

To the Church in Corinth



DailyLife
Five Oaks Church

Week 14: July 16–22, 2016

Day 1”

July 18



Pray | *Ask your Heavenly Father to give you a bold witness for Christ.*

IF THE DEAD aren't raised. . . .

As we saw last week, there were some members of the Corinthian church who believed there was no resurrection from the dead. They did not understand how foundational to the faith the Resurrection was. Paul continues with his defense of the Resurrection. His approach may seem very much as a father would toward his children, and some may sense how frustrated he seemed to be.

In his defense of the Resurrection, Paul asks a peculiar question: “What do people mean by being baptized on behalf of the dead?” Scholars agree this is a difficult verse, and they aren't sure of what the practice was that it describes. Whatever it was, it appears to have been short-lived.



Read | *1 Corinthians 15:29–34*



Reflect | Choose one or more of the following questions for reflection.

Paul is writing this letter from Ephesus. He mentions that he “fought with beasts in Ephesus.” Many believe this refers to a riot against his preaching that occurred there, which was instigated by a silver smith named Demetrius. The pain of this may have been fresh on Paul’s mind. Why would he continue to preach Jesus and the Resurrection, and suffer so much for it, if the gospel was not true? Publicly sharing his faith almost always caused Paul pain, but he continued to do so because he knew its value, and he knew its author. Paul’s life begs the question for each of us: “If I believe, am I willing to suffer for my faith?”

“Bad company ruins good morals.” This is a quote from a Greek poet named Menander. Paul sees that the Corinthians are allowing their faith to be muddied by the anti-Christ wave that moved through society rather than powerfully influencing that society for Christ. How does our society impact your walk with Christ?

Day 2^o

July 19



Pray | *Pray for the hope of eternal life to grow more and more in your heart.*

THE RESURRECTED BODY . . .

In the passage you will read today, Paul foresees the next objection of the Corinthians who doubt the Resurrection: “How will the dead be raised? What kind of bodies will they have?” (verse 35 NLT). Paul uses this as an opportunity to teach. Most of what we learn about the gospel refers to a transformed life, lived out in bodies that are decaying. However, these verses give us a glimpse of something new: the promise of a body that will never, never die!



Read | *1 Corinthians 15:35–49*



Reflect | Choose one or more of the following questions for reflection.

God's choice, individually fitting for each of us:

- Different degrees of glory
- Sown perishable—raised imperishable
- Sown in dishonor—raised in glory
- Sown in weakness—raised in power
- Sown natural—raised in spiritual
- Born earthly—raised heavenly

What do you think this might be like for you?

After Jesus was raised from the dead, he made it clear that he was not a ghost. He asked his disciples to touch him. The Scripture says he had “flesh and bones.” He ate broiled fish in their presence, yet he appeared and disappeared at will. He had a spiritual body, the capabilities of which we do not yet fully grasp. However, this is the type of body God's children will inherit. What will you miss the least about the body you have now?

Day 3rd

July 20



Pray | *Ask your heavenly Father to open your eyes to his Kingdom.*

FROM FRAILTY to forever . . .

Have you experienced frailty with your current body? Many of us have struggled with disabilities and unexpected, unwanted disease, or if not, at least we've found limitations that seem to hold us back. Even if we are the best at something, ten years later we can't do that thing as well as we once did and eventually can't do it at all! With proper nutrition and exercise, we might be able to slow the process, but from the moment we are born, these bodies of ours are all heading toward death.

In today's verses, Paul shares a mystery, giving us the hope of something much better.



Read | *1 Corinthians 15:50–58*



Reflect | Choose one or more of the following questions for reflection.

Paul says, “Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.” If not, then how do we who are flesh and blood enter God’s kingdom? The Scripture tells us that we must be born again, or born from above. This is the supernatural work of God’s Spirit, which occurs through faith in Jesus’ death for us so that our sins are forgiven, and in his resurrection, we are made new. Through this faith, that same power that raised Christ from the dead works in you. You are born into God’s family, no longer just flesh and blood but truly a new creation in Christ. If you have not done so, will you receive Christ as your Lord and Savior? If you are a Christian already, rejoice before God for this “unspeakable gift” that you have been given.

For believers, the last trumpet will be the end of the “already, not yet” that we wrestle with every day. All our physical struggles will be no more. The new creation will be completed. In light of this, Paul makes it clear that we ought to be “steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.” Meditate on and apply verse 58 to your life. How can you use your gifts and talents to “[abound] in the work of the Lord”?

Day 4

July 21



Pray | *Ask God to reveal himself to you as you study today.*

A NEW world coming . . .

So far this week, we have discussed the new bodies that we will receive. It seemed reasonable, therefore, to show a little of where the Scriptures say we will live. Often Christians think of “going to heaven,” but this is not the final destination of believers. God has other wonderful plans for us to be truly human in a much more full sense than we can now imagine.



Read | *Revelation 21:1-4, 23-26*



Reflect | Choose one or more of the following questions for reflection.

The new creation does not stop with our new bodies, but there will be a new heaven and a new earth— for us! Yes, it will be an earth where there will be no evil, one in which God will openly dwell with us. We see again in these Scriptures that death will be eliminated, along with mourning, crying and pain.

In verses 23–26, we see there still will be rulers (kings) and nations in this new world, yet in proper order, without sin or evil. This passage seems to imply that we may have jobs—unimaginable ways to use our gifts and talents—challenges, and many other things to enjoy. It is said that “no one is good except God alone” (Mark 10:18) and “every good gift and every perfect gift is from above” (James 1:17). God made the good in this world. How do you think the new creation will be better? List a few ways.

If you want to reign with Christ in this new world, if you endure, here and now, not shrinking back in our faith, then you will reign with him, the Scriptures say. If you pursue righteousness, there will be some suffering. Whether it is spiritual, mental (you do have a spiritual enemy), or physical, are you willing to face these and endure with Christ leading you?

Day 5''

July 22



Pray | *Ask God for genuine concern for those who don't know Christ.*

LOST . . .

The apostle Paul said, "Note then the kindness and the severity of God" (Romans 11:22), and in another place, "I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). It is tempting to ignore the fact that not all will take part in the wonderful future that God has planned for his children.

Today's reading lists the persons who will not be there: the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters and all liars. All these are fallen human attributes that make our current world so troubling.



Read | *Revelation 21:8*



Reflect | Choose one or more of the following questions for reflection.

Look at the list in verse 8. It doesn't take long to see that without Christ, none of us would qualify for eternal life. Will any work on your part fully pay for a changed heart? No. The only way to escape this destiny is the free gift of God. It cost much more than anything we could ever give or do to purchase our release and receive a new nature. Whether in thought, word, or actions, we have all been, by very nature, evil. Any good we have done will not weigh in the balance toward eternity. The only price high enough was the life of God's Son, the perfect and spotless Lamb dying in our place. In what are you putting your faith for eternal life?

The place described as the second death, a lake that burns with fire and sulfur, whether a metaphor or real, is a place where, unlike this world, there will be no weighing of good and evil. There will be no good. It will no longer be a creation that God once called good, which he seeks to redeem, but a place apart from his presence, devoted to destruction. Only new creatures will live in the new creation. What can you do to spread the news of God's free gift?

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