

I CORINTHIANS: HANDLING BELIEVERS' PRACTICAL PROBLEMS

XVII. Adhering To Belief In The Bodily Resurrection, 1 Corinthians 15:1-58

C. The Believer's Resurrection Body

(1 Corinthians 15:35-49)

I. Introduction

- A. The people Paul discipled in Corinth lived in a city that was known for its immorality, alcoholism and worldly pursuits (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, "Introduction to the First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians: The City of Corinth," p. 1619), so the formidable influence of the city's culture on the Corinthian believers left Paul addressing "(a)berrant beliefs and practices of an astonishing variety" in his letters to them, Ibid.
- B. However, in a vision Paul received from God as he ministered at Corinth in Acts 18:10b NIV, God told him, "I have many people in this city," so Paul was to keep on ministering regardless of the trials he faced there.
- C. In 1 Corinthians 15:35-49, Paul described a believer's resurrection body, for deniers of the resurrection asked how it could occur, and what was the nature of a resurrected body. We view the passage for our insight:

II. The Believer's Resurrection Body, 1 Corinthians 15:35-49 ESV.

- A. Having presented the case for belief in the resurrection, Paul anticipated objections from those readers who denied the resurrection, including their question as to how the dead body could be raised, and with what kind of body could a resurrected person have once the current body had decayed to dust in physical death, v. 35.
- B. Paul dismissed these objections as being foolish, for nature itself illustrates the fact that what seed one sows does not produce a living plant unless the seed itself dies, 1 Corinthians 15:36. Also, the seed that one sows is not the body that will sprout from it, for the bare kernel of wheat or some other grain that is sown is different from the plant that sprouts from the seed that is sown, 1 Corinthians 15:37. Thus, God gives a body as He has decided, and to each seed its own kind of body that sprouts from the seed, 1 Corinthians 15:38.
- C. Paul then noted the wide variety of bodies that exist in the current creative order, 1 Corinthians 15:39-41:
 - 1. Human beings have one kind of flesh, animals have another kind, birds and fish also have their own unique kinds of physical bodies, 1 Corinthians 15:39.
 - 2. There are also heavenly bodies as distinct from earthly bodies of humans, animals, birds and fish, v. 40.
 - 3. Then, among the heavenly bodies, there are different kinds of glory – the glory of the sun, another kind of glory of the moon, another kind of glory of the stars, and the stars differ from one another in glory, v. 41.
- D. Similarly, the resurrection body has different characteristics from one's current body, 1 Corinthians 15:42-49:
 - 1. The body that is "sown" in physical death is perishable, but what is raised is imperishable, 1 Cor. 15:42.
 - 2. The body that is "sown" in physical death is sown in dishonor, for death is the product of sin (cf. 1 Cor. 15:21-22), but the believer's body is raised in honor without a sin nature, 1 Corinthians 15:43a, 54-57.
 - 3. The body that is "sown" in physical death is sown in weakness due to the presence of the sin nature, but it is raised in power due to its liberation from sin and its debilitating effects, 1 Corinthians 15:43b.
 - 4. The body that is "sown" is a natural body, but it is raised a spiritual body (1 Corinthians 15:44a) with the capacity to appear and disappear, to pass through walls or to stand on physical structures as Christ's body could do, cf. Luke 24:36-43. Paul added that there is a physical body and also a spiritual body, and he referred to Genesis 2:7 to show that the first Adam was made a living soul in a physical body, but the last Adam, Christ (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:21-22) was made a life-giving spirit, 1 Corinthians 15:44b-45.
 - 5. Having mentioned the contrast between the first Adam and Christ, Paul discussed this at length, v. 46-49:
 - a. The spiritual body is not the first body, but the natural is first, and then the spiritual, 1 Corinthians 15:46.
 - b. The first man, Adam, was made from the earth, a man of dust, but the second Adam is from heaven, v. 47.
 - c. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven, 1 Corinthians 15:48.
 - d. Just as we believers have borne the image of the man of dust in the first Adam, so also will we believers bear the image of the second Adam Christ, the man of heaven, 1 Corinthians 15:49.

Lesson: *Though we do not know the particulars involved, we DO know that our current bodies that are affected by the presence of sin natures is weak, unglorified, corrupt and transitory where our resurrection bodies are without sin and very blessed with power, glory, incorruptibility, and they are eternal.*

Application: *(1) May we believers believe in our bodily resurrection of blessing in deliverance from our current state. (2) May we labor for the life to come and God's reward instead of living for this world, 1 John 2:15-17.*