

**Session 15:**  
**WHAT DO YOU MEAN...THERE IS NO RESURRECTION OF THE**  
**BODY?**  
**1 Corinthians 15**

**The Corinthian Church was having a hard time believing that the Church would have a new body to go along with our soul....**

**Keep in mind as you read 1 Corinthians 15:**

- (1) The Corinthians were not denying the Resurrection of Jesus Christ...but were denying that there was a Resurrection of the body**

Paul was insistent that if man denied the resurrection of the body he thereby denied the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Therefore, the Corinthians were emptying the Christian message of its truth...and the Christian life of its reality.

- (2) In any early Christian church there were two backgrounds....the Jews and the Greeks.**

- **Jewish background—Sadducees denied that there was any life after death at all.** So, part of the Jews denied both the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the body (Acts 23:8)...

**However, immortal hope in eternity with God developed...**

**Two reasons:**

- ✓ Israel was the chosen people, and yet her history was one continued tale of disaster (man's choice)...man began to feel that it required another world to redress the balance.
- ✓ For many centuries it is true to say that the individual was an unimportant unit. God was the God of the nation and the individual was an unimportant unit...The individual was here to bring the nation either closer to God...or further from God. As centuries went on, the individual felt personally involved with God. Decisions by man affected the world. God really became known as the friend of every individual that chose to be a friend. God loved the world and every person in it...but the world did not love Him. Man chose God...or chose not to honor God. God took this personally as man took on personal responsibility for the outcome of his soul.
- **Greeks believed in immortality....but feared death. They believed the soul was going to meet God, but the body was a waste.** Therefore, they did not feel it a detriment for the body to be absorbed by sin...and what sin can do to the body. They believed in God...but wanted to enjoy life in this body while it was existing.

**PAUL HAD A DIFFERENT OUTLOOK ON THE SITUATION BETWEEN GOD AND MAN.**

**GOD, PAUL BELIEVED, WAS INTERESTED IN MAKING SURE THAT OUR SOUL WAS SAVED AND THAT WE PRESENT OUR BODIES A LIVING SACRIFICE THAT HOUSES THE SPIRIT OF GOD WHILE WE ARE HERE ON EARTH.**

To the Christian, we believe the life to come involves the total man, body and soul.

Paul believed that after death the individual remains.

**Paul never said that we would rise with the body with which we died.**

**He insisted that we would have a spiritual body.....Man's personality will survive.**

**Paul believed in the resurrection of the whole man.**

Man will be himself; he will survive as a person. Everything of the body and of the soul that is necessary to make a man a person will survive, but, at the same time, all things will be new, and body and spirit will alike be very different from earthly things, for they will be immortal....not of earth, but of God's likeness.

**1 Corinthians 15:1-11**, *"Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. <sup>2</sup> By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. <sup>3</sup> For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup> that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, <sup>5</sup> and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. <sup>6</sup> After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. <sup>7</sup> Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, <sup>8</sup> and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born. <sup>9</sup> For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. <sup>10</sup> But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me. <sup>11</sup> Whether, then, it is I or they, this is what we preach, and this is what you believed."*

**Paul was reminding the Corinthians about the good news which he first brought to the Corinthians.**

**It was not news that he invented...but news which had first been delivered to him, and it was news of a Risen Lord.**

**Paul stated in the first two verses some extremely interesting things about "the good news." It was something in which:**

- **The Corinthians had received.**

No man ever held on to the gospel for himself. He spreads it around....it not, he probably has not ever received it himself.

- **The Corinthians stood.**

The very first function of the good news was to give a man stability.

- ✓ In a slippery world it kept him on his feet.

- ✓ In a tempting world it gave him resistance power.

- ✓ In a hurting world it enabled him to endure a broken heart or an agonized body and not to give in.
- **The Corinthians were saved.**
  - ✓ Salvation is the good news....the best news...the news that means life for ever.
  - ✓ Saved people know that good news must be passed on...or else the torch goes out. It has never gone out because there are saved people that know that it is heaven or hell....no in between.
- **Man has to hold on to tenaciously.**
  - ✓ Life makes many attempt to take away our faith. Things happen to us and to others which baffle our understanding...
  - ✓ Life has its problems to which there seems no solution and its questions to which there seems there is no answer.
  - ✓ Life has its dark places where there seems to be nothing to do but hold on.
  - ✓ Faith is always a victory....the victory of the soul which tenaciously maintains its clutch of God.....
    - And praise God, God never lets go of us when we are clutching on to Him.

**As Paul lists the appearance of the Risen Lord to several disciple....there are two that are especially interesting:**

- (1) **Appearance to Peter**—In the earliest account of the Resurrection story, the word of the messenger in the empty tomb is, “Go, tell his disciples and Peter.” (Mark 16:7).

One of the most amazing things...is that one of the first appearances of the Risen Lord was to the disciple who had denied him. Is not this grace...Is not this love. Others might have hated Peter forever, but the one desire of Jesus was to set this erratic disciple of his upon his feet.

Peter had wronged Jesus and then had wept his heart out; and the one desire for the amazing Jesus was to comfort him in the pain of his disloyalty.
- (2) **Appearance to James—Jesus’ brother.**

Jesus’ own family did not understand him and were even actively hostile to him. Mark 3:21 tells us that they actually sought to restrain him because they believed him to be mad. John 7:5 tells us that his brothers did not believe in him. When Jesus died, James had to be very remorseful...for he had watched everything happen just like his brother had told them. His mother was right...and James was in agony that he saw his brother die...and he had treated his brother so terribly. Jesus came to James to bring him peace to the troubled soul of the man who had called him mad and who had been his opponent.

Jesus meets the penitent heart far more than halfway....as he certainly did you and me!

**These verses also tell us:**

❑ **The Character of Paul himself.**

To Paul it was the most precious thing in the world that Jesus had appeared also to him (the turning point in Paul's life).

**The verses tell us of:**

• **Paul's utter humility...**

Least of the apostles;

Glorified with an office for which Paul stated he was not worthy.

It was by the grace of God that Paul was what he was....a most gracious, humble man.

• **Paul's consciousness of his own worth.**

Not what he had done on his own...but what God had enabled him to do.

• **Paul's sense of fellowship.**

Paul did not feel himself unique...but a fellow bearer of the good news.

He and the other apostles preached the same gospel...This just made him closer and bound to the Christian fellowship.

**1 Corinthians 15:12-19**, *"But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? <sup>13</sup> If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. <sup>14</sup> And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. <sup>15</sup> More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. <sup>16</sup> For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. <sup>17</sup> And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. <sup>18</sup> Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. <sup>19</sup> If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.*

**Paul attacks the central position of his opponents at Corinth.**

**The opponents stated flatly, "Dead men do not rise again."**

**Paul stated... "If you take that position it means that Jesus Christ has not risen again; and if that be so, the whole Christian faith is wrecked."**

**Why did Paul regard a belief in the Resurrection of Jesus as so essential??**

**What great values and great truths does it conserve??**

**It proves four (4) great facts:**

**(1) The Resurrection proves that truth is stronger than falsehood.**

Jesus came with the true idea of God and of goodness; his enemies procured his death because they did not want their own false view destroyed.

The Resurrection is the final guarantee of the indestructibility of the truth.

**(2) The Resurrection proves that good is stronger than evil.**

The forces of evil crucified Jesus and if there had been no Resurrection these forces would have been triumphant. Jesus is alive and well....and He lives in you and me if we have placed our faith in Him.

**(3) The Resurrection proves that love is stronger than hatred.**

Jesus was the love of God incarnate.

The attitude of those who procured his crucifixion was an almost virulent hatred....bitter....with the power of the devil.

If there had been no Resurrection, it would have meant that the hatred of man in the end conquered the love of God.

The Resurrection is the triumph of love over all that hatred could do.

**(4) The Resurrection proves that life is stronger than death.**

If Jesus had died never to rise again, it would have proved that death could take the loveliest and best life that ever lived and finally break it.

Paul insisted that if the Resurrection of Jesus was not a fact the whole Christian message was based on a lie, that many thousands had died trusting in a delusion....

Jesus is real...this I know...for the Bible tells me so.

However, if the Word of God was not available...and was burned or buried never to be seen again....

It would not break my faith because it is not based on shifting sand.

My faith is built on nothing less than Jesus blood and righteousness.

I dare not trust the sweetest frame...but wholly lean on Jesus' name.

Jesus...the same yesterday...today...and forever!

**1 Corinthians 15:20-28**, *"But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. <sup>21</sup> For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. <sup>22</sup> For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. <sup>23</sup> But each in turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. <sup>24</sup> Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. <sup>25</sup> For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. <sup>26</sup> The last enemy to be destroyed is death. <sup>27</sup> For he "has put everything under his feet." Now when it says that "everything" has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God*

*himself, who put everything under Christ. <sup>28</sup> When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all."*

**This speaks of Christ as "the first fruits of them that sleep."  
This....the Jews recognized immediately. The Feast of the  
Passover...**

**The first fruits were brought in from the fields to the Priest...**

**This was to be blessed by the Priest...It was a sign of the harvest to come.**

**The Resurrection of Jesus was a sign of the resurrection of all believers which was to come.**

**Just as the new barley could not be used until the first-fruits had been offered up, so the new harvest of life could not come until Jesus had been raised from the dead.**

**Two contrasting set of facts seen here:**

**First.....Adam—Sin—Death.**

**Second...Christ—Goodness—Life.**

**Just as we were all involved in the sin of him; who was first created, we are all involved in the victory of Him who re-created mankind.**

**A new power came into the world with Jesus Christ....to liberate men from sin and death.**

**As God sent forth His Son to redeem the world, so in the end He will receive back a world redeemed; and then there will be nothing in heaven or in earth outside His love and power.**

**What does "being baptized for the dead" mean?**

**1 Corinthians 15:29-34**, *"Now if there is no resurrection, what will those do who are baptized for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptized for them? And as for us, why do we endanger ourselves every hour? <sup>31</sup> I face death every day—yes, just as surely as I boast about you in Christ Jesus our Lord. <sup>32</sup> If I fought wild beasts in Ephesus with no more than human hopes, what have I gained? If the dead are not raised, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." <sup>33</sup> Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character." <sup>34</sup> Come back to your senses as you ought, and stop sinning; for there are some who are ignorant of God—I say this to your shame."*

**I believe in:**

- ***The authoritative Word of God...***
  - ***The infallible Word of God....***
    - ***The truth of the Word of God...***

- ***The understanding of the Word of God through the Holy Spirit...***
- ***The opinionated concepts...or theories of man...(only that every man has the right to his/her opinion).***
- ***The truth that:***
  - ✓ ***Man makes mistakes.....God does not!***

**The word for the preposition “for” in the phrase “for the dead” v. 29 is the Greek word “huper.”**

***“Huper” can have two meanings....***

***It can mean “above” or “over.”***

***Or,***

***It can mean “instead of” or “on behalf of”***

**What could it mean in this place in Scripture...and why?**

- **Phrase.... “above or over”....**

**Some scholars have suggested that it refers to those who get themselves baptized over the graves of the martyrs. The idea...is that there would be something especially moving in being baptized on sacred ground with the thought of the unseen cloud of witnesses all around (only a theory).**

- **Phrase....”Instead of or on behalf of”...**

- ✓ It is suggested that this refers to “those who get themselves baptized in order to fill up the vacant places in the Church which the dead have left.”

A new Christian comes in to the Church like a new recruit to take the place of the veterans who have served their campaign and earned their release (only a theory).

- ✓ Maybe referring to those who get themselves baptized out of respect for and affection for the dead.

(The idea...that many of us came into the Church because we knew and remembered that some loved one had died praying and hoping for us (unseen influence on our lives).....(Only a theory).

- **In the early Church there were vicarious (substitute...acting on behalf of) baptisms.**

If a person died who had intended to become a member of the Church and was actually under instruction, sometimes someone else underwent baptism for him/her. The custom sprang from a superstitious view of baptism, that, without it, a person was necessarily excluded from the bliss of heaven (It was a safeguard against this exclusion that sometimes people volunteered to be baptized literally on behalf of those who had died).

**Understand something...Paul does not say that he approves or disapproves of that practice.**

***Paul merely asks if there can be any point in it if there is no resurrection and the dead never rise again...***

PAUL PASSES ON ONE OF THE GREAT MOTIVES OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

**IN EFFECT, PAUL ASKS, “WHY SHOULD A CHRISTIAN ACCEPT THE PERILS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE IF IT IS ALL TO GO FOR NOTHING??”**

- ❑ TAKE AWAY THE THOUGHT OF A LIFE TO COME AND THIS LIFE LOSES ITS VALUES.
- ❑ TAKE AWAY THE IDEA THAT THIS LIFE IS A PREPARATION FOR A GREATER LIFE TO FOLLOW AND THE BONDS OF HONOR AND MORALITY ARE LOOSENED.

**PAUL, IN THE END, IS SAYING..... “TO SAY THAT THERE IS NO RESURRECTION IS NOT A SIGN OF SUPERIOR KNOWLEDGE; IT IS A SIGN OF UTTER IGNORANCE OF GOD.”**

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1 Corinthians 15:35-58, “But someone will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?” <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> Not all flesh is the same: People 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. <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. <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 is of heaven. <sup>48</sup> As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the heavenly man, so also are those who are of heaven. <sup>49</sup> And just as we have borne the image of the earthly man, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly man. <sup>50</sup> I declare to you, brothers and sisters, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. <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.<sup>58</sup> Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, 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.”*

...

**Paul answers the question from the congregation that states, “OK...so there is a resurrection of the body, with what kind of body do people rise again??”**

**Paul’s answer has three (3) basic principles in it:**

- **The analogy of the seed...**

The seed is put in the ground and dies, but in due time it rises again; and does so with a very different kind of body from that with which it was sown.

*Our earthly bodies will dissolve; they will rise again in very different form; but it is the same person who rises.*

*Dissolved by death, changed by resurrection, it is still we who exist.*

- **In the world, even as we know it, there is not one kind of body; each separate part of creation has its own. God gives to each created thing a body suitable for its part in creation. If that be so, it is only reasonable to expect that he will give us a body fitted for the resurrection life.**
- **In this life there is a development. Adam the first man, was made from the dust of the earth (Genesis 2:7). But Jesus is far more than a man made from the dust of the earth. He is the incarnation of the very Spirit of God.**

*Now, under the old way of life, we were one with Adam, sharing his sin, inheriting his death and having his body; but, under the new way of life, we are one with Christ and we shall therefore share his life and his being.*

**We have a physical body to begin with, but it is also true that one day we shall have a spiritual body.**

**What is that spiritual body going to be like?**

**It will be spiritual...**

**It will be such as God knows that we need...  
We will be like Christ.**

**Our future state...according to verses 42-44:**

- **The present body is corruptible; the future body will be incorruptible.**

*Everything is subject to change...(“We be getting uglier!”)*

*In the life to come there will be a permanence in which beauty will never lose its sheen...never lose its wonder.*

- **The present body is in dishonor; the future body will be in glory.**

*Through our bodily feelings and passions that dishonor can so easily come; but in the life to come our bodies will no longer be the servants of passion and of impulse...but the instruments of the pure service of God, than which there can be no greater honor.*

- **The present body is in weakness; the future body will be in power.**

*It is nowadays fashionable to talk of man’s power, but the really remarkable thing is his weakness. A breeze of air or a drop of water can kill this body... We are limited in this life...because of the limitations of our body.*

*Time and time again our physical constitution says to our visions and our plans, “thus far and no farther.” But....in the life to come the limitations will be gone.*

- **The present body is a natural body; the future body will be a spiritual body.**

*Again, limitations of the natural body...however, when we become a spiritual state...nothing can hold us down....*

*We will be able to render the perfect worship, the perfect service, the perfect love that now can only be a vision and a dream.*

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