



MESSAGE

STUDY GUIDE

GROUP MATERIAL

SONGS

Examining the text & our hearts:

Bible Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-49, 58

³⁵ But someone will ask, 'How are the dead raised? What kind of body will they have when they come?' ³⁶ You fool! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. ³⁷ & as for what you sow—you are not sowing the body that will be, but only a seed, perhaps of wheat or another grain. ³⁸ But God gives it a body as he wants... ⁴² So it is with the resurrection of the dead: Sown in corruption, raised in incorruption; ⁴³ sown in dishonor, raised in glory; sown in weakness, raised in power; ⁴⁴ sown a natural body, raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. ⁴⁵ So it is written, '*The first man Adam became a living being*'; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. ⁴⁶ However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, then the spiritual. ⁴⁷ *The first man was from the earth*, a man of dust; the *2nd man is from heaven*. ⁴⁸ Like the *man of dust*, so are those who are of the dust; like the *man of heaven*, so are those who are of heaven. ⁴⁹ & just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we will also [or 'let us also'] bear the image of the man of heaven... ⁵⁸ Therefore, my dear brothers & sisters, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the Lord's work... knowing your labor in the Lord is not in vain" (1 Cor 15:35-38, 42-49, 58 CSB)

SUMMARY:

Among Evangelicals the Christian hope is often reduced to 'going to Heaven when we die,' as disembodied souls/spirits. Yet this pagan idea owes more to Plato than to Paul, who rebutted this notion when writing to Corinth (1 Cor. 15). It's time to retrieve a genuine, biblical hope—the bodily resurrection and transfiguration of those 'in Christ.' *En route* we address some misunderstood Scriptures. Contrary to many, Paul's enigmatic saying, '*The last Adam became a life-giving spirit,*'

does *not* describe Christ's relation to the Holy Spirit. Rather it denotes the glorified body of the risen Lord. That's important, since

Christians are promised fully conformity to Jesus, the glorified 'Heavenly Man.' Resurrection hope was a great incentive to Paul, governing his life & labor; it should do the same for us

1. The Believer's Hope is not 'Heaven,' but Resurrection

- a. "In popular evangelicalism, the *Christian hope was often reduced to 'going to heaven when we die,'* which was perceived as a spiritual, rather than bodily existence...[Yet,] if the risen Christ is...the 'first-fruits' of those who are raised [1 Cor. 15:20, 22]... the [believers'] general resurrection will complete the 'redemption of our bodies' [Rom. 8:23] & usher us [entirely] into the new creation." [M. Davie, Tim Grass, *New Dictionary of Theology*, pp.]
- b. "Paul *nowhere promises believers they will ever go to heaven;* [he]...insists that Christ *comes* to rescue his constituents (those 'belonging to Christ' 1 Cor. 15:23), having re-ordered the disordered cosmos, defeated Death (15:26), [and] delivered God the Kingdom [15:24b]." [J. Q. Martini, *Body Now & Not Yet*, (2009) p. 108]
- c. "Popular religion has lost the Christian doctrine of the resurrection & imagines instead a disembodied life ['life-after-death'] forever in 'Heaven,' [in that context] the question of the 'intermediate state' does not arise. But, as N. T. Wright emphasized, Christians believe in 'life-after-life-after-death' [i.e. resurrection after an interval] & some concept of the 'intermediate state' seems to be required. A certain mystery remains & the focus of *Christian hope is not there* [i.e., in 'life-after-death', in the 'intermediate state'], *but in resurrection.* Yet Christian theology asserts [that]...those who are 'absent from the body' are 'present with the Lord' (2 Cor. 5:8)..." [M. Davie, Tim Grass, *New Dictionary of Theology*, pp.]
- d. "The Christian hope is *not* the long-held [concept] of a disembodied existence as disembodied souls or spirits in an eternal heaven, but that, while at death believers go to be with the Lord, the *real hope is for [resurrection] 'life after life after death'* (N.Wright). It is *hope* not just for individual souls, but *for resurrection trans-physical life* in the new creation [depicted as the New Jerusalem, in the new heaven & earth (Rev. 21-22)] [M. Davie, Tim Grass, *New Dictionary of Theology*, pp.]
- e. "We tend to misunderstand the resurrection, as though it were an isolated & strange event that happened only to Jesus long ago." [Clark H. Pinnock, "Salvation by Resurrection," *Ex Auditu*, Vol. 9 (2004) p. 7]
- f. "Just as Jesus experienced *an interval [three days] of disembodiment between his death and resurrection,* so too will the Christian who dies before the *parousia [2nd coming]*...Just as Paul...believed in the preservation of the spirit of Jesus during his...disembodiment, so also he taught the safekeeping of believers as, in a bodiless state, they await the resurrection: [during which] they are in active communion with Christ in his immediate presence." [Murray J. Harris, *2 Cor.*, p. 402]
- g. Belief in the bodily resurrection of the dead is affirmed in the foundational Christian creeds:
 - The Apostles' Creed (~200 CE): '...I believe in...the *resurrection of the body* & the life everlasting. Amen.'
 - The Nicene Creed (381 CE): '...We look for the *resurrection of the dead*, & the life of the world to come. Amen'

2. Searching for the '2nd Adam'—Abraham, Israel, or Christ?

- a. Adam Failed; God called Abraham—the 'Second Adam'?
 - "N.T. Wright argues that the background for Paul's ['new Adam'] doctrine is the OT teaching on Adam & Israel as developed in Jewish literature...*God's purposes for Adam were passed on to Abraham & his family*... [Wright] writes, 'God's purposes for the human race in general have devolved on to, & will be fulfilled in, Israel in particular. Israel is...God's new humanity.' (N. T. Wright, *Climax of the Covenant*, p. 20)...The thrust of the argument is clear – *there is a second Adam in the OT & Jewish literature & it is collective Israel rather than an individual* ...In 1 Cor. 15 *Paul agrees that there is a new humanity, a last Adam, but it is not Israel* in general. *Rather, it is Christ*...'The role traditionally assigned to Israel had devolved on to Jesus Christ. Paul now regarded [Jesus], not Israel, as God's true humanity [& 'new Adam'].' (N. T. Wright, *Climax*..., p. 26)" [John Latham, "USE OF THE OT IN 1 COR. 15:44-49," *American J. of Biblical Theology*, p. 6]
- b. Israel, Abraham's race failed, God sent His Son
 - "Paul regarded [Israel]...as God's answer to the problem of the sin of Adam. He would've agreed...with the Rabbi who put into God's mouth the words 'I'll make Adam first: if he goes wrong Abraham will come to restore everything again'...Paul...read Gen. 12ff. as the sequel to Gen. 1-11. Where Paul

differs from Jewish understanding, however, is in the next step...Abraham's people, intended as a light to the world, provided only darkness. *Israel...were meant to be God's new humanity [new Adam], taking Adam's place...but Israel failed in this task. Their failure...meant...the task had to be undertaken by their representative [Jesus, Messiah 'last Adam'] alone.* [N. T. Wright, "Paul of History & Apostle of Faith," Tyndale Bulletin, Vol. 29 (1978) p. 65]

c. Jesus replaces Adam, heads a new humanity (Rom. 5:12, 15)

- "Sin entered the world through *one man [Adam]*, & Death through sin, in this way Death spread to all people, because all sinned ...For if by the *one man's [Adam's]* trespass the many Died, how much more have the grace of God & the gift which comes through the grace of the *one man Jesus Christ* overflowed to the many." (Rom. 5:12, 15)
- "Since Death came through *a man [Adam]*, the resurrection of the dead also comes through a *man [Jesus Christ]*.²² For just as *in Adam all die*, so also *in Christ all will be made alive.*" (1 Cor. 12:21-22)
 - "In a way quite foreign to most modern western thinking, the OT views the nature & destiny of groups of people in terms of the actions of a key individual." [Douglas Moo, "Christology of Early Pauline Epistles," p. 176]
 - "To reconcile the world to [God]...Christ died as the representative of all, the one for the many (2 Cor. 5:14). Thus he is the new Adam, the beginning of a new creation, & *all who are in Christ are a new creation* (2 Cor. 5:17). At the present, humanity groans...But...at the...resurrection of the dead, believers will bear the image of...the new Adam." [F. Matera, *NT Christology*, pp. 101-2]
 - "It is very significant that *in 1 Cor. 15...Jesus is described as the last Adam*. The resurrection means...the remaking of creation has begun at last...Paul...pictures...*the church as the new humanity*, the true Israel, the historical & visible people of God." [N.Wright, "Paul of History & Apostle of Faith," Tyndale Bulletin, Vol. 29 (1978) pp. 75-77]

d. "In Adam" or 'In Christ'? – "Just as *in Adam all die*, so also *in Christ all will be made alive.*" (1 Cor. 12:22)

- "Paul's 'in Christ' formulation grows seamlessly out of...Christ as the 2nd Adam...In Paul's doctrine...all people are either 'in Adam' or 'in Christ,' the 2nd Adam. There are two, & only two, humanities recognized by God. In Paul's word, '*as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive*' (1 Cor. 15:22). One is transferred from the first Adam to the second Adam through an act of faith in Christ (Col. 1:13) summarized in the...confession, 'Jesus is Lord' (Rom. 10:9; 1 Cor. 12:13). This confession is linked with...water baptism." [Larry R. Helyer, *Witness of Jesus, Paul & John*, p. 287]
- "The risen Jesus is...the model for the Christian's future resurrection] body & the means by which it comes." [N. T. Wright, "Heaven is Not our Home," CT., (April 2008) p. 37]
- "Although at death Christians cease to be [*in the flesh*] they *do not* cease to be [*in Christ*]. There's no evidence in Paul's [letters]...that death removes their [*in Christ*] incorporation, *this persists at and after death.*" [M. J. Harris, *2 Cor.*, p. 371]
- "The resurrection of Jesus marks the pivotal point...it starts the reversal of Adam's curse in the creation (1 Cor. 15:21–22; cf. Gen 2–3; Rom 5:12–20). For Paul, all humanity exists in solidarity with the first man who sinned against God & received the penalty of death as a result: 'in the Adam all die.' Although all humans face inevitable death in their bodies 'in Adam,' those who are 'in the Christ' will be made alive because of the resurrection. To be 'in Christ' is to belong to a realm or domain, the new creation, that contrasts being 'in Adam' & the old creation (2 Cor. 5:17; Gal 6:15). To be 'in Christ'... consists of a spiritual union & fellowship with the risen Christ through God's Spirit (Gal 3:27–28; Rom 8:18–25; Phil 3:9; Col 1:27). It also "identifies a person as belonging to the corporate body of Christ in which Jesus Messiah is both the agent of & the sphere in which the new creation becomes effective for believers (1 Cor. 12)." [B. J. Oropeza, "...Death, Immortality, & Being in Adam & in Christ," p. 4]

3. Adam & Christ (1 Cor. 15:44-49)

- In "Paul's interpretation of history...the entrance of *Sin*...through the transgression of Adam introduced *a power, a cosmic anti-god figure*...Jesus' life, death & resurrection was God's... answer to the...power of *Sin* introduced by Adam...History [centered on] *two paradigmatic figures, Adam & Jesus*...Paul believed...Jesus'...death & resurrection...inaugurated the...new creation." [John E. Toews, *Story of Original Sin*, p. 41]

a. Adam brought Sin & Death to all Humanity (Rom. 5:12, 14; 1 Cor. 15:21-22)

- "*Sin entered the world through one man [Adam]*, & *Death through sin; Death spread to all people*, because all sinned...Death reigned from Adam [on] even over those who didn't sin...like Adam's [sin].

He's a type of the Coming One." (Rom. 5:12, 14)

- "Since *Death came through a man* [Adam], the resurrection of the dead also comes through a man [Jesus Christ].²² For just as *in Adam all die*, so also in Christ all will be made alive." (1 Cor. 15:21-22)

b. Two 'Adams'—the First & the Last—two types of body (1 Cor. 15:45-46)

- ³⁵ Someone will ask, 'How are the dead raised? What kind of body will they have when they come?' ... Sown a natural body, raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural [*psychikos*] body, there is also a spiritual [*pneumatikos*] body.⁴⁵ So it is written, '*The first man Adam became a living being [psyche]*'; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit [*pneuma*].⁴⁶ However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, then the spiritual." (1 Cor. 15:35, 44-46 CSB)
- "The first man Adam became a *living soul [psyche (sing.)]*" (1 Cor. 15:45a Darby)
- "Noah's...ark...in which...*eight souls [psyche (pl.)]*, were saved through [the Flood] water." (1 Peter 3:20 Darby)
- "All the *souls* [descendants] of Jacob that came to Egypt were **70**." (Gen. 46:27 Darby) **Note** 'souls'=embodied souls, people
 - "The OT treats the 'soul' as metonymy [shorthand] for the entire living body." [Amy L. Skillicorn, *Body After Death* (2013) p. 17]
 - "To understand [this]...one must keep in mind two crucial...matters. First, the concern is *not* Christological [Christ's person in the Trinity &/or related to the Holy Spirit]—"these are quite beside Paul's point, which...has to do with Christ's *resurrection* being the ground for our resurrection" (#327) "Rather, the argument is to demonstrate from Scripture...that just as there is a *psychikos* body ['natural body'], so there is a *pneumatikos* body ['spiritual body']...Second... Paul's concern throughout has to do with the question 'With what kind of body?' (1 Cor. 15:35)... The concern of line 2 ['the last Adam became a life-giving spirit'] ...is *not* Christological, as though Christ & the Spirit are somehow interchangeable terms for Paul. The concern is...to [show] that *Christ is the foundation for the believers receiving a 'spiritual body'*. To make any further theological deductions...is to do the Apostle a grave injustice." [Gordon D. Fee, *1 Corinthians*, 871-873 & #327]
 - "The use of *psyche* to describe Adam [1 Cor. 15:45a quoting Gen. 2:7] gives Paul a biblical base for the...two kinds of *soma* [Gk.body]...represented by the two...'Adams.' The first Adam, who became a 'living *psyche*' was...given a *psychikos body* at creation...The last Adam [has] a 'spiritual [*pneumatikos*] (glorified) *body*' [via]...resurrection..." [Gordon D. Fee, *1 Cor.*, p. 873]
 - "The first Adam was made a 'living being' ['soul'] *with a physical body* by the creative power of God (15:45a). But God, by raising [Christ] from the dead, made the last Adam a 'life-giving spirit' (1 Cor. 15:45b) *with a spiritual body* [who can also] give [end-time] spiritual life." [John Paul Heil, *Rhetorical Role of Scripture in 1 Cor.*, 237]

c. Christ as 'Second Man,' 'life-giving spirit,' begins at Resurrection (1 Cor. 15:45b)

- "Paul creates a new expression ['the last Adam'] in 1 Cor. 15:45...the expression ['life-giving spirit,'] is a unique expression in the Greek Bible & clearly [a compound term of] Paul's [creation]. By creating these unique phrases Paul [establishes] that 'As the first Adam came into existence at creation, the beginning of the Old Age, so *the last Adam* (as such) *came into existence at the resurrection*, the beginning of the Age to Come...Christ's role as 'Second man, as last Adam, does not begin either at some pre-existent state or at the incarnation, but at his resurrection. The resurrection marks the beginning of the [new] humanity of the last Adam' (J. Dunn, *Christology in the Making*, p. 108)." [Y. Lee, *Son of Man as the Last Adam*, 134-5]
- Why did Paul use the expression 'life-giving spirit? "Adam & Christ are both portrayed in their representative roles. Adam represents the bodily life associated with the old age & the power of death. That death is the enemy of human life is a point made explicitly in 1 Cor. 15:26 [Death is 'the last enemy'], & it will be made again in 15:54-55. As 'life-giving spirit' Christ deals the decisive blow against death & thus opens the possibility for those who are 'in Adam' to escape the tyranny of death. The first Adam introduced death; the 'last Adam' gives life to the dead." [Matthew P. O'Reilly, *Body & the Future*, (2016) p. 88]
- "When Paul speaks of Christ as the 'man from heaven,' the heavenly one (1 Cor. 15:47-48), he is referring to the risen Lord, who is the life-giving Spirit because he's been raised from the dead. Previous to his resurrection, Jesus also bore the image of Adam. But now, risen & transformed, he is the

heavenly one, the image of God, & he will confer upon believers the image of his resurrection body at the general resurrection of the dead [believers].” [Frank J. Matera, *NT Christology*, 97]

4. Resurrection body vs. present body (1 Cor. 15:35, 44-45)

- o “Sown a natural body, raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.” (1 Cor. 15:44)
 - “‘With what kind of body do they come?’ (1 Cor. 15:35). Paul’s answer in 1 Cor. 15 is that the resurrection body will be an imperishable, powerful, glorious, & spiritual body, brought about by the power & grace of God, fit for the life of the age to come ...[But,] Paul’s conception of the resurrection body of the believers ultimately owes its origin in the resurrected Christ, the ‘lifegiving spirit’...Christ, the [end-time] Adam, is the founder of a new & better humanity.” [Brian S. Rosner, “‘With what kind of body do they come?’ (1 Cor. 15:35b),” in B. W. Winter (ed.) *NT in its First-century Setting*, p. 203]

a. Continuity & Discontinuity—the same, yet different (1 Cor. 15:41-44)

- “...the resurrection of the dead: *Sown* in corruption, *raised* in incorruption, sown...raised....sown... raised...” (1 Cor. 15:41-44)
- “Paul keeps alive the metaphor of the seed through the 1st verb (‘sown’) but expresses the language of resurrection with the 2nd (‘raised’)...[There’s] no expressed subject; ‘body’ is the likely intended... subject for *both* verbs in each set, thus implying *genuine continuity between the present body and its future expression*.” [Gordon Fee, *1 Corinthians*, p. 783]
- “Paul...uses a series of analogies to explain that the resurrection body would *be similar, but not identical*, to the pre-death body. [Gordon] Fee explains, ‘It [the resurrection body] will have continuity in that it is the present body that is raised; it will have discontinuity in that it will be ‘transformed’ & thereby fitted for the life of the future, the life of [eternity]’...The point of these contrasts is not so much the differences between the present life & the future life, but the power of God to raise the dead and transform fallen bodies into glorious, [eternity]-ready bodies.’ [John W. Latham, “...OT in 1 15:44-49,” *AJBT*, pp. 4-5]
- “For Paul...regardless of whether dead bodies are reduced to particles, ashes, or bones, they are given new life & transformed to possess & reflect divine glory. God, who created all things, is powerful enough to rework & restore bodies from whatever materials or lack of them remain. Even so, the seed sown in the ground looks very different than what grows from it...This analogy suggests...both continuity & discontinuity [between the raised body & the buried one]...The perishable body of Jesus sown in burial was recognizable as the same person in the resurrected state...As the first-fruit, so will be the harvest regarding the [believers] resurrection...’It’ in these verses seems to refer to the human body in the contrasting pairs (cf. 15:37), & from this we can affirm continuity between the body that dies & one that rises.” [B. J. Oropeza, “...*Being in Adam & in Christ*,” p. 7]

b. “Spiritual,” “soulish/natural”—animation, not composition (1 Cor. 15:44-45)

- “In 1 Cor. 15:44...Paul is contrasting two different embodied states...the *en-souled earthly body (soma psychikos)*; on the other, the *en-spirited risen body (soma pneumatikos)*...[with the latter] stressing an embodied existence perfectly suited for the S/spirit’s rule.” [Frederick S. Tappenden, *Embodying Resurrection*, (2012) pp. 129-130]
- 1 Cor. 15:44 “Some have surmised the ‘spiritual body’ is a body consisting of *pneuma* (spirit), however, [Paul is *not*] *thinking in terms of substance*. It’s better to understand the ‘spiritual body’ to be a new body, animated by the Spirit of God, a body appropriate to the new life in the Spirit...[It] comes through the resurrection, which completely alters the somatic [bodily] condition.” [David Hodgins, “*Our Resurrection Body...1 Cor. 15:42-49*,” *Melanesian J. of Theology*, V. 17-2 (2001) pp. 76-77]
- “The human body is first sown a ???????? [psychikos] body, a “soulish-animated” body, & raised a ???????????? [pneumatikos] body, a “spiritual-animated” body (15:44). It is clear from the context that both refer to a body ...The point is one of *animation rather than composition*. As the ???????? [psychikos] body *does not designate a body consisting of ‘soul-substance,’* so the ???????????? [pneumatikos] body *does not designate a body formed out of ‘Spirit-stuff.’* Rather, ???????????? [pneumatikos] describes, *not what something is composed of, but what it is animated by. It is the difference between speaking of a ship made of steel or wood on the one hand and a ship driven by steam or wind on the other.* The ???????????? [pneumatikos] body characterizes those who are in Christ; their existence via the Spirit overcomes the state of death characterizing the first Adam & creation, & they participate with the ‘last Adam’ in the new creation. In the resurrection, they experience

the fulfillment of the final deposit of the Spirit (2 Cor. 1:22; 5:5; cf. Rom 8:23)...They become fully empowered by the Spirit to the extent that God ultimately intended...In the resurrection the soul as the principle that animates the body is replaced by the Spirit." [B. J. Oropeza, *Clashes with Death, Immortality, & Being in Adam & in Christ*, pp. 8-9]

- "Paul's vision of the resurrected body may not be much different than...the Gospels, which depict the post-Easter Christ, whose body is identifiable with the pre-Easter Christ, & can be touched & handled (Lk. 24:39-42; Jn. 20:17, 27). The final words in 1 Cor. 15:49 both urge & anticipate the full realization of that transformation with the [exhortation], 'let us also wear the image of the man of heaven'." [B. J. Oropeza, *Clashes with Death, Immortality, & Being in Adam & in Christ*, p. 10]

c. Transformation vs. Exchange

- "Some scholars have proposed...*an exchange view* of Paul's resurrection body [whereby]...rather than the physical body transforming into a glorious body in the resurrection, the *natural body is traded out* [exchanged] *for an entirely different spiritual body.*" [Andrew W. Pitts, *Paul's Concept of the Resurrection Body*, in Stanley E. Porter (ed.) *Paul & Gnosis*, p. 58]
- Some scholars posit "an immaterial or spiritual body for the risen Jesus...Albert Schweitzer claimed that for Paul 'the first Adam is a psychic man, created of earthly material, the second [Man] Christ is the 'pneumatic' (spiritual) man, who comes from heaven'...These proposals [of a spiritual (immaterial) resurrection body]...are largely driven by Paul's description...of the resurrected Christ-follower's body as a 'spiritual body' in 1 Cor. 15:44 & his comment in 1 Cor. 15:50 that 'flesh & blood' cannot inherit the kingdom'...This *exchange view*...contrasts with the traditional view of *transformation into a glorified material body*, rather than an *exchange of a natural body for a different spiritual body.*" [Andrew W. Pitts, *Paul's Concept of the Resurrection Body*, in Stanley E. Porter (ed.) *Paul & Gnosis*, pp. 44-45]
- "In order to derive his two-body [exchange] thesis [R. Carrier] translates...1 Cor. 15:44...'A biological body is sown, a spiritual body is raised' [But.] translators univocally prefer...'(It is) sown a natural body, (it is) raised a spiritual body'..." [Andrew W. Pitts, *Paul's Concept of the Resurrection Body*, in Stanley E. Porter (ed.) *Paul & Gnosis*, p. 52] D. In Resurrection—we retain our personal identity (Phil. 3:20-21)
- "We eagerly wait for a Savior from [heaven], the Lord Jesus Christ. ²¹ *He will transform the body* of our humble condition *into the likeness of his glorious body*, by the power that enables him to subject everything to himself." (Phil 3:20-1) **Note:** This is not exchange/replacement (out/off with the old: in/on with the new). Rather its transformation/transfiguration.
- In resurrection "personal identity is preserved. Those who are to bear the 'image of the heavenly man' will *not be personally different* from those who bore 'the image of the man made of dust' (1 Cor. 15:49). There are 2 dwellings but only one occupant. {'The same historically continuous...ego [the 'I'] makes use successively of 2 different kinds of body.' C. K. Barrett, *1 Cor.*, 373} The subject of the successive forms of corporeality is the same 'self' who will be transformed, by the Spirit of life at the resurrection." [Murray Harris, *Resurrection & Immortality: 8 Theses*, Themelios, Vol. 1.2 (1976) p. 55 & #27]
- "Rather than the spiritual or immaterial self escaping from the body at death, Paul promotes the [view of] the body undergoing a qualitative transformation at the resurrection *with the self intact.*" [B. J. Oropeza, *1 Corinthians*, p. 216]
- "Jesus' resurrection body...was numerically identical with his pre-resurrection body (i.e., it was one & the same body) but not qualitatively identical with it (some of the old properties were still there, but it possessed several new ones as well)." [Stephen Davis, *Risen Indeed: Making Sense of the Resurrection*, (1993) p. 58]
- When raised, the body is "transformed...like a change of [clothes]...the 'putting on' of the imperishable, immortal covering (1 Cor. 15:53). *The self* 'under the garment,' though fully sanctified, *remains the same.*" [B. J. Oropeza, *1 Corinthians*, p. 220]

5. The Defeat of Death (1 Cor. 15:50-58)

- "Death is an intruder, a violator of God's good world. The Creator's answer to death can't be...compromise. Death must be, & in the Messiah has been & will be defeated. (1 Cor. 15:26)." [N. T. Wright, *Resurrection of the Son of God*, p. 314]
- "There are **3 dimensions to death**: [1.] *physical*, [2.] *moral* (sin) [Eph. 2:1], & [3.] *eternal perdition* (...['2nd death' Rev. 20:15])...Death...is personified as an 'inimical [hostile], murderous, quasi-angelic power that has held all Adamic humanity in subjection & enslavement. The death of Christ is the invasion of this age, which unmask the nature of Sin & Death. Through Christ's death...

God is able to [re-] establish his sovereignty over the world. (M. de Doer, *Defeat of Death*.)” [Scott M. Lewis, *What...about the NT Apocalyptic?* p. 50] “The whole point of 1 Cor. 15:20-28 is the *defeat and destruction of death as a consequence of Christ’s resurrection.*” [Scott M. Lewis, *So that God may be All in All*, p. 46]

- “The resurrection...set in motion a ...process of history whose goal is the annihilation of death in the victory of the life of resurrection...& which ends [when] God receives in all things his due [1 Cor. 15:28].” [J. Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, 163]
- “⁵⁰ What I’m saying, brothers & sisters, is this: Flesh & blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor can corruption inherit incorruption. ⁵¹ Listen, I’m telling you a mystery: We will not all fall asleep, but we will all be changed, ⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, & the dead will be raised incorruptible, & we will be changed. ⁵³ For this corruptible body must be clothed with incorruptibility, & this mortal body must be clothed with immortality. ⁵⁴ ...Then the saying that is written will take place: *‘Death has been swallowed up in victory.* ⁵⁵ *Where, death, is your victory? Where, death, is your sting?’* ⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, & the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ! ⁵⁸ Therefore, my dear brothers & sisters, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the Lord’s work, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.” (1 Cor. 15:50-58 CSB)

6. The Ethical Imperative—“*Therefore...*” (1 Cor. 15:58; 2 Cor. 5:1, 6-10, 15; 2 Tim. 4:7-8)

- “Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, *let us also bear* the image of the man of heaven...” (1 Cor. 15:49)
 - “At present we carry the image of the first man [Adam] (1 Cor. 15:59a), but as 2 Cor. [3:18] suggests, [we] also increasingly the image of the heavenly man, although not to such an extent that the Spirit] already transforms the body into a pneumatic body, [a spiritual body]. That...is a future reality according to 1 Cor. 15.” [G. H. van Kooten, *Paul’s Anthropology in Context*, p. 305]
- Therefore, my dear brothers & sisters, *be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the Lord’s work*, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.” (1 Cor. 15:58)
 - **Note:** ‘*Therefore...*’ [1 Cor. 15:58; 2 Cor. 5:9] implies a [present] practical application...of... resurrection: work (e.g. evangelism) that Christians do for the kingdom of God will bring results that last forever. ESV
 - “...Always, give yourself fully to the work of the Lord.” (1 Cor. 15:58b) “The work of the Lord’...may refer more broadly to whatever one does *as a believer*, both toward outsiders & fellow believers. But...Paul frequently uses ‘work’ to refer to the actual ministry of the gospel...Our present existence in Christ, & our present labors, are not in vain.” [G. Fee, *1 Cor.*, 894]
- “We know that if our ‘earthly tent’ [present body] we live in is destroyed, we have a [resurrection body] ‘building from God,’ an eternal dwelling in the heavens...⁶ We...know that while we are at home in the [present] body we are away from the Lord. ⁷ For we walk by faith, not by sight. ⁸ In fact...we would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. ⁹ Therefore, whether we are at home or away, *we make it our aim to be pleasing to him.* ¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may be repaid for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil...[Christ] died for all so that those who live should no longer live for themselves, but for the one who died for them & was raised.” (2 Cor. 5:1, 6-10, 15 CSB)
 - **Note:** The ‘*earthly tent...we live in*’ [2 Cor. 5:1] refers to present human bodies that will die. ‘*We have*’ refers to the future resurrection, & ‘*building from God...eternal dwelling*’ refers to the resurrection body believers...receive on the last day. ESV
 - “Death brings destruction (2 Cor. 5:1) & departure (5:8). When Christians die, their ‘earthly house’ is demolished (5:1) & they depart from earthly embodiment...& earthly existence

(5:8). But their departure implies a destination...a 'to' as well as a 'from.' ...Death brings a change in...location...absent from their 'bodily home'....they are 'at home with the Lord' (5:8)...in deeper communion with the risen Lord...[Their being] 'in Christ'...remains intact through death [plus there] is added a personal 'with Christ' dimension." [Murray J. Harris, 2 Cor., pp. 402-403]

- **Note:** *'we make it our aim to please him.'* [2 Cor. 5:9] Paul lives his entire life in light of a hope that his actions will bring delight to God day by day. It is possible for Christians to please or displease God in their daily actions (cf. Eph. 5:10...) ESV
- **Note:** *'Each one...repaid...what is due for what he's done...whether good or evil'* (2 Cor. 5:10). This underscores the principle that present-day actions have eternal consequences. All Christians will appear before the eternal judgment seat of Christ, to receive 'what is due' to them for the deeds that they have done in their earthly life. ESV
- "2 Cor. 5:9 [implies] an ethical imperative...After the facts [5:1-8] there follows...the *consequences for behavior*...Paul's constant ambition to know Christ's approval (5:9) was a direct consequence...of his awareness that death would inaugurate a ['walking by sight... This] hope of person-to-person communion with Christ after death (5:8b)...prompted the *aspiration of gaining* [Christ's] *acceptance...both before & after death.*" [Murray J. Harris, 2 Cor., 403-404]
- "2 Cor. 5:10 Paul's constant ambition to gain Christ's approval was prompted by 2 facts... his destiny of dwelling with the Lord (5:8) & his coming accountability to Christ (5:10) 'for we must all appear before Christ's judicial bench' (5:10)...[implying] divine scrutiny & disclosure [plus] appropriate recompense...The 'all' [relates to] all Christians...'each person' [means its] not judgment en masse. Accountability & assessment are individual... Each Christian without exception [will appear]...receiving an exact & impartial recompense...based on deeds, both good & bad, performed through the earthly body." [Murray J. Harris, 2 Corinthians, pp. 405, 408-9]
- *"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."*⁸ There is reserved for me the...which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on that day, & not only to me, but to all those who have loved his appearing." (2 Tim. 4:7-8)
 - *"I have fought the good fight."* Using athletic imagery, Paul affirms at the close of his life... he has engaged himself in the one event truly worth one's life (i.e., [God's] mission). Some [think] Paul...sounds prideful. But there's no claim of personal glory here. Paul is simply saying...he's finally completed the course God ordained for him (see Acts 20:24). ESV

QUESTIONS: Read: 1 Corinthians 15:35-58

1. If a friend or colleague were to ask you—"OK, you're a Christian, so what's your ultimate hope?" How would you answer? Discuss. What would constitute a clear, yet concise, and biblical answer?
2. In 1 Cor. 15:35-49 Paul is answering the question: "How are the dead raised? What kind of body will they have when they come?" (15:35). In his answer, Paul develops several successive points, based on his first-century view of the world. How would you (briefly) summarize his points? Do you find his arguments convincing or not? Why or why not?
3. In 1 Cor. 15:36-43 Paul gives a 'seed—plant' analogy—the 'seed' represents our present body & the 'plant' our resurrection body. Based on this analogy, what characteristics does Paul assign to our present body, & to our future resurrection body?
4. Some suggest that at the final resurrection we exchange our present 'earthly body' for a superior 'heavenly body'—it's "like trading in an 'old, beaten up, junk car' for a new model at the auto dealership." Is this analogy helpful? Why or why not?
5. In 1 Cor. 15:42-47 Paul applies his 'seed—plant' analogy to resurrection. Based on this he asserts "If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body" (15:44b) Do you see his point? Does this convince you? Why or why not?

6. In 1 Cor. 15:45 Paul quotes from Genesis: “the Lord God formed the man out of the dust...& breathed the breath of life into his nostrils, & the *man became a living soul.*” (Gen. 2:7) Notice in Scripture ‘soul’ can represent the whole (embodied) person; e.g. “Noah’s...ark...in which...**8 souls** [*psyche* (pl.)], were saved through water.” (1 Pet. 3:20) “All the souls of Jacob that came to Egypt were **70**.” (Gen. 46:27).
 - a. So, what is included when Paul talks of Adam as a “living soul”?
 - b. Doesn’t Paul equate the “natural/‘soul-ish’ body” (15:44) with Adam as a “living soul” (15:45)?
 - c. Why might this be difficult for Greeks who thought of human as having a distinct ‘body’ (material, bad) & ‘soul’ (good)?
7. Paul adapts the statement in Genesis, “So it is written, ‘*The first man Adam became a living being* [soul];’” and then ‘extrapolates’: “the last Adam became a life-giving spirit.” (15:45b)
 - a. What minor modifications’ has Paul made in quoting Genesis 2:7? How does that help his ‘extrapolation’?
 - b. Paul sees 15:45b “the last Adam became a life-giving spirit,” as a *necessary implication* of 15:45a ‘*The first man Adam became a living being* [soul]’. Do you see his argument? Are you convinced? Why or why not?
8. 1 Cor. 15:58 says, “*Therefore...be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the Lord’s work...*” (15:58). The promise of a future resurrection with a glorious body was an incentive to Paul; how can it be an incentive to us today?