

Christians Gone Wild!  
**1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians, week 14**  
**Our Resurrection Body (1 Corinthians 15:35–58)**  
April 9, 2006  
Pastor Mark Driscoll

*Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?*  
1 Corinthians 15:55

The fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians contains the most extended treatment of the resurrection in all of Scripture. In verses 35–58, Paul responds to two questions that the Corinthian church (and most churches since) asked about the resurrection body of Christians. The first question from verse 35a ("How are the dead raised?") is answered in verses 50–57. The second question ("With what kind of body will they come?") is answered in verses 36–49. Curiously, this longing for a new, supernatural, immortal body is also a major theme in most comics where a mere mortal in some sense experiences death and then emerges with supernatural powers and invincibility as a superhero. It seems that God has placed a desire for a glorified body deep within us.

**What will our glorified body be like?**

*<sup>36</sup>How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. <sup>37</sup>When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but just a seed, perhaps of wheat or of something else. <sup>38</sup>But God gives it a body as he has determined, and to each kind of seed he gives its own body. <sup>39</sup>All flesh is not the same: Men have one kind of flesh, animals have another, birds another and fish another. <sup>40</sup>There are also heavenly bodies and there are earthly bodies; but the splendor of the heavenly bodies is one kind, and the splendor of the earthly bodies is another. <sup>41</sup>The sun has one kind of splendor, the moon another and the stars another; and star differs from star in splendor.*

Paul uses an agricultural metaphor to explain what will happen to a Christian's body upon death. Much like a seed is buried in the ground to die and then spring forth as something more glorious than could have ever been imagined, when a Christian dies they too are buried to spring forth with a glorified resurrection body. Paul then assures us that if God could create the sun, moon, stars, planets, animal life, plant life, and human life, He can certainly take our dead bodies and resurrect us in new, glorified bodies.

*<sup>42</sup>So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; <sup>43</sup>it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; <sup>44</sup>it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.*

Paul then seeks to explain in greater detail the nature of our glorified resurrection bodies. First, while our body in this life is mortal and subject to sin and death, the glorified body is not. Second, while our mortal body dies in dishonor it will be raised in honor. All of this is because our body is in some ways like clothing that

covers our immaterial soul and God will in essence exchange our current physical covering for new and more glorious eternal body.

<sup>45</sup>So it is written: "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit. <sup>46</sup>The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual. <sup>47</sup>The first man was of the dust of the earth, the second man from heaven. <sup>48</sup>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. <sup>49</sup>And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven.

Quoting Genesis 2:7, Paul says that just as our mortal body is patterned after Adam, our glorified body will be patterned after Jesus. Our glorified body is made possible because our eternal God, Jesus, came down from heaven to save us through His death and bodily resurrection thereby securing for us the forgiveness of sin and gifting us resurrection bodies patterned after His own.

### **How will we receive our glorified body?**

<sup>50</sup>I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

Regarding the receiving of our glorified body, Paul begins by stating that our mortal bodies are marked by sin and death and are not fit for God's perfect and sinless eternal kingdom. Therefore, God must change our bodies to make them fit for His kingdom.

<sup>51</sup>Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed— <sup>52</sup>in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. <sup>53</sup>For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. <sup>54</sup>When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory." <sup>55</sup>"Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" <sup>56</sup>The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. <sup>57</sup>But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Because of our sin, we die. But Jesus came to conquer our sin through His death and conquer our death through His resurrection. Therefore, only through faith in Jesus can sin and death be defeated so that we might live forever in new bodies in a new world without the pains of sin and death. This transformation of our bodies will not happen gradually, but in an instant upon Jesus' second coming. Upon Jesus' arrival, those Christians who are alive will see their mortal bodies transformed into glorified bodies in an instant. Simultaneously, those Christians who had died in faith will be resurrected like Jesus was in glorified bodies fit for God's kingdom.

## Closing

<sup>58</sup>*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.*

Knowledgeable of the Christian propensity to disconnect theology from practical daily living, Paul closes by commanding us to think in terms of eternity and not compromise our beliefs or quench our ministry because what is done in this mortal body has eternal consequences.

**Verses for next week:** 1 Corinthians 15:1–11