



Verse-by-Verse 1 Corinthians 15

Resurrection

The Corinthians were much like the Ephesians in their religious worship, influenced by Greek culture. Their attitude toward sex and the human body were similar.

The Corinthians were influenced by Socrates and Plato, teaching the soul was beautiful and the body was evil.

They looked forward to death so the body would be gone, and the soul would be freed to cross the River Styx and float into the Elysian Fields.

The Corinthians, after being born again, found out they would receive a resurrection body, and many regretted their salvation. The idea of another body after death was repulsive to them.

The messages of 1 Corinthians are basic, simple but explanations are needed to understand it.

Chapter 1-3 – Divisions caused by strife.

Chapter 3 – Carnality and the resulting Judgement Seat of Christ.

Chapter 5 – Church Discipline.

Chapter 6 – Lawsuits, sexual immorality.

Chapter 7 – Marriage, divorce, and remarriage.

Chapter 8 – Doubtful things.

Chapter 10 – Idolatry.

Chapter 11 – Communion service – its order and importance.

Chapter 12 – Gifts of the Holy Spirit, offices of Jesus Christ, and operations of God.

Chapter 13 – The importance of love toward God and each other.

Chapter 14 – Order of church service, preaching of the word, and the Holy Spirit gifts.

Chapter 15 – The Resurrection of Jesus and the Church

1. The resurrection is the most important part of the work of Jesus in our salvation.
 - a. The cross did not save us. It removed the problem – our sins.

- b. The resurrection saved us. It gave us the answer after the problem was removed.
- c. The empty tomb is the answer to the empty cross.
- d. The answer – the empty tomb gave us was eternal.
- 2. The most important holiday we honor is not Christmas, but Easter.
- 3. We should wear a rock with a hole in it as jewelry, not an empty cross.

Resurrection Background: Verses 1-4

“Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, 2 by which also you are (are not were) saved (daily salvation, deliverance, sanctification), if you hold fast (unless you have forgotten) that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.

3 For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,”

Each part of the work of Jesus is found in the Old Testament and the gospels.

- 1. Jesus Died for Our Sins – Genesis 3:15, Psalms 22:1-21, Psalms 69, Isaiah 53:1-9, Matthew 20:18-19, Luke 24:46.
- 2. Jesus Was Buried and Rose Again – Isaiah 53:9, Isaiah 53:10, Jonah 2:10.

Resurrection Order

- 1. All are raised at the end of the age – their dispensation
- 2. Resurrection order:
 - a. Jesus was raised from the dead after three days in the grace.
 - b. Jesus comes for the Church and the dead of the Church Age at the end of the Church Age.
 - c. Those who died before the cross (Old Testament) saints are resurrected with the Tribulation saints at the end of the Tribulation.
 - d. The Millennial saints will receive a resurrection body at the end of the Millennium.

Eyewitnesses of the Resurrection of Jesus and the Resurrection Appearances of Jesus: Verses 5-11

These appearances are not in chronological order:

- 1. Peter
- 2. The 2 on the road to Emmaus
- 3. A group without Thomas
- 4. A group with Thomas
- 5. To over 500
- 6. James

7. Disciples at Galilee
8. Disciples at the Mount of Olives
9. Paul

“And that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve.”

The Corinthians knew Peter and would accept his testimony (1:2). The twelve – a technical term for the remainder of the disciples minus Judas.

“6 After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remains to the present, but some have fallen asleep.”

This was probably the last group to see Jesus on the Mount of Olives before Jesus left.

“7 After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles.”

James was one of Jesus’ brothers (Matthew 13:55). He wrote the book of James and was head of the Jerusalem church.

All of the apostles were in the upper room and at Galilee.

“8 Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time (abnormally born, saved from abortion)” (Acts 9:3-5).

“9 For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy 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; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.”

God’s grace made Paul what he is today – the greatest of all apostles. Grace took him from persecutor of the church to its greatest promoter.

“Therefore, whether it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.”

The problem was not with the preacher, Paul, or anyone else. It was not whether the information was a lie or not. The issue was the Corinthians believed the message from the ones who were sent (Romans 10:14).

Resurrection Review

1. Paul faced opposition to resurrection from Jews and Greeks.
 - a. The Sadducee’s thought resurrection was heresy.
 - b. The Greeks thought resurrection was repulsive.
2. The thought of a resurrection body complicated the thinking of the Corinthians who saw the soul as beautiful and the body as evil.
3. Paul will now use debaters’ techniques to show the Greeks his argument for resurrection, assuming them right to prove them wrong.

4. Glorification is another name for resurrection. God looks far ahead in time then makes His plans. He already sees us in resurrected bodies (Romans 8:29-30).

The Importance of the Resurrection: Verses 12-22

“12 Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you (Corinthian believers) say that there is no resurrection of the dead?”

Paul has already told them he preached the resurrection and they believed it. He also told them of many resurrection witnesses, including himself who saw Jesus raised from the dead.

“13 But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen.”

Paul is now assuming them to be right to scripturally prove them wrong. “Let’s assume for a moment there is no resurrection for anyone. So, it has to be assumed Jesus was not raised.”

This would now mean the witnesses were lying. It is difficult to deceive that many people. This must have all been an illusion if not a lie. If it is not true, why didn’t Peter go back to fishing and Matthew to collecting taxes?

“14 And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty (a lie) and your faith is also empty (a lie).”

Jesus was not raised to justify us, but because we were already justified.

“Who was delivered up because of our offenses and was raised because of our justification.”
Romans 4:25

1. If there is no resurrection you are believing in someone who is still in the grave. If this is true, there is no justification.
2. Resurrection proves our justification.
3. You confessed the resurrection to be saved (Romans 10:9-10). If there is no resurrection – there is no salvation – because you confessed something which did not happen and does not exist.

“15 Yes (moreover), and we (all who witnessed) are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up—if in fact the dead do not rise.”

If God the Father said He raised up Jesus, then God is a liar. This is blasphemy.

“16 For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen.”

If believers who have died do not have a resurrection, then Jesus was not resurrected.

“17 And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!”

Verse 14 – Our preaching is in vain.

Verse 17 – Your faith is also in vain.

No resurrection. No salvation. You are deceived. So, you are still sinners.

“18 Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.”

“Fallen asleep” is a term used for believers only who have died. Sinners have died and are dead. Believers have fallen asleep. If someone falls asleep, they are not dead, but awaiting the time to wake up (1 Corinthians 11:30, 1 Thessalonians 4:14).

Our resurrection is our time to wake up. Our alarm is the shout, the voice of the angel, and the trumpet of God.

If there is no resurrection, then there is nothing past the grave. They have ceased to exist.

“19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.”

Even if it were possible to be saved in this life and then there were no life after, we would be most miserable.

The best part of Christianity is yet to come.

1. The Holy Spirit is only the down payment of eternity.
2. This natural life is temporary, and heaven is eternal.
3. Our rewards for our life lived on earth, in heaven, are eternal (1 Peter 1:4).
4. If there is no resurrection for Jesus, there is no resurrection for us and there is nothing after death. This life is all there is. This is the ultimate conclusion of no resurrection.

“20 But now Christ is risen from the dead and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.”

Since Paul has totally destroyed the argument against resurrection, there is only one conclusion – Jesus is resurrected and is alive.

Firstfruits is a feast of Israel in which the priests walked through the fields of grain and waved the first stalks of grain before the Lord. It was a guarantee the rest of the crops would be good.

The tithe is our firstfruits. It is the guarantee the rest of our finances are blessed and good and a guarantee of a great increase.

Jesus was crucified on Passover but was raised from the dead on Firstfruits.

Jesus is the Firstfruits – our guarantee of our:

1. New Birth
2. Sonship
3. Heirship
4. Priesthood

5. Entrance and citizenship into heaven
6. Position and authority over Satan and demons
7. Resurrection body

“21 For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead.”

1. A man brought mankind into this mess.
2. A man had to get mankind out of this mess.
3. Adam, a man, brought us into spiritual death.
4. Jesus, a man, brought us out of spiritual death.

“22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.”

Not only are we alive at the point of salvation, but we will also be made alive at our resurrection – the rapture.

We are spiritually dead or alive based on who we are in. Like a branch on a tree, we are born in Adam and born into spiritual death. We need to be born again and be “in Christ.” We have no choice to be in Adam, but we can choose to be in Christ.

Jesus’ resurrection guarantees a resurrection for both saints who have died and for us, the living, at Jesus’ appearing (1 Thessalonians 4:14)

Resurrection Ranks: Verses 23-28

“23 But each one in his own order (rank, battalion): Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ’s at His coming.”

1. Resurrection for any group comes at the end of their age.
2. Resurrection includes a resurrection body.

Five Orders of Resurrection

1. Jesus was the first resurrected – the Firstfruits.
2. The rapture – resurrection – of the Church at the end of the Church Age.
3. Old Testament saints and those saved during the Tribulation.
4. Millennial Saints.
5. Sinners from all ages just before the Great White Throne.

“24 Then comes the end (of the Millennium), when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power.”

1. Jesus in His resurrection, rapture of the Church, second coming, progressively puts all of Satan’s kingdom and works under His feet.
2. This will finally undo all that Adam did to the earth and the world’s system.

“25 For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet.”

1. The final reign of the Lord, before the eternity of eternities, will be the Millennium.
2. After the millennium will be the Great White Throne at which time the end of all enemies will come to pass.

“26 The last enemy that will be destroyed is death (physical).”

1. All other enemies, including spiritual death, and Satan himself, will have been handled.
2. Physical death will be gone because the redeemed of all ages will have resurrection bodies.

“27 For “He has put all things under His feet.” But when He says, “all things are put under Him,” it is evident (evident) that He who put all things under Him is excepted (the exception).”

1. Even Jesus’ defeat of Satan and then ruling the Church, Jesus has remained in submission to the Father.
2. It is obvious, the Father has always been, is today, and will always be the highest ranking member of the godhead.

“28 Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.”

What is a Resurrection Body: Verses 29-34?

Review

1. The Corinthians and resurrection.
2. Paul has just finished a section telling them of the importance of resurrection to the Christian life.
3. Paul is now concluding his argument.

“29 Otherwise, what will they do who are baptized for the dead, if the dead do not rise at all? Why then are they baptized for the dead?”

Baptism is one of three rituals for the church age: 1. Communion, 2. Anointing Oil, 3. Water Baptism. The replaced the many rituals of the Old Testament which were fulfilled by the life, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.

Water baptism symbolizes our identification with the work of Jesus in death, burial, and resurrection. It symbolizes our death with Jesus and our resurrection in the new birth with Him.

Paul also brings out that it represents the coming resurrection of the Church Age believers. When we are baptized, we are observed by the saints who have gone on and tells of the coming rapture of the Church when we will all (alive and dead) receive a resurrection body.

Until the resurrection of the Church, the family of God is divided – part on earth, and part in heaven (Ephesians 3:14).

“30 And why do we stand in jeopardy every hour?”

Paul and his team were always in constant danger in each city he preached. If life is all there is, why spend it on constant danger of death at the hands of the religious crowd? If we only have hope in this life, why not make the most of every minute and enjoy life?

“31 I affirm (take an oath), by the boasting in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.”

Death threats were not something Paul faced on some occasions. It was daily. The threats and fear of death were almost as bad as dying itself. The possibility of dying accompanied Paul wherever he went (2 Corinthians 11:23-33).

“32 If, in the manner of men (human viewpoint), I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantage is it to me? If the dead do not rise, “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!”

In Ephesus, the gladiators fought with lions in the arena and many of them died. Paul likens his spiritual battles and suffering to those men. Why would Paul put up with constant death threats if there was no resurrection in the future? Why not just spend the rest of life partying?

“33 Do not be deceived: “Evil company corrupts good habits.”

The Corinthians have been listening to those who choose to disagree with Paul and the word of God. Paul lets them know, who you hang around with is important. If evil friends can corrupt your morals, good friends can raise your morals and bring you blessings.

“34 Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame.”

Like the prodigal son, come to yourself, wake up to the life of righteousness (Ephesians 5:14).

The wake-up call for the Corinthians is to separate from the evil companions who have corrupted their morals – the holiness of their lifestyle.

Sowing, Reaping, and Resurrection: Verses 35-44

“35 But someone will say, “How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?”

Like so many other passages in 1 Corinthians, Paul is now going to answer the questions the believers have been asking of the wrong people (1 Corinthians 7:1).

Paul will go into a discussion of the resurrection body we will all receive and help us understand the theology behind our new body.

The Resurrection Body of Jesus

1. It was a rebirth of His previous body.
2. It could appear and disappear at will.

3. It could walk through walls and solid objects.
4. It could travel through outer space.
5. It could eat and drink yet did not have to.
6. It could breathe yet did not need to.
7. It was solid and could be touched.

“36 Foolish one, what you sow is not made alive unless it dies.”

Paul calls them fools, not because they are stupid, but because they are ignorant, but can be taught.

All of the word of God revolves around sowing and reaping – Mark 4:13-14, *“And He said to them, “Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables? 14 The sower sows the word.”*

1. God is good.
2. Satan is evil.
3. God gives.
4. Satan steals what God has given.
5. The hearing ear is the key to the parable.
6. God, Who gives, is not the key, nor is it Satan who steals.
7. The seed – the word – never changes. The word always works.
8. The ground – heart of the hearer – is the key.

“37 And what you sow, you do not sow that body that shall be, but mere grain—perhaps wheat or some other grain.”

“38 But God gives it a body as He pleases, and to each seed its own body.”

Sowing, Reaping, and the Resurrection: Verses 39-49

“39 All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of animals, another of fish, and another of birds.”

1. There is no evolution. There are walls between the species.
2. Man’s flesh is different than any flesh of: a. animals, b. fish, c. birds.

“40 There are also celestial bodies and terrestrial bodies; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.”

1. There are also spiritual and natural bodies.
2. Men differ in glory, brilliance of position, and authority on earth.
 - a. Kings, governors, and business leaders.
 - b. School teachers, truck drivers, and cashiers.
3. The glory of heaven is different also.
 - a. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

- b. Angels, Cherubs, Seraphs, rank and file angels.

“41 There is one glory (brilliance) of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory.”

1. The natural glory is as different as the Sun, moon, and stars. All are different in brightness.
2. The spiritual kingdom is also as different as the Sun, moon, and stars.
3. In heaven, our brilliance will be determined by our rewards. Every believer will be as different as the stars - from bright to dim.

“42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown (planted) in corruption, it is raised (reaped) in incorruption.”

1. Much of the Bible is understood by sowing and reaping (Mark 4:13, Genesis 8:22).
2. When a seed is planted it grows by degrees. The same is the daily Christian life – until resurrection (Mark 4:28-29).
3. Our physical body is the seed sown and the resurrection body is the harvest.
 - a. Our physical body is under the curse from Adam and has many dishonorable titles.
 - b. The resurrection body has no curse and will be rid of all dishonorable things.

“43 It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power.”

1. The natural body is dishonorable to God and will not inherit heaven or eternal life.
2. It will be raised from the ground in great glory capable of rulership and fellowship with God.
3. The natural body is also weak in physical strength, by creation lower than angels.
4. Our resurrection body will be by creation above angels and above them in strength.

“44 It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.”

1. Our physical body is called “natural” because it is made of nature – dust.
2. Since the dust was cursed and all that came from it, our body is the part of our being still under the curse.
3. The resurrection body is spirit made tangible.
4. Our body is a seed, and our spirit man is the heart of the seed.
5. Our physical body is called:
 - a. Corruption (vs. 42).
 - b. Dishonor (vs. 43).
 - c. Weakness (vs. 44).
 - d. Natural (vs. 44).
6. You always reap more than what you sow. The resurrection body is a 100-fold return on the natural body.
7. Our resurrection body is called:

- a. Incorruption
- b. Glory
- c. Power
- d. Spiritual

“45 And so it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being.” (Genesis 2:7) The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.”

1. Adam was alive but could not pass that life on.
2. Jesus is alive and does pass that life on to us.

“46 However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual.”

1. You cannot have a resurrection body first. You must begin with a natural body.
2. No one begins with a resurrection body:
 - a. Even Adam and Jesus did not begin with a resurrection body, but a natural body free from the curse.
 - b. We have a body which has the curse but will one day have a resurrection body just like Jesus’.
 - c. The usual way to a resurrection body will be to go through death. The only exception will be those alive in the rapture generation.

“47 The first man (Adam) was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is the Lord from heaven.”

1. Adam’s body came from the earth. After the curse entered into the earth, Adam became sensual, controlled by his soul
2. Jesus’ resurrection body is from God, made of spirit, and its source is heaven, not earth.

“48 As was the man of dust, so also are those who are made of dust; and as is the heavenly Man, so also are those who are heavenly.”

1. This is a contrast between our natural body and resurrection body.
2. Even believers in a natural body are earthy, pressured by the senses to follow the world.
3. Like Jesus, our resurrection body will be from heaven and no longer possessed with the nature of the flesh or the pressures of a natural body.
4. The nature of the flesh is in our bodies:
 - a. Romans 6:6 – body of sin.
 - b. Romans 6:12 – let sin reign in your mortal body.
 - c. Romans 6:13 – do not yield you members to sin.
 - d. Romans 7:5 – sin which worked in our members.
 - e. Romans 7:23 – law of sin in my members.
 - f. Colossians 3:5 – mortify your members, fornication...
 - g. James 4:1 – lust which war in your members.

“49 And as we have borne (carried through life) the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man.”

1. The image of the earthy, earthy body is all that is contained in the fall of Adam.
 - a. Aging
 - b. Failing strength
 - c. Wrinkles
 - d. Prone to sickness
 - e. Temptations
2. The image of the heavenly totally excludes the nature of the flesh and the curse of Adam.
 - a. Perfect age – permanent
 - b. Maximum strength – permanent
 - c. Perfect skin
 - d. No more sickness
 - e. No temptations

The Rapture of the Church: Verses 50-58

“50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption.”

1. We cannot go to heaven in our natural state.
2. At physical death, the Christian leaves the flesh and blood, corruptible body behind.
3. To go to heaven, we must be absent of our body, or be in a body that can exist in heaven.

“51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—”

1. The rapture of the Church was an Old Testament mystery.
2. Not every Christian will have died by the rapture.
3. Some will be alive yet be changed with those who are sleeping.
4. There **must** be a rapture for us to join God in heaven.
5. There **must** be a rapture to unite the family (Ephesians 3:14-15).

“52 In a moment, (instant) in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet (last assembly for the Church age). For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”

1. The dead are absent from the body, but present with the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:8).
2. The living are anticipating death, but will be instantly changed with the dead and given a resurrection body.
3. The only other instant change we experience is the new birth.

The Rapture of the Church

“Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, 2 not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. 3 Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, 4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

5 Do you not remember that when I was still with you, I told you these things? 6 And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. 7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. 8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.” 2 Thessalonians 2:1-8

“For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.” Philippians 3:20-21

“When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.” Colossians 3:4

“Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore, the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. 2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. 3 And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.” 1 John 3:1-3

1. Knowing of the rapture does not make us want to sin but to live righteously.
2. Knowing of the rapture also produces a fervor in us to win the lost.

Comparison of Rapture and Second Coming

The Second Advent is primarily taught in Old Testament, the four gospels, and the first chapter of Acts.

Acts 1:11 *“...in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.”*

Zechariah 14:4-5 *“His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, from east to west, making a very large valley; half of the mountain shall move toward the north and half of it toward the south. Then you shall flee through My mountain valley, for the mountain valley shall reach to Azal. Yes, you shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Thus, the Lord my God will come, and all the saints with You.”*

The Difference – Rapture and Second Coming

The Rapture:

1. Jesus comes FOR His saints.
2. Jesus APPEARS in the sky.
3. Only the SAINTS see and hear Him.
4. Begins a time of JUDGMENT on earth.

Second Coming:

1. Jesus comes WITH His saints
2. Jesus TOUCHES the earth.
3. EVERY eye sees Him, EVERY knee will bow.
4. Begins a time of PEACE on earth.

The Mount of Olives will split and be cast into the sea at the Second Coming.

1. Zechariah 14:8-9
2. Mark 11:23

“53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.”

“54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.”

“55 O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?”

“56 The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.”

“57 But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

“58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast (stabilized), immovable (settled), always abounding (increasing) in the work of the Lord, knowing (the key is knowledge) that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”