stinger and checked his son for damage.

"When the bee leaves its stinger in the victim," he told the boys, "from then on it is perfectly harmless. The bee can still buzz and scare you, but it is powerless to hurt you. Your brother took the sting away by being stung."

Unable to resist a sermon, DeHaan went on to quote 1 Corinthians 15:55: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

"The Lord Jesus, our older Brother," he said, "hung on the cross and took the sting out of death. And death, which has only one sting, can no longer hurt us. It can buzz around and scare us, but its sting is gone."

The boys never forgot the lesson—though Richard would have just as soon learned it some other way. (From this Verse)

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### **Loins Girded - Death, Where is Thy Sting? 1 Cor 15:55**

Some expositors think that death is here represented as a driver, who chases us relentlessly to hell, which is here the realm of death, and who uses for this purpose a stick that has a goad or a sharp prick at the end. Much richer is the image, if we see, according to other commentators, in death a poisonous monster, that, like a scorpion, is equipped with a death causing sting or goad. Much like such a frightful kind of vermin, does death sneak up to us, drives home the sting in the heart, and pours out the murderous venom into our blood. The sting, that he exercises his power with, he obtained by sin. No grave would have been dug into the earth, if there would have been no sin. And that sin could provide him that power, is because of the law, because it

pronounces the curse upon any one who only in the slightest matter digresses from it.

It is a fearful thought to be threatened continually by that ruinous power and to have to expect any moment the death blow of that sting. It is a sharp sting,—nothing can withstand it, no health nor blossoming youth, no wealth nor knowledge; there is nothing that keeps us from the blow of that sting. It is a poisonous sting,—dying is bitter, oh, not only because it separates us from those whom we love, but especially because we realize that it is ordained for man to once die and afterwards face judgment. It is not surprising that many flee from the thought of death, even though they cannot escape from death itself.

This is the treachery of unbelief, it lacks the courage to face the enemy and it rather hides itself from him, till he conquers them in their hiding place and drags them to the grave as his prey. Much more noble was a man like Paul, who fully sensed the depth of death, who described it in its horrible character, and who added the taunting words to it: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" That is the language of faith. The language of faith is the language of heroes. The language of faith is the language of praise. It is the language of a heart that has triumphed over death. Oh, certainly, the faithful still has to die, but that is not the true, the depth of dying any more. His Jesus struggled through that for him. That Saviour caught the sting of death in His Mediatorial heart, absorbed all the venom of it, yes, even broke the sting for all His chosen ones. Now we can sing in the face of death, not because we are such heroes in and from ourselves, but because our trust is in Him who has gained the victory. Now we sing, even at the edge of the grave: "Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

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### **For Whom The Bell Tolls**

Death is swallowed up in victory. O Death, where is your sting? —1 Corinthians 15:54-55

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:51-56

In 17th-century England, church bells tolled out the news of what was taking place in a parish. They announced not only religious services but also weddings and funerals.

So when John Donne, author and dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, lay desperately sick with the plague that was killing people in London by the thousands, he could hear the bells announce death after death. Writing down his thoughts in the devotional diary that became a classic, Donne urged his readers, "Never send to know for whom the bell tolls. It tolls for thee."

How true! The book of Hebrews teaches that we will all face death one day: "It is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment" (9:27).

But if we are believers in the gospel, news of death does not need to arouse dread. We know, as Paul joyfully assured us, that by His resurrection Jesus has broken the power of death and "brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Timothy 1:10). Death has been "swallowed up in victory" by the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 15:54). Its sting is gone (v.55).

When the bell tolls for the Christian, it announces the good news of Jesus' victory over death. By: Vernon Grounds [Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#)

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**Martin Luther** - O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? This is so true that even Satan cannot deny it. Christ's resurrection and victory over sin, death and hell is greater than all heaven and earth. You can never imagine his resurrection and victory so great but that in actuality it is far, far greater.

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**Billy Graham** - Death has two stages, first the separation of the body from the spirit . . .for a purely spiritual existence, and second, reunion with the body and a glorious resurrection at the Second Coming of Christ.

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### **Three Certainties**

O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory? —1 Corinthians 15:55

Today's Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

As I waited outside the Intensive Care Unit for changes in the condition of a loved one, I was reminded that death affects all of us: old and young, male and female, rich and poor.

In 1 Thessalonians 4, the apostle Paul comforted those who mourned the death of their loved ones. He told them that excessive grief resulted from being uninformed. Weeping for our loss is good, but we need not weep like those who have no hope. Instead, we must rely on three certainties of death.

The first certainty is that the soul does not die. The souls of departed believers are with the Lord (v.14). They have retired from this problematic world, and they “sleep in Jesus.”

Second, Jesus will come for every believer. Whether a Christian is alive on earth or asleep in death, Jesus will return for all His children (vv.16-17).

Third, there will be a joyous reunion. “Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord” (v.17).

Knowing these certainties brings comfort to believers when their friends and loved ones depart. Although we are separated from them for a while, we will meet again in the presence of our Lord. By: Albert Lee ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

When facing death's shadow, remember the Light;  
The shadows bring fear, and the dark shrouds our eyes;  
But if we will turn to face Jesus the Light,  
The shadows will fade as He brightens our skies.  
—Lee

Sunset in one land is sunrise in another.

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A man who was suffering from poor health decided to move to a warmer climate. Wanting to make sure he would choose the area best suited to his needs, he visited several locations. While in Arizona, he asked, "What's the average temperature?" "What about the humidity?" "How many days of sunshine are there?" When he asked, "What's the death rate?" he received this answer: "Same as where you come from, friend—one death for every birth."

As sure as setting of the sun  
In evening's western sky,  
This life's brief day will soon be done  
And we will have to die.  
—D. De Haan

Dying is the last page of time and the first page of eternity

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Do you ever think about your inevitable death? Or are you like the influential theater tycoon Bernard Jacobs, who said, “Of all the things in the world I think least about, it's what happens after you die. Dead is dead.”

Is that what happens when we exhale our last breath and our brain cells stop functioning? When our life has come to an end, are we totally extinguished like a flame of a candle plunged into water? That's a common belief. But it isn't what the Bible teaches. Hebrews 9:27 declares that it is appointed for us “to die once, but after this the judgment.”

If we have received Jesus as Savior from our sins, we need not fear facing Him. We will enter into blessed fellowship with God for all eternity, for we will be “absent from the body and . . . present with the Lord” (2 Cor. 5:8).

Jesus taught His disciples, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die” (John 11:25-26).

Jesus' message in the Word of God gives hope when we face our own death or the death of someone we love. He promises that we will enter our heavenly home and be with Him forever. We can count on His word.

“I go to prepare a place for you . . .  
That where I am there you may be,”  
Our death is not the end of life—  
Beyond, with Christ, eternity!  
—Hess

Jesus' resurrection spelled the death of Death.



- **sting** Ge 3:17-19 Ps 90:3-11 Pr 14:32 Joh 8:21,24 Ro 5:15,17 6:23 Heb 9:27
- **power** Ro 3:19,20 4:15 5:13,20 7:5-13 Ga 3:10-13
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## STING OF DEATH IS SIN & LAW EMPOWERS SIN

**The sting of death** ([thanatos](#)) is **sin** - **Cleon Rogers** on sin (literally "the sin") "The article indicates the principle of sin (ED: SIN IS IN EFFECT PERSONIFIED AS IN ROMANS 6-7 WHERE IT IS REPEATEDLY "THE SIN" PRINCIPLE - SEE [Sin = Principle](#)). Death is not simply the result of decay; rather, it is the result of the deadly poison, **sin** itself, which became all the more energized in our lives through acquaintance with the law (SEE THIS DYNAMIC DESCRIBED BELOW).

**And the power** ([dunamis](#)) of **sin** ([hamartia](#)) is **the law** - What Paul is saying is that "the law gives sin its power." How does the law give sin power. Think about what the law does to the fallen flesh. Tell your flesh "I'm not going to do "x" for the entire week." What have you just done to yourself? In effect you have placed yourself under the law (one you declared, but law nevertheless). And the moment you fall into this trap of legalistic obedience, it won't be long before you experience failure and frustration. The important spiritual dynamic is what Paul is alluding to in this passage. He describes the how law gives [Sin](#) its power in Romans 7:6 writing "while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which **were aroused by the Law** (NOTE THE EFFECT OF THE LAW!), were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death." So we see that the Law arouses the sinful flesh to commit sins. And again in Romans 7:8 we Paul explains that "[Sin](#), taking opportunity through the **commandment**, (THE LAW) produced (accomplished) in me coveting of every kind; for apart from the Law sin is dead." And so we see the effect of the Law is to stimulate [Sin](#) producing coveting. In sum, the law gives sin its power.

In his Pilgrim's Progress, John Bunyan describes Interpreter's house, which Pilgrim entered during the course of his journey to the Celestial City. The parlor of the house was completely covered with dust, and when a man took a broom and started to sweep, he and the others in the room began to choke from the great clouds of dust that were stirred up. The more vigorously he swept, the more suffocating the dust became. Then Interpreter ordered a maid to sprinkle the room with water, with which the dust was quickly washed away. Interpreter explained to Pilgrim that the parlor represented the heart of an unsaved man, that the dust was original sin, the man with the broom was the law, and the maid with the water was the gospel. **His point was that all the law can do with sin is to stir it up. Only the gospel of Jesus Christ can wash it away.** (MacArthur MNTC-Galatians)

**THOUGHT** - The practical upshot of the previous discussion is that we need to be very cautious and hesitant in making a list of "**Do's and Don't's**" in an attempt to try to control our sinful flesh! We are destined for defeat because the law arouses our fallen flesh. It does not suppress it. So God provided a far superior way to battle lusts and sin -- the Spirit. We need to learn to rely not on self to control "self" but to rely on the Spirit. Romans 8:13+ is a key passage - "if **by the Spirit** you are putting to death (present tense = continually; active voice - a choice of our will - but even that choice is "energized" by the Spirit giving us the desire and the power - see Php 2:13NLT+) the deeds of the body, you will live." Filling/control/reliance on the Holy Spirit is the "secret" to controlling unholy passions!

**Zeisler:** But the law offers no praise for good or even improving effort. It always demands absolute obedience and always condemns anything that falls short of that. This is why sin is so powerful (BECAUSE IT ALWAYS FALLS SHORT), and why we fear death so much.

**Mare:** If it were not for sin, death would have no sting. It is the law of God with its stringent moral demands that strengthens the power of sin by showing us how sinful we are, and thus condemns us.

**Sin** (266) [hamartia](#) literally conveys the idea of missing the mark as when hunting with a bow and arrow (in Homer some hundred times of a warrior hurling his spear but missing his foe). Later **hamartia** came to mean missing or falling short of any goal, standard, or purpose. **Hamartia** in the Bible signifies a departure from God's holy, perfect standard of what is right in word or deed (righteous). See discussion of "the Sin" "[personified](#)" as a principle as it is here in 1 Cor 15:56.

**Thomas Gray** wrote "[Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard](#)"

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of pow'r,  
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,  
Awaits alike th' inevitable hour.  
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

## POWER OF THE LAW TO STIR UP SIN

Paul alludes to the power of the law to stimulate sin "the power of sin is the law." (1 Cor 15:55-56)

**Augustine** - Nothing could be truer. For a prohibition always increases an illicit desire so long as the love of and joy in holiness is too weak to conquer the inclination to sin. So without the aid of divine grace it is impossible for man to love and delight in sanctity. (CITY OF GOD)

I will never forget an illustration of this by Charles Swindoll who described a beautiful "putting green" like lawn in his front yard. And to keep it pristine, he placed a sign so the kids would not ride their bikes over the lawn "STAY OFF THE LAWN." You guessed it! Kids began to ride "rampant" over his "putting green" lawn. That's the effect of the Law!!!

In Galveston, Texas, a hotel on the shore of the Gulf of Mexico put this notice in each room: NO FISHING FROM THE BALCONY Yet every day, hotel guests threw in their lines to the waters below. Then the management decided to TAKE DOWN THE SIGNS – Guess what happened? The fishing stopped!

**Martin Luther** on "The power of sin is the Law." Who has ever heard that said about God's commandment and law, which, after all, was given and instituted as holy and good by God? And still St. Paul can say that sin would be feeble and dead and could effect nothing if it were not for the Law. The Law renders sin alert and strong and prompts it to cut and to pierce. If it depended on us, sin would very likely remain dormant forever. But **God is able to awaken it effectively through the Law.** When the hour comes for sin to sting and to strike, it grows unendurable in a moment. For the Law [dins](#) this into your ears and holds the register of your sins before your nose: "Do you hear? You committed this and you committed that in violation of God's commandments, and you spent your whole life in sin. Your own conscience must attest and affirm that." In that way sin already shows its power. It frightens you so that the whole world becomes too confining for you. It agitates and strikes until you must needs despair. And there is neither escape nor defense here. For the Law is too strong, and your own heart abets it, which itself denounces you and condemns you to hell. Therefore sin requires nothing else than God's law. **Where that enters the heart, sin is already alive and able to kill man if it wants to, unless he lays hold of this victory, which is Christ, our Lord.**

Paul says the "power of sin" is derived from the law. Place yourself under law even in the most subtle of ways) and you have just given sin an opportunity to stimulate you to commit sins! The take message for all of us is to [assiduously](#) avoid **legalism** (see Ray Stedman on [Legalism](#)) in any shape, form or fashion, lest we arouse our old master **Sin**! Beware!

**Run, John, Run! The Law commands  
But gives me neither feet nor hands.  
Far grander news the Gospel brings  
It bids me fly and gives me wings!**

**THOUGHT** - Dear brother or sister in Christ, this little [ditty](#) begs the question -- are you "**flying**" or are you "**dying trying**," trying in vain, in your own strength, to please God, to merit His smile, to curry His favor, to earn His grace? If so, then quit "**trying**" (yourself) and begin daily "**dying**" (to self - cf Mk 8:34+) and the Spirit will give you "wings" so that you might be enabled to *soar like an eagle*, for Jesus promised if you abide in His Word you would be His disciple and would "know the truth, and the truth will make you free" and "if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed." (John 8:32, 36) Isaiah echoes the truth that "those who wait (trust in, hope) for the LORD will gain new strength. They will mount up with wings like eagles. They will run and not get tired. They will walk and not become weary." (Isaiah 40:31<sup>±</sup>)

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### The Sting

The sting of death is sin . . . . But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. —1 Corinthians 15:56-57

Today's Scripture: Romans 5:12-21

Years ago, while I was walking in the field with my two young boys, a bee stung the elder of the two just above his eye. He quickly

brushed it away and threw himself in the grass, kicking and screaming. No sooner had the bee been brushed away when it went straight for the younger son and began buzzing around his head. He tried to hide in the tall grass and began screaming for help. I picked him up and told him not to worry—the bee had lost its stinger.

This particular bee can sting only once. It leaves its stinger in the victim and becomes harmless. So I took my younger son over to his older brother and showed him the little black stinger in his brother's brow. I told him, "The bee can still buzz and scare you, but it is powerless to hurt you. Your brother took the sting away."

In 1 Corinthians 15:56, the apostle Paul said that the sting of death is sin. But Jesus took the sting for us by dying in our place on the cross. Death is now powerless to hurt us because Jesus took its sting.

Death may "buzz around" and scare us, but it cannot hurt us anymore. We need not fear God's judgment. All death can do is open the door to Glory. By: M.R. DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

I have life in Jesus' name,  
For He took my guilt and shame;  
Gone the sting of death and sin,  
Only peace now reigns within. —Hess

Death may alarm us, but it cannot harm us.

**1 Corinthians 15:57 but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.** [NASB 1995 - Lockman](#)

- **thanks** Ac 27:35 Ro 7:25 2Co 1:11 2:14 9:15 Eph 5:20
- **gives** 1Co 15:51 2Ki 5:1 \*marg: 1Ch 22:11 Ps 98:1 Pr 21:31 Joh 16:33 Ro 8:37 1Jn 5:4,5 Rev 12:11 15:2,3
- See also The Resurrection of Christ
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Romans 6:17+ But **thanks be to God** that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed,

Romans 7:25+ **Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!** So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.

2 Corinthians 2:14 **But thanks be to God, Who always leads us in triumph in Christ,** and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place.

## GIVE GRATITUDE TO GOD

**but thanks be to God** - **Thanks** is the word [charis](#) which is our word for grace. It is a bit of a paradox that we who are in daily desperate need of God's grace, can in some way give "grace" to God with our gratitude to Him for His gift of victory over death.

**Who** (present tense - continually) **gives us the victory** ([nikos](#)) - Note the present tense participle (continually giving) so it is not "God gave us the victory" but "God Who keeps on giving us the victory!" This is good news for it emphasizes the certainty of the victory. Yes, we are still human and experience fear when dangerous situations arise (I just received a text about an active shooter in Austin who had already killed 3 people). But when we are on our deathbed, we can fall asleep in complete assurance that this "victory" by our mortal enemy is only temporary and we will emerge on the other side of the veil as victors over death because of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Death is not a period—it's only a comma

**Through our Lord** ([kurios](#)) **Jesus** ([Iesous](#)) **Christ** ([Christos](#)) - **Through** is the preposition [dia](#) indicating that this **victory** "flows" from the throne (the Father) through the Son to His own! That'll preach like they say! Notice Paul uses the full Name, the **Lord Jesus Christ**. Every spiritual victory we will ever experience in this life comes through our **Lord Jesus Christ!** And don't miss the personal possession pronoun **our**, for He belongs to us even as we belong to Him in intimate, eternal covenant union.

I will praise my dear Redeemer,  
His triumphant power I'll tell,  
How the victory He giveth  
Over sin and death and hell.  
—Bliss

**Lenski:** "Victory" connotes enemies and battle, but it is not for us, for we should never win. This stupendous **victory** is being given to us. The last phrase (**through our Lord Jesus Christ**) therefore names the Victor, names him as the medium through whom the victory gift becomes ours. ([Commentary](#))

**Ray Stedman** applies these truths - I do not know anything that means more to me as a Christian than the fact that every day I can lay hold of the grace of Jesus Christ. He is not a distant Savior who lived twenty centuries ago. He is alive, and I meet him every day. When I find myself having failed, faltered, and sinned, I come again and receive from him the cleansing that he has won for me on Calvary. My sins are washed away anew. I am forgiven once again, and given a clean slate to start over again from that moment. That gives me new power to say, "No!" to all the evil, afflictions, and pressures of my life. I know that that evil is put away; it will never come back to haunt me; I will not have to face it at the judgment seat of God. I call turn instead to try to make up, in as many ways as I can, to others for the hurt I have done, and to help others find the way of release and deliverance out of heartbreak and sorrow and guilt and fear. ([1 Corinthians 15:50-58 The Victory Of The Mystery](#))

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**Spurgeon** - Soldier of the cross, the hour is coming when the note of victory shall be proclaimed throughout the world. The battlements of the enemy must soon succumb; the swords of the mighty must soon be given up to the Lord of lords. What! soldier of the cross, in the day of victory wouldst thou have it said that thou didst turn thy back in the day of battle? Dost thou not wish to have a share in the conflict, that thou mayest have a share in the victory? If thou hast even the hottest part of the battle, wilt thou flinch and fly? Thou shalt have the brightest part of the victory if thou art in the fiercest of the conflict. Wilt thou turn, and lose thy laurels? Wilt thou throw down thy sword? Shall it be with thee as when a standard-bearer fainteth? Nay, man, up to arms again! for the victory is certain. Though the conflict be severe, I beseech you, on to it again! On, on, ye lion-hearted men of God, to the battle once more! for ye shall yet be crowned with immortal glory.

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**The Only One Who Conquered Death** - Dr. Harry Rimmer was traveling in Egypt and, while negotiating with the Secretary of State, a refined and cultured gentleman, he engaged him in conversation concerning religious experience. "We believe that God has given to man three revelations of Himself," said Dr. Rimmer. "We, too, believe that," said the man, who was a Moslem. "We believe that God has revealed Himself in the works of creation. "We, too, believe that." "We believe that God has revealed Himself in a book—the Bible." "We believe that God has revealed Himself in a book—the Koran." "We believe that God has revealed Himself in a man—that man is Jesus Christ." "We believe that God has revealed Himself in a man—that man is the prophet Mohammed." "We believe that Jesus died to save His followers." "We believe that Mohammed died for his people." "We believe," said Dr. Rimmer, "that Jesus is able to substantiate His claims because He rose from the dead." The Moslem hesitated, then his eyes fell, and finally he replied, "We have no information concerning our prophet after his death." Jesus Christ is supreme because He is the only one who ever conquered death and triumphed over the grave.—Sunday School Times

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## What Cancer Can't Do

Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. — 1 Corinthians 15:57

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:35-49

One of the most dreaded sentences a patient can hear is, "You have cancer." These words bring a chill to the heart. Although great progress is being made in treating this disease, recovery can be long and painful, and many people do not survive.

An enthusiastic believer in Christ, Dan Richardson, lost his battle with cancer. But his life demonstrated that even though the physical body may be destroyed by disease, the spirit can remain triumphant. This poem was distributed at his memorial service:

Cancer is so limited . . .

- It cannot cripple love,
- It cannot shatter hope,
- It cannot corrode faith,
- It cannot eat away peace,
- It cannot destroy confidence,

- It cannot kill friendship,
- It cannot shut out memories,
- It cannot silence courage,
- It cannot invade the soul,
- It cannot reduce eternal life,
- It cannot quench the Spirit,
- It cannot lessen the power of the resurrection.

If an incurable disease has invaded your life, refuse to let it touch your spirit. Your body can be severely afflicted, and you may have a great struggle. But if you keep trusting God's love, your spirit will remain strong. By: David C. Egner ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Our greatest enemy is not disease, but despair.

## The Defeat Of Death

Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. —1 Corinthians 15:57

Today's Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18

Christian faith ought to make a difference in how we live from day to day. But the final test of our trust in the gospel is how we react in the face of death. When we attend a memorial service for a departed friend who loved the Lord Jesus, we gather to honor a believer whose stalwart trust has richly blessed the lives of those who knew him. The words spoken are more an expression of praise to God than a tribute to an admired fellow pilgrim. The service is a God-glorifying testimony to our Savior's victory over death and the grave (1 Cor. 15:54-57).

How different from the funeral service of Charles Bradlaugh, a belligerent British atheist. Writer Arthur Porritt recalls: "No prayer was said at the grave. Indeed, not a single word was uttered. The remains, placed in a light coffin, were lowered into the earth in a quite unceremonious fashion as if carrion were being hustled out of sight. . . . I came away heart-frozen. It only then dawned on me that loss of faith in the continuity of human personality after death gives death an appalling victory."

Christians, however, believe in a face-to-face fellowship with our Lord after death and the eventual resurrection of our bodies (1 Cor. 15:42-55; 1 Thess. 4:15-18). Does your faith rejoice in victory over death? By: Vernon Grounds ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

From earth's wide bounds and ocean's farthest coast,  
 Through gates of pearl stream in the countless host,  
 Singing to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—  
 Alleluia! Alleluia!  
 —How

Because Christ is alive, we too shall live.

## THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE

At the southern tip of Africa, a cape jutting out into the ocean once caused sailors great anxiety. Many who attempted to sail around it were lost in the swirling seas. Because adverse weather conditions so often prevailed there, the region was named the Cape of Storms. A Portuguese captain determined to find a safe route through those treacherous waters so his countrymen could reach Cathay and the riches of the East Indies in safety. He succeeded, and the area was renamed the Cape of Good Hope.

We all face a great storm called death. But our Lord has already traveled through it safely and has provided a way for us to do the same. By His crucifixion and resurrection, Christ abolished eternal death for every believer and has permanently established our fellowship with Him in heaven. Although this "last enemy," physical death, can touch us temporarily, its brief control over our earthly body will end at the resurrection. The sting of death has been removed!

Now all who know Christ as Savior can face life's final voyage with confidence. Even though the sea may be rough, we will experience no terror as we pass through the "cape of good hope" and into heaven's harbor. The Master Helmsman Himself has assured our safe passage. - H G Bosch

Think of just crossing a river,  
 Stepping out safe on that shore,

Sadness and suffering over,  
Dwelling with Christ evermore!  
Anon

Christ has charted a safe course through the dark waters of death.

**1 Corinthians 15:58** Therefore, my beloved brethren, **be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord** ([NASB 1995 - Lockman](#))

- Therefore 2Co 7:1 2Pe 1:4-9 3:14
- be ye Ru 1:18 Ps 55:22 78:8,37 112:6 Col 1:23 2:5 1Th 3:3 Heb 3:14 2Pe 3:17,18
- abounding Php 1:9 4:17 Col 2:7 1Th 3:12 4:1 2Th 1:3
- the work 1Co 16:10 Joh 6:28,29 Php 2:30 1Th 1:3 Tit 2:14 Heb 13:21
- ye know 1Co 3:8 2Ch 15:7 Ps 19:11 Ga 6:9 Heb 6:10
- is not Ps 73:13 Ga 4:11 Php 2:16 1Th 3:5
- in the Mt 10:40-42 25:31-40 Php 1:11 Heb 13:15,16
- See also The Resurrection of Christ
- [1 Corinthians 15 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **A FINAL EXHORTATION BASED OF THE FINALITY OF DEATH'S DEATH**

**For in depth commentary** see [1 Corinthians 15:58](#)

**Therefore** - Term of Conclusion - "This goes back to the whole truth of resurrection taught in 1 Corinthians 15 which gives new meaning and purpose to life for the Christian. What is the use of life if its efforts and endeavors are made void by death and absorbed in the grave? The resurrection assures us that what we do for the Lord on this earth in time will be accredited to our account for rewards in eternity." (Arnold)

**my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord** - **Be** is a command in [present imperative](#) which calls on us [to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#). In the context of this chapter **abounding in the work of the Lord** is preaching of the Gospel.

**J C Ryle** - Activity in doing good is one recipe for being cheerful Christians; it is like exercise to the body and it keeps the soul in health.

**Spurgeon** - Let not your exertions end in tears; mere weeping will do nothing without action. Get on your feet: ye that have voices and might, go forth and preach the gospel; preach it in every street and lane of this huge city; ye that have wealth, go forth and spend it for the poor and sick and needy and dying, the uneducated, the unenlightened; ye that have time, go forth and spend it in deeds of goodness; ye that have power in prayer, go forth and pray; ye that can handle the pen, go forth and write down iniquity,—every one to his post; every one of you to your gun in this day of battle; now for God and for His truth; for God and for the right; let every one of us who knows the Lord seek to fight under His banner.

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A goose will sit faithfully on a dozen or so eggs and will not move for anybody or anything. But, after three or four eggs hatch, she becomes so preoccupied with them that she walks away from the remaining eggs. She does not persevere to the end. In this passage, Paul reminds the Corinthians not to become so preoccupied with nonessentials that they are in danger of not remaining steadfast and immovable in the work of the Lord. 1555

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#### **James Smith - A SERVANT'S REQUIREMENTS 1 Corinthians 15:58**

1. Be Active. "Work."
2. Be Devoted. "Work of the Lord."
3. Be Steadfast. "Unmovable."
4. Be Liberal. "Always Abounding."
5. Be Hopeful. "Forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

**GREAT ENCOURAGEMENT TO STABILITY AND SERVICE** 1 Corinthians 15:57, 58

## I. The Exhortation.

1. In faith be steadfast (Col. 1:23).
2. In trial be unmovable
3. In work be always abounding.

## II. The Encouragement.

1. Your work is in the Lord.
2. Your labour is not in vain.
3. Your triumph is sure. "He giveth us the victory."

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**Story of a Steadfast Saint** - [John G. Paton](#), a nineteenth century missionary to the South Seas, met opposition to his leaving home in Scotland and going to preach to the cannibalistic people of the New Hebrides Islands. A well-meaning church member moaned to him, "The cannibals, the cannibals! You will be eaten by the cannibals!" Without hesitation, he replied, "I confess to you that if I can live and die serving my Lord Jesus Christ, it makes no difference to me whether I am eaten by cannibals or by worms; for in that Great Day of Resurrection, my body will rise as fair as yours in the likeness of our risen Redeemer!"

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### Behind The Building

Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. —1 Corinthians 15:58

Today's Scripture: 1 Peter 4:8-11

Where we were working was hot, dirty, and it smelled bad. We had traveled thousands of miles to do some work projects, and on this day we were painting the back of a classroom building at a school for the deaf. The only people who would ever see this part of the building would be the guy who cut the grass and any unfortunate person who would have to work on the septic pit.

Yet, as the young adults diligently painted away, one of the girls, Melissa, put it in perspective by saying, "Nobody will ever come back here to see this, but God will see it. So let's make it look nice." And so we did.

Sometimes we sit at our desk and think no one sees our work. Or we stand at a line assembling item after endless item. Perhaps we take care of crying babies in the church nursery. Or we live the best Christian life we can—without anyone noticing.

Often our work is "behind the building." But if that is what God has called us to do, we need to work with all our heart. As part of our calling to love others deeply (1 Peter 4:8), offer hospitality (v.9), and use our gifts to serve others (v.10), our task is to work with God's strength to bring praise and glory to God, not ourselves. The important thing is that God likes what He sees. By: Dave Branon ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Though others may not observe us  
And see how we serve God today,  
Our job as servants of Jesus  
Is to please Him in every way.  
—Branon

No service for Christ goes unnoticed by Him.

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### Never A Quitter

Be steadfast . . . in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain. —1 Corinthians 15:58

Today's Scripture: Galatians 6:6-10

A preacher who was growing weary in the ministry had a dream. He saw himself pounding away at a huge chunk of granite with a pick-axe. It was his job to break it into small pieces. But hard as he tried, he couldn't chip off even a tiny piece. At last, tired and disappointed, he decided to give up.

Just then a stranger appeared and said, "Weren't you given orders to do that work? Your duty is to give your best regardless of what happens." The preacher, with a renewed determination, lifted the pick-axe high in the air and gave the granite a crushing blow. It broke into a thousand pieces. He had almost quit—one blow too soon.

The Lord wants us to keep working at our God-given task no matter how difficult it might be. Even when success seems remote or impossible, we are to remain steadfast, assured that there will be an ample reward for those who persevere.

Have you grown tired in your service for God? Have you become so discouraged that you're tempted to "throw in the towel"? Remember that preacher's dream. Better still, remember God's promise spoken by Paul: "Let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart" (Galatians 6:9). By: Richard DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

The service that we give to Christ,  
If steadfast we will be,  
Is sure to reap a rich reward  
That someday we will see.  
—Sper

Failure is not defeat unless you stop trying.

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### **Stand Firm**

Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. —1 Corinthians 15:58

Today's Scripture: Colossians 1:19-27

As our final project for a high school earth science class, a friend and I built a stream table. With extensive help from my father, we built a long plywood box with a hinge in the middle. Then we lined it with plastic and filled it with sand. At one end we attached a hose. At the other end was a drainage hole. After assembling all of it, we raised one end of the stream table, turned on the water, and watched as it created a path directly to the hole at the other end. The next part of the experiment was to place a rock in the stream and watch how it changed the path of the water.

This project taught me as much about life as it did about science. I learned that I can't change the direction things are going if I'm on the bank of the river. I have to step into the stream of life and stand there to divert the flow. That's what Jesus did. The Bible refers to salvation as a rock (2 Sam. 22:47; Ps. 62:2,6-7), and the apostle Paul clarifies that Christ is that Rock (1 Cor. 10:4). God placed Jesus in the stream of history to change its course.

When we remain steadfast in Christ, abounding in the work of the Lord, God uses us to change the course of history through acts of obedience that turn others to Him. By: Julie Ackerman Link ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

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### **Driven By Gratitude**

Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. — 1 Corinthians 15:58

Today's Scripture: Acts 20:22-24

What's the greatest novel ever written? Many readers would vote for Leo Tolstoy's War and Peace, which, depending on the edition, can run well over 1,000 pages. Even after his novel was finished, Tolstoy continued to write—often until he was on the brink of exhaustion, unable to sleep, and on the verge of a breakdown.

One day a friend asked him why he kept writing and driving himself to the edge of exhaustion. He reminded Tolstoy that he was a wealthy Russian count with servants at his beck and call, and that he had a secure future.

Tolstoy explained that he kept writing because he was the slave of an inner compulsion and had a consuming desire deep within his bones. He felt that he had to keep writing or else he would go mad.

The apostle Paul experienced a similar compulsion, except that his drive was God-motivated. As he explained to his friends in Corinth, "the love of Christ compels us" (2 Cor. 5:14). His was a burning passion, an emotional fire, a spiritual force that made him share the good news of Jesus and His death and resurrection.

Such dedicated zeal has characterized many of our Lord's followers throughout the years. May a spark of that fire burn in our own hearts. By: Vernon Grounds ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))



[reserved](#))

Fill Thou my life, O Lord my God,  
In every part with praise,  
That my whole being may proclaim  
Thy being and Thy ways.  
—Bonar

The good news is too good to keep to yourself.

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## Not In Vain

Read: 1 Corinthians 15:51-58 | Bible in a Year: Psalms 89-90; Romans 14

Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. —1 Corinthians 15:58

In September of 2000, I attended the 100th-anniversary celebration of a small Bible college in Ohio. When the school began in 1900 with a handful of students and very little money, few observers thought it would last. A year after the doors opened, the founder died during a typhoid epidemic, and the school's prospects appeared dim.

A century later, some people wondered if the founder would have been surprised to find the school thriving. Whether or not he thought the institution would last for 100 years, everyone attending the celebration agreed that he expected the results to last forever. He knew that his work for God was of eternal value.

That's an assurance you and I can share as we live for the Lord. At the conclusion of a stirring passage on immortality and our victory in Christ over death, Paul concluded by saying, "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" (1 Corinthians 15:58).

Because our labor for Christ is never worthless or futile, we can find encouragement to keep honoring and serving Him in all that we do. J. B. Phillips summed it up well when he said, "Nothing you do for Him is ever lost or ever wasted." By David C. McCasland ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Service done in Jesus' name  
Lasts for all eternity,  
For God's Spirit does the work,  
Using folks like you and me. |  
—D. De Haan

Work done for God endures long after the worker dies.