

Tommy Meador / General

1 Corinthians / 1 Corinthians 15:35–58

Introduction

- Heaven is For Real - 2010 - bestseller - then a movie - 4 year old boy who claimed to visit heaven during emergency surgery for appendicitis - Claimed to meet Jesus who was riding a rainbow-colored horse. Book spent three years on NY times bestseller list.
- Not the only book written about an afterlife experience. A whole genre of books called “Heaven Tourism” books that recount the stories of people who had a near death experience and what they experienced.
- Don’t doubt near death experiences, or what people see, but we don’t build our theology of the life that is to come off of what a four year old remembers during an emergency surgery.
- These books so popular because we all want to know: what will life after death be like? That is a question that your heart wrestles with. We all want to know that this life isn’t all that there is and that the life to come is better than this life.
- Rather than turning to heaven tourism books about the life to come, we should turn to the Bible.
- 1 Corinthians the great chapter on the future resurrection, and in these verses Paul answering two questions: What will our resurrected bodies be like? And, how should I live now knowing that resurrection is coming?
- This morning, two truths from this passage to help us answer those two questions.

The resurrection guarantees the life you have always longed for.

- In Corinth, there are believers who do not believe in a future resurrection. Paul writes this chapter to convince believers in Corinth that one day God will raise their bodies from the grave and give them resurrected life in the new heavens and new earth.
- Why don't they believe in resurrection? Dualism an influence in this time period - body/soul are opposed to each other, not united. Dualism believed the soul to be immortal but not the body. Dualism saw the body as corrupt and not redeemable.
- BUT... the Bible teaches that God did not make us as a dualistic being, but as a whole person. Your body matters to God, so much so that in your eternal existence you will not be a disembodied soul but a whole person - body and soul - just like your resurrected Lord.
- The Corinthians struggled to believe this. "How are the dead raised? (vs. 35)" Paul: "You fool!" Seems harsh - but Corinthians foolish because they doubted the power of God to give resurrected life.
- Two analogies. First, consider a seed (vs. 36-38). A seed doesn't spring forth new life unless it dies (or, is cast aside.) An acorn doesn't produce an oak tree unless it is planted in the ground. Over time, that plated seed springs up new life.
- Your physical body is just a seed. It's not what it will be (vs. 37). Someday, if Christ tarries, your body will be put in the ground like a seed awaiting the day that new life will spring forward from the grave. On the day that Christ resurrects your body from the grave, it will be nothing like the "seed" that went into the ground.
- Paul's argument - God is more than capable of giving your a resurrected body. 2nd analogy - Consider his creative order and how varied God's creation is. Animals, birds, and fish all have different bodies than

humans because God is powerful enough to create different types of mammals. Or, look at the heavenly bodies. There are planets, solar systems, stars, suns, moons, etc. (vs. 39-41).

- As if Paul is saying, “Look at what God can do! Don’t you think He is powerful enough to give you a resurrected body?”
- vs. 42-49 - Paul explains what your resurrected body will be like:
 - Incorruptible (vs. 42) - raised in incorruption. What is sown is corrupt - your current body affected by the fall. You get sick, you have pain, you never feel rested, etc. Not your resurrected body - it is incorruptible. Your resurrected body will never feel the affects of sin. No more aches and pains. No more getting sick. No more waking up sore. And... it will always be that way.
 - Glorious (vs. 43). Your resurrected body will radiate beauty - the kind of beauty that is unstained by sin and reflects the full glory of God. You know people now who reflect the glory of God well - people who you say things about like “they radiate the joy of the Lord.” Think what it will be like to radiate the glory of God when sin and death is completely eradicated.
 - Powerful (vs. 43). Your body will go to a grave. In your power, you cannot overcome death. You are frail and weak. But, a day coming that you will be raised up in power. Sin and death won’t be able to attack you - you will be immune from it because those enemies will no longer exist. The power to live the life God intended in [Gen. 1](#) - that we rule with Him and have dominion with Him.
 - Spiritual (vs .44). No sin anymore to hinder your fellowship with God. You will be in unhindered communion with God, who is Spirit. (Jesus tells us to worship in spirit and truth - someday, you will experience that in a far greater way than you do now.)

- Christlike (vs. 45-49). Paul already told us that death came through Adam (vs. 21-22). Paul now reminding us that Jesus is going to give us full spiritual life - the life God intended. Simply put, we will be like Christ. Jesus is a life-giving spirit - He gives us what Adam could never give us - full, resurrected life and unhindered communion with God.
- These are powerful verses that remind us that in Christ your best is yet to come. Your future resurrection should affect how you live now.
 - **It's not ok to worship your body, but it is wise to steward your body.** We can be over consumed with trying to live forever in this body that we make physical health and idol rather than seeing your present body as a gift of God to use for His glory. Take care of yourself, but not for the point of simply extending your life. Healthy and unhealthy people have the same fate: death. Take care of yourself so you can do the will of God well.
 - **It is wise to expect struggles.** Struggles in every area of life - you shouldn't be surprised. There's no formula to avoiding struggles. Self-help books, get rich quick tips, life coaching, etc. do not prevent struggles. That's part of a broken world. Thankfully, God uses the struggles to refine our faith and teach us to depend on Him ([James 1:2](#), [1 Peter 1:7](#)).
 - **It is wise to let every struggle give you a holy longing.** Since the resurrection is true, the worst pain you experience in this life light and momentary. Your struggles shouldn't create great despair, but great longing for the day when Christ returns.

The resurrection makes every sacrifice for the Kingdom worth it.

- vs. 50 - It is not possible for your current body to inherit the Kingdom of God. Your corrupt body cannot enter that which is incorruptible. You need a resurrected body to be a full person in the presence of God.
- vs. 51 - 54 - Paul bringing clarity to what will happen at the return of Christ when Christ returns. They will be transformed in a moment and pass to resurrected life without going through physical death. But, those who have died will rise up from the ground incorruptible. All of our mortal bodies will be clothed with immortality.
- vs. 54 - 55 - Quotation from [Isaiah 25:8](#) and [Hosea 13:14](#). The hope of the OT prophets will be realized. Death will be done away with and no longer “sting” God’s people.
- How often have you tasted the sting of death in this life? How many of us have lost people that we dearly loved? Some that we love, we’ve lost tragically. We had a child die, a parent die, a spouse die. It stings. And, some day, death will sting you. If Christ tarries, a day will come when you struggle for your last breaths and your heart stops. The sting of death is coming for you.
- But, death is not victorious. Jesus is. He has defeated death for us by going to a cross to pay the penalty for our sin only to rise from the dead victoriously.
- vs. 56 - The power of sin is the law? [Romans 7:5](#) - The law intended to be life-giving, to show us how to live in a relationship with God. But, because of our sin nature, we took what was meant to be life-giving and made it sin-empowering. Adam and Eve did the same thing in the garden - they couldn’t resist breaking God’s law.

- In Christ, we are victorious. Our salvation not found in our ability to keep God's law, because we can't do it. Instead, life is found in the One who kept the law for us, and then gave His life as a sacrifice for our sins.
- vs. 58 - Therefore... Since we are convinced of resurrected life - be immovable (unsinkable) - don't let the present struggles of this world shake you. And, excel in the Lord's work. Know that your labor is not in vain. If you are living for Jesus, you are living a life worth living. No wonder Paul wrote, "To live is Christ, to die is gain" ([Philippians 1:21](#)).
- **You have no reason to NOT walk by faith.** Since the resurrection is true, every sacrifice we make in this life for the Kingdom of God is worth it. The sacrifice of your time, your spiritual gifts, your financial resources is worth it because you know you are investing in what's eternal. The sacrifice of time to share the Gospel with someone else is worth it. The sacrifice of living for your desires to instead live a holy life is worth it because you are convinced that living God's way is superior to living like the world. What objection do you really have to not walk by faith? You don't have time? It's not worth it? Christianity is not compelling enough? The resurrection puts all those objections to rest.
- **You have every reason to live boldly for Jesus.** Bold faith is not coming to church every other week and enduring a 45 minute message. Bold faith isn't posting Bible verse on your Facebook timeline. You get once life to live for the resurrected Lord. You get a limited number of years to live on His mission. Use your time well. Now is the time to invest in that family member who is far from God. Now is the time to go on that mission trip, or to volunteer for ESL. Now is the time to be disciplined, or if you've been disciplined, to start that discipleship group. Every sacrifice you make for the sake of the Gospel is worth it. How is God calling you to live boldly for Him? What step of faith is He calling you to take?

- This morning, if you are not a follower of Jesus, God is calling you to believe. Believe that Jesus died and rose again for you, repent of your sins, and surrender your life to Him.