

1 CORINTHIANS 15 | The Resurrection

The Received Gospel

1 Now I would remind you, brothers and sisters, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, 2 and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. 3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Messiah died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, 5 and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. 6 Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters (ἀδελφοίς) at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. 7 Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles.¹ 8 Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. 9 For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. 11 Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

No Resurrection?

12 Now if Messiah is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13 But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Messiah has been raised. 14 And if Messiah has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. 15 We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Messiah, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. 16 For if the dead are not raised, not even Messiah has been raised. 17 And if Messiah has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. 18 Then those also who have fallen asleep in Messiah have perished. 19 If in Messiah we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.

The Resurrection and Its Results

20 But in fact Messiah has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. 21 For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Messiah shall all be made alive. 23 But each in his own order: Messiah the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Messiah. 24 Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. 25 For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy to be destroyed is death. 27 For God has put all things in subjection under his feet. But when it says, all things are put in subjection, it is plain that he is excepted who put all things in subjection under him. 28 When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all.

¹ “All the apostles” are distinct, limited group.

Why Face Danger?

29 Otherwise, what do people mean by being baptised on behalf of the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptised on their behalf?² 30 Why are we in danger every hour? 31 I protest, brothers and sisters, by my pride in you, which I have in Messiah Jesus our Lord, I die every day! 32 What do I gain if, humanly speaking, I fought with beasts at Ephesus? If the dead are not raised, Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die. 33 Do not be deceived: Bad company ruins good morals. 34 Wake up from your drunken stupor, as is right, and do not go on sinning. For some have no knowledge of God. I say this to your shame.

God Gives Various Bodies and Glories

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

The Natural Body and the Spiritual Body

42 So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable. What is raised is imperishable. 43 It is sown in dishonor. It is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness. It is raised in power. 44 It is sown a natural body, It is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural [human] body, there is also a spiritual [human] body. 45 Thus it is written, The first man Adam became a living soul (εις ψυχήν ζῶσαν). The last Adam became a life-giving spirit (εις πνεῦμα ζωοποιῶν). 46 But it is not the spiritual [body] that is first but the natural [body], and then the spiritual [body]. 47 The first man [Adam] was from the earth, made of dust (ἐκ γῆς χοϊκός). The second man is from heaven. 48 As was the man of dust (ὁ χοϊκός), so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. 49 Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust (τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ χοϊκοῦ), we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven (τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ ἐπουρανίου).

The Death of Death

50 I tell you this, brothers and sisters: flesh and blood cannot inherit the [Messianic] kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. 51 Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet [of the church age]. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed [the rapture]. 53 For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. 54 When the perishable puts

² Is Paul speaking of pagan cults in which this is practiced?

on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: Death is swallowed up in victory. 55 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 Torah. 57 But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Messiah.

Summary Commands

58 Therefore, my beloved brothers and sisters, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord [Jesus], knowing that in the Lord [Jesus] your labor is not in vain.

Commentary

1. Introduction

- a. Questions to ask:
 - (1) Where does one go when one dies? What are the options?
 - (2) Who are some believers very close to you who have passed away?
 - (3) Are we afraid of death?
- b. The New Testament reveals not only the fact of the resurrection but the significance of the resurrection.

2. The Received Gospel (1 Co 15:1-11).

- a. **1 Co 15:1-11** 1 Now I would remind you, brothers and sisters, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, 2 and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. 3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Messiah died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, 5 and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. 6 Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters (ἀδελφοίς) at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. 7 Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles.³ 8 Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. 9 For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. 11 Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.
- b. Paul begins to remind the Corinthians of the gospel he preached when he was with them (v. 1a).
- c. The Corinthians:
 - (1) Received this gospel (v. 1b).
 - (2) Have stood (ἵστημι, perf. act.) in this gospel (v. 1c).
 - (3) Are being saved (σώζω, pres.) through this gospel if (εἰ) they hold fast (κατέχω, pres.) to it (v. 2a).
 - (4) They won't be saved (pres.) through it if they believed (πιστεύω, aor.) to no purpose (εἰκῆ) (v. 2b).
 - (a) εἰκῆ: “pert. to being without purpose, to no purpose...pert. to being without careful thought, without due consideration, in a haphazard manner” (*BDAG*, 281).
 - (b) Notice the theme of emptiness, futility, vanity: 1 Co 15:2, 10, 14, 17, 58.
- d. Paul received (παραλαμβάνω, aor.) this gospel and delivered (παραδίδωμι, aor.) it to the Corinthians (v. 3a).
 - (a) **Galatians 1:11** 11 For I would have you know, brothers, that the gospel that was preached by me is not man's gospel.
 - (b) See *The Apostle's Creed*.
 - (c) See Lee Strobel, *The Case for Christ*, 34-36.

³ “All the apostles” are distinct, limited group.

- (2) This gospel is of first importance (πρῶτος) (v. 3b):
 - (a) πρῶτος: “pert. to prominence, first, foremost, most important, most prominent” (BDAG, 893).
- e. The content of this gospel is:
 - (1) Messiah died for (ὑπὲρ) our sins in accordance with the Scriptures (v. 3c).
 - (2) Messiah was buried (v. 4a)
 - (3) Messiah was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures (v. 4b).
 - (a) Resurrection was always part of God’s plan, as seen by “in accordance with the Scripture.”
 - (b) Jesus’ resurrection is central to the gospel by which the Corinthians were saved.
 - (4) Messiah appeared (ὀράω) to:
 - 1) ὀράω: “pass. in act. sense become visible, appear” (BDAG, 719).
 - (b) Cephas (Peter) (v. 5a).
 - (c) The twelve (v. 5b).
 - (d) More than five hundred brothers and sisters (ἀδελφοί) at one time (v. 6a).
 - 1) Most of these are still alive, though some have fallen asleep (v. 6b)
 - a) The Corinthians probably knew some of these people personally.
 - (e) James (v. 7a).
 - (f) All the apostles (v. 7b).
 - (g) Last of all, as to one untimely born (ἔκτρομα), Paul (v. 8).
 - 1) ἔκτρομα: “a birth that violates the normal period of gestation (whether induced as abortion, or natural premature birth or miscarriage...or birth beyond term) *untimely birth*. So Paul calls himself, perh. taking up an insult...hurled at him by his opponents 1 Cor 15:8 (in any case the point relates to some deficiency in the infant...: Paul confesses himself to be unworthy of being called a full-fledged apostle...)” (BDAG, 311).
- f. Paul considers himself the least of the apostles (v. 9a), unworthy to be called an apostle, because he persecuted the church.
 - (1) But by God’s grace Paul is an apostle (v. 10a).
 - (2) God’s grace toward Paul was not in vain (v. 10b).
 - (3) Paul worked harder than any other apostle (v. 10c).
 - (a) Though really, it is not Paul, but God’s grace with (σύν) Paul (v. 10d).
 - 1) Christian good works are a cooperative venture between God and the believer.
- g. Whoever preached (κηρύσσω, aor.), Paul or others, it was this gospel in which the Corinthians believed (πιστεύω, aor.) (v. 11).
 - (1) Paul never doubts the Corinthians’ justification. He does doubt their sanctification.

3. No Resurrection? (1 Co 15:12-19).

- a. **1 Co 15:12-19** 12 Now if Messiah is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13 But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Messiah has been raised. 14 And if Messiah has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. 15 We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised

Messiah, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. 16 For if the dead are not raised, not even Messiah has been raised. 17 And if Messiah has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. 18 Then those also who have fallen asleep in Messiah have perished. 19 If in Messiah we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.

- b. Some of the Corinthians are saying there is no resurrection (ἀνάστασις) from the dead (v. 12b).
 - (1) ἀνάστασις: a change for the better in status, *rising up, rise...* resurrection from the dead, *resurrection*" (BDAG, 71).
- c. This makes no sense! If there is no resurrection, Jesus has not been raised (v. 13, 16).

Men who die cannot be resurrected.
Jesus is a man who died.
Jesus cannot be resurrected.

- d. If Jesus has not been raised:
 - (1) Christian preaching and faith are totally empty (κενός) and useless (μάταιος) (v. 14, 17a).
 - (a) κενός: "pert. to being without someth. material, *empty*...pert. to being devoid of intellectual, moral, or spiritual value, *empty* fig. extension of mng. 1...of things: *without content, without any basis, without truth, without power κ. λόγοι empty words*...pert. to being without purpose or result, *in vain*" (BDAG, 539).
 - (b) μάταιος: "pert. to being of no use, idle, empty, fruitless, useless, powerless, lacking truth" (BDAG, 621).
 - (2) The apostles are false witnesses (ψευδομάρτυρες) (v. 15).
 - (3) The Corinthians are still in their sins (v. 17b).
 - (4) Christians who have died have perished (v. 18).
 - (5) Christians who have hoped (perf.) in Jesus in this life (ζωῆ ταύτη) are to be pitied above all people (v. 19).

4. The Resurrection and Its Results (1 Co 15:20-28).

- a. **1 Co 15:20-28** 20 But in fact Messiah has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. 21 For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Messiah shall all be made alive. 23 But each in his own order: Messiah the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Messiah. 24 Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. 25 For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy to be destroyed is death. 27 For God has put all things in subjection under his feet. But when it says, all things are put in subjection, it is plain that he is excepted who put all things in subjection under him. 28 When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all.
- b. As an historical fact, Jesus has been raised from the dead (v. 20a).
- c. He is the firstfruits (ἀπαρχή) of those who have fallen asleep (v. 20b).

- (1) ἀπαρχή: “cultic t.t. *first fruits, first portion* of any kind... which were holy to the divinity and were consecrated before the rest could be put to secular use” (BDAG, 98).
- (2) Make no mistake. Jesus has been raised, and we, too, will be raised.
- (3) Apologetically, we need to be able to make a convincing argument for the resurrection.
- d. As death came through a man (Adam), so resurrection has come through a man (Jesus) (v. 21).
- e. As in Adam all are dying (pres.), so in Messiah all (believers) will be made alive (v. 22).
 - (1) Jesus’ resurrection happened, so what?
- f. Here’s the classes/order (τάγμα) (v. 23a):
 - (a) τάγμα: “a clearly defined group...of an orderly arrangement of personnel, *division, group* military t.t. for bodies of troops in various numbers...without any special military application *class, group*.... Acc. to 1 Cor 15:23f the gift of life is given to various ones in turn..., and at various times. One view is that in this connection Paul distinguishes three groups: Christ, who already possesses life, the Christians, who will receive it at his second coming, and the rest of humanity..., who will receive it when death, as the last of God’s enemies, is destroyed...a stage in a sequence, *order, turn*” (BDAG, 987-88).
 - (2) Jesus, the firstfruits (ἀπαρχή Χριστός), is raised from the dead (v. 23b).
 - (3) At Jesus’ second coming (παρουσία), believers are raised from the dead (v. 23c).
 - (a) παρουσία: “arrival as the first stage in presence, *coming, advent*...in a special technical sense...of Christ (and the Antichrist). The use of π. as a t.t. has developed in two directions. On the one hand the word served as a sacred expr. for the coming of a hidden divinity, who makes his presence felt by a revelation of his power, or whose presence is celebrated in the cult.... On the other hand, π. became the official term for a visit of a person of high rank, esp. of kings and emperors visiting a province.... These two technical expressions can approach each other closely in mng., can shade off into one another, or even coincide...of Christ, and nearly always of his Messianic Advent in glory to judge the world at the end of this age” (BDAG, 780-81).
 - (b) This happens in two stages: rapture and second coming proper.
 - (4) Jesus reigns (βασιλεύω, pres.), putting all his enemies under (ὑπό) his feet (v. 25).
 - 1) **Ps 8:6** 6 You have given [man] dominion over the works of your hands. You have put all things under his feet....
 - (b) Jesus destroys (καταργέω, aor.) every rule (ἀρχή) and every authority (ἐξουσία) and power (δύναμις) (v. 24b).
 - 1) **Ps 110:1** 1 Yahweh says to my Lord: Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.
 - (c) Death is the final enemy Jesus destroys (καταργέω) (v. 26).
 - (d) The Father then will have subjected (ὑποτάσσω, perf. pass.) all things to Jesus (v. 27a, 28a).
 - 1) ὑποτάσσω: “to cause to be in a submissive relationship, *to subject, to subordinate*...become subject τινί to a pers. or a state of being...*subject oneself, be subjected or subordinated, obey*.... Of submission involving

recognition of an ordered structure, w. dat. of the entity to whom/which appropriate respect is shown” (*BDAG*, 1042).

- (e) The only exception is the Father himself (v. 27b).
- (5) At the end (τὸ τέλος), Jesus delivers (παραδίδωμι, pres.) the kingdom to the Father (v. 24a).
- (6) Jesus himself is subjected (ὑποτάσσω, fut. pass.) to the Father (v. 28b).
- (7) God is all in all (v. 28c).

5. Why Face Danger? (1 Co 15:29-34).

- a. **1 Co 15:29-34** 29 Otherwise, what do people mean by being baptised on behalf of the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptised on their behalf? 30 Why are we in danger every hour? 31 I protest, brothers and sisters, by my pride in you, which I have in Messiah Jesus our Lord, I die every day! 32 What do I gain if, humanly speaking, I fought with beasts at Ephesus? If the dead are not raised, Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die. 33 Do not be deceived: Bad company ruins good morals. 34 Wake up from your drunken stupor, as is right, and do not go on sinning. For some have no knowledge of God. I say this to your shame.
- b. Even pagans know there is a resurrection, as proven by their practice of being baptised on behalf of the dead (v. 29).
- c. If there is no resurrection, why do the apostles live in constant danger (κινδυνεύω)? (v. 30).
- d. Paul dies (pres.) every day because of his belief in the resurrection (v. 31).
- e. If there is no resurrection:
 - (1) Paul gains nothing (ὄφελος) (εἰ) by fighting (aor.) with beasts at Ephesus (v. 32a).
 - (2) One might as well eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die (v. 32b)
 - (a) **Is 22:13** 13 ...And behold, joy and gladness, killing oxen and slaughtering sheep, eating flesh and drinking wine. Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.
- f. In light of the resurrection, the Corinthians are not to be deceived (v. 33a).
 - (1) To their shame (ἐντροπή), they are associating with those ignorant of God (v. 34).
 - (2) Bad company corrupts/ruins (φθείρω) good behavior/custom/habit (ἥθος) (v. 33b).
 - (3) They are to sober up (ἐκνήφω) from their drunken stupor (v. 34a).
 - (4) They are to stop sinning (v. 34b).

6. God Gives Various Bodies and Glories (1 Co 15:35-41).

- a. **1 Co 15:35-41** 35 But someone will ask, How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come? 36 You foolish person! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. 37 And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. 38 But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. 39 For not all flesh is the same, but there is one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish. 40 There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is of one kind, and the glory of the earthly is of another. 41 There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars, for star differs from star in glory.
- b. A foolish (ἄφρων) skeptic (v. 36a) asks:
 - (1) How are the dead raised (v. 35a)?

- (2) What kind of body do they get (v. 35b)?
- c. Paul responds:
- (1) A seed has to be sown and “die” (ἀποθνήσκω) before it comes to life (ζωοποιέω) as a new plant (v. 36).
 - (2) The seed, a bare kernel, is not the wheat or grain that eventually will be (v. 37).
 - (3) God gives (pres.) to each kind of seed its own body (σῶμα), as he desired (θέλω, aor.) (v. 38).
 - (a) **Ge 1:11** 11 And God said, Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth. And it was so.
 - (4) Not all kinds of flesh (σάρξ) and glory (δόξα) are the same (v. 39a).
 - (a) The flesh of humans, animals, birds, and fish differ in kind from one another (v. 39b).
 - (b) The glory of heavenly bodies differs in kind from the glory of earthly bodies (v. 40).
 - (c) The sun, the moon, and each star differ (διαφέρω) from one another in glory (v. 41).
 - 1) This implies angels differ from one another in glory.
 - 2) God is behind all this. He alone determines the kind of flesh or glory appropriate to each entity.
 - 3) Paul is heavily influenced here by the Ge 1 creation account.

7. The Natural Body and the Spiritual Body (1 Co 15:42-49).

- a. **1 Co 15:42-49** 42 So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable. What is raised is imperishable. 43 It is sown in dishonor. It is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness. It is raised in power. 44 It is sown a natural body, It is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural [human] body, there is also a spiritual [human] body. 45 Thus it is written, The first man Adam became a living soul (εἰς ψυχήν ζῶσαν). The last Adam became a life-giving spirit (εἰς πνεῦμα ζωοποιοῦν). 46 But it is not the spiritual [body] that is first but the natural [body], and then the spiritual [body]. 47 The first man [Adam] was from the earth, made of dust (ἐκ γῆς χοϊκός). The second man is from heaven. 48 As was the man of dust (ὁ χοϊκός), so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. 49 Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust (τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ χοϊκοῦ), we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven (τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ ἐπουρανίου).
- b. Resurrection is like that seed that is sown (v. 42a).
 - (1) The natural body (v. 44a):
 - (a) Is sown in deterioration (φθορά) (v. 42b).
 - 1) φθορά: “breakdown of organic matter, dissolution, deterioration, corruption, in the world of nature” (*BDAG*, 1054)
 - (b) Is sown in dishonor (v. 43a).
 - (c) Is sown in weakness (v. 43c).
 - (d) Is like the first Adam, a living soul (v. 45a).
 - (e) Comes first (v. 46a).
 - (f) Is from the earth and made of dust, like the first man (v. 47a, 48a).

- (g) Bears the image of the man of dust (v. 49a).
- (2) The spiritual body (v. 44b):
 - (a) Is raised incorruptible (ἀφθαρσία) (v. 42c).
 - 1) ἀφθαρσία: “the state of not being subject to decay/dissolution/interruption, *incorruptibility, immortality*” (BDAG, 155).
 - (b) Is raised in glory (v. 43b).
 - (c) Is raised in power (v. 43d).
 - (d) Is like the last Adam, Jesus, a life-giving spirit (v. 45b)
 - (e) Comes second (v. 46b).
 - (f) Is from heaven, like the second man, Jesus (v. 47b, 48b).
 - (g) Bears the image of the man of heaven, Jesus (v. 49b).

8. The Death of Death (1 Co 15:50-57).

- a. **1 Co 15:50-57** 50 I tell you this, brothers and sisters: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. 51 Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 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 shall be changed. 53 For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. 54 When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: Death is swallowed up in victory. 55 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 Torah. 57 But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Messiah.
- b. Flesh and blood, the natural body, cannot inherit God’s kingdom (v. 50a).
 - (1) κληρονομέω: “acquire, obtain, come into possession of” (BDAG, 547).
 - (a) Note inheritance of the kingdom is future.
 - (b) Is this the Messianic kingdom or the eternal kingdom?
 - (2) In other words, the perishable cannot inherit the imperishable (v. 50b).
 - (a) We must receive a body appropriate to our life in God’s future kingdom.
- c. As a mystery:
 - (a) Paul is writing about a “mystery,” an event not previously disclosed in the Old Testament. It was kept hidden until Jesus revealed it to Paul. No one prior to Paul wrote about this subject matter.
 - 1) **Ro 16:25-26** 25 Now to him [God] who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Messiah, according to the revelation of the *mystery* that was kept secret for long ages 26 but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations....
 - 2) **Eph 3:1-5** 1 For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner of Messiah Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles— 2 assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God’s grace that was given to me for you, 3 how the *mystery* was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. 4 When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the *mystery* of Messiah, 5 which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.

- 3) **Col 1:25-27** 25 ...Of which I [Paul] became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, 26 the *mystery* hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints. 27 To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this *mystery*, which is Messiah in you, the hope of glory [in the future resurrection].
- (2) Not all believers will die physically (v. 51a).
- (3) But all believers will be changed (v. 51b).
- (4) The change will happen in a split second, at the last trumpet sound (v. 52a).
- (a) **σάλπιγξ**: “the sound made or signal given by a trumpet, *trumpet-call, trumpet-sound*” (BDAG, 911).
- (b) There is nothing here about a “last trumpet” (musical instrument). The language is “last trump” (the sound of the musical instrument). There is one trumpet making at least two sounds. By contrast, *Revelation* involves seven trumpets making seven sounds in succession.
- (c) **1 Th 4:16** 16 For the Lord [Jesus] himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet sound (**σάλπιγξ**) of God. And the dead in Messiah will rise first.
- 1) At the rapture, God blows the trumpet. The trumpets of Revelation involve angels blowing trumpets. At the rapture, one archangel speaks, but does not sound a trumpet.
- (5) When the trumpet sounds:
- (a) The dead will be raised imperishable (v. 52b).
- (b) All believers will be changed (v. 52c).
- 1) It could be there are two trumpet blasts. The first trumpet blast resurrects deceased believers; the second trumpet blast transforms living believers.
- d. The reason for this resurrection is:
- (1) Our perishable body must put on the imperishable (vv. 53a, 54a).
- (2) Our mortal body must put on immortality (vv. 53b, 54b).
- e. The result is man’s victory over death and its prick and power (vv. 54c-55).
- (a) **Is 25:8** 8 He will swallow up death forever. And Lord Yahweh will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth, for Yahweh has spoken.
- (b) **Ho 13:14** 14 I shall ransom them from the power of Sheol. I shall redeem them from Death. O Death, where are your plagues? O Sheol, where is your sting? Compassion is hidden from my eyes.
- (2) The prick of death is sin (v. 56a).
- (3) The power of sin is the Torah (v. 56b).
- (a) **Ro 7:8** 8 But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. For apart from the law, sin lies dead.
- f. The credit for this victory (**νίκος**) goes to God and the Lord Jesus (v. 57).

9. Summary Commands (1 Co 15:58).

- a. **1 Co 15:58** 58 Therefore, my beloved brothers and sisters, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord [Jesus], knowing that in the Lord [Jesus] your labor is not in vain.

- b. As a result of their future resurrection, the Corinthians are to:
 - (1) Be firm/solid/steadfast (ἑδραῖος) (v. 58a).
 - (2) Be immovable/unchanging/unshifted (ἀμετακίνητος) (v. 58b).
 - (3) Always abound/excel/be outstanding in the work of Jesus (v. 58c).
 - (a) **2 Co 8:7** 7 But as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you—see that you excel in this act of grace also.
- c. The Corinthians are to know that in Jesus their labour/toil/work (κόπος) is not without purpose/result (κενός) (v. 58d).
 - (1) Just as Paul works hard (v. 10), the Corinthians are to work hard.
 - (2) In working hard, the Corinthians’ faith won’t be in vain (v. 2).

10. Application.

- a. Be assured of our own future resurrection.
 - (1) Sing “I believe in the resurrection” with all your might!
- b. Don’t make an idol out of your natural body, which is perishable.
- c. Keep excelling in the work of Jesus.
- d. Be buried, not cremated. Signal you expect to be resurrected bodily.