

The Necessity and Nature of the Resurrection

1 Corinthians 15:12-58

Kevin Laser, January 2, 2022

Well, good morning, it's good to see you. Our family has been away to visit my wife's family in Iowa for the last few weeks. And so it's really good for us to be back here and to fellowship along with you again. I'm just glad to be back here with you. I'm really excited to talk about why I want us to look at in First Corinthians 15 today, because what I want to do is talk about something that's new, which is what we often do at a New Year's sort of a service, or sermon. We talk about anticipating good and better things, good and better days. And so I thought, well, what good and what new do we have to look forward to? And my heart was drawn to First Corinthians 15, because as we read in the Scripture, it's all about the resurrection. And it's focusing mostly on our resurrection, founded on the Lord Jesus Christ. It's a whole chapter that Paul devotes to giving us the hope and giving us the truth. And giving us the reminder that one day, there is a day of resurrection coming and that's going to be a great and glorious day. And so my heart's desire is for you to be encouraged with that truth today, and hold on to that for the year. We live in a time where everybody, a lot of people are afraid of dying and different things like that. And, yeah, one day, we're all going to die; we're all going to have to go through that door. But that's merely going to be a door to being with God forever. But it's even better than that. Because the people that are dead now, they don't have their resurrected bodies. But there's a day coming when everybody is going to get a resurrected body. And so I want us to look at some passages here, some particular verses, as we unwrap and unpack this amazing gift that God has given to us. He has explained it in such amazing detail here.

Paul begins this chapter in the first 11 verses, we didn't read them, but in the first 11 verses, Paul talks about how when Jesus was resurrected, He appeared to many, it says that He appeared to Peter and He appeared to the disciples. He appeared to Mary Magdalene. (Some of these people we're going to talk about later in the service.) And He even appeared to hundreds of people all at once. And he starts off this whole chapter about our future resurrection by saying that Jesus, when He was raised from the dead, with His resurrected body, He appeared to many people. And so that's how He starts this whole section here.

But not everybody in the church was necessarily agreeing with this resurrection business. And some are questioning it. Some were wondering, I'm not so sure about this. And he says here, "Now if Christ is preached that he has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection among the dead?" In other words, we know that Christ was raised from the dead, but how is it that some of you say that there is no future resurrection for us? This doesn't make sense. You see the people they were probably influenced by Sadducees who believed that there was no resurrection. So there's some influence, probably from them. But there was probably also very secular Greek philosophy influence that they were affected by as well. And the Greek philosophy was that the body is evil, everything is evil. And so if the body is evil, why would God give us a resurrected body because it's just going to come continue and perpetuate the evilness. And you can't do that in heaven. And so there's a sense in which they were influenced by a lot of this false thinking. And so Paul addresses this here. And he makes it very clear that if there is no resurrection of the dead in our future, then there can't be a resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. If Christ is not raised, then our preaching, he says, is in vain, and your faith is also in vain. You see, if Christ wasn't raised from the dead, the apostles would be exposed as liars, the whole thing being exposed as a sham. And if we don't get a resurrection one day, the reality is Christ couldn't have been raised from the dead then. And we're blaspheming against God Himself, when we say that He was resurrected from the dead. If we say that there's no resurrection of the dead, in essence, we are saying that Christ was not

resurrected from the dead. And we are therefore also false witnesses. But in verse 16, a second time, Paul mentions that; he says, "If the dead are not raised, then not even Christ has been raised." Paul drives this point home in verse 16, where he wants us to see that you can't have one resurrection without the other. If one resurrection is true, they both have to be true. Take a coin. On a coin, how many sides are there? If I were to show you a coin and say, I've got one side only, sort of like I'd say there's only the resurrection of Christ, or there's only the resurrection of us in the future. You'd say, turn it around, look, the other side, there's a different picture there too. The resurrection of Christ is sort of one side of the coin. And by default, our resurrection has to happen as well.

Likewise, if there's any resurrection, ours or Christ's, then there are by default two resurrections. And Paul's pointing this: because Christ was resurrected, we too will be resurrected. He's showing that really Christ's resurrection is a pledge. It's a proof. It's an evidence. It's an actual foreshadowing of our resurrection that is to come one day. A resurrection is actually necessary because Christ was raised from the dead and our resurrection is necessary because Christ was raised from the dead. If Christ, though, had not been raised from the dead, what would the outcome be? What would the result be? How would that play out? He tells us here, he says that our faith would be in vain, it would be empty and void. He says, our faith would rest. Our faith rests on the power of Christ to overcome sin. And if He wasn't raised from the dead to overcome sin and the power of death, it's all in vain. If Christ had not been raised from the dead, He says, you and I, we would still be in our sins still be stuck in our sins. We would, in other words, still be under the condemnation and the wrath that is yet to come.

He also says, though, that our preaching would be in vain. Now think about this for a second. If Christ was not raised from the dead, and all preaching is in vain, tabulate all the sermons, all the Bible lessons at home that have happened for the last couple of 1000 years. Paul says, it's all in vain. If Christ was not raised from the dead. But he also says something absolutely remarkable. He says, If Christ was not raised from the dead, we perish. Which basically means we would be annihilated. That's the end. If there's no resurrection, lights out, consciousness ends. It's over. But because we have a resurrection to come, we have lots to look forward to. And we have life to look forward to with God and Heaven.

He also says two more things. He says, if Christ was not raised from the dead, we would be guilty of giving a false testimony against God, of speaking wrongly against him. This theology, this truth, this reality, and Scripture, which comes in so many places, he says, If this is not true, we're giving a false testimony. This is just not some sort of a secondary issue. This is foundational to our faith, isn't it? And he says, if we are good, he says, if we don't hold to the resurrection of Christ, and don't hold to the resurrection of ourselves in the future, if Christ was not raised from the dead, we are guilty. Think about that, we would be guilty, and have to stand before God and be held accountable before Him of speaking wrongly about Him so so so often.

And then he ends by saying this, "We would be pitied of all the people in the world." Of all the people groups that you could say, "How unfortunate it is to be in your situation." He says, "We, of all people, are to be most pitied." Because we put all of our hope, all of our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and His resurrection. And if he wasn't raised from the dead, we are to be the most pitied. And Paul concludes this line of thinking a little bit later in verse 32. He says this: If the dead are not raised, in other words, if the resurrection is not coming, he says, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." It doesn't matter how you live if there is no resurrection to come. It doesn't matter how we end up in our life. So go ahead, live however you want. In other words, he says, live for today for

tomorrow really has nothing to offer you if there is no resurrection to come. There's nothing after death to live for and translated it means, abandon old scruples and live it up if there's no resurrection that is coming.

However, Paul admonishes them in verse 34, he says this, he says, “become righteously sober minded, and stop sinning.” Actually, let me just back up to verse 33. He says, “Do not be deceived, bad company corrupts good morals; become righteously sober minded and stop sinning for some have no knowledge of God, and I speak this to your shame.” Theology matters, what we believe matters, because here Paul is addressing the fact that he has been influenced by a people group, or a theology or a way of thinking that says that there's no resurrection to come. And he says, “Bad company corrupts good morals.” Translated, we need to be careful what we feed ourselves with, right? We can go online and we can look up what does this preacher say? What does that theologian say? And we can read this book and read that magazine. And those are all good things. But we have to be careful what we put into ourselves, what we eat spiritually, what we're chewing on, what we're digesting, what we're adopting, what we're holding on to, and what we end up, therefore, preaching with our lives.

Let's go to verse 20 because this is a really interesting section here, where he talks about Christ's resurrection. He says in verse 20, “But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.” In the Old Testament, the Israelites were commanded to give a wave offering to God, after the Passover festival, is talking to them in Leviticus, chapter 23. And he says, “Have a Passover festival, celebrate.” And then he says, “After that Festival,” which is on a Saturday, he says, “On the Sunday, have a wave offering.” And with this wave offering, basically, you take the first of the produce, the first of the crop, the stuff that comes in, that's first, and he says, with the wave offering, you would pick it up and you would literally wave it up with your hands, wave it up to the sky, wave it up to the heavens. And so, in a sense, what that was, is a foreshadowing of the resurrection of Christ himself. Because you had on the Saturday the Passover festival, which celebrated and anticipated the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. And then a Sunday, the day after that the day in which Christ was raised from the dead. There's the wave offering. And so here it's saying that Christ is the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep of all those that are going to be resurrected, which is all of us. He explains: That's not the first fruits, the first one to have experienced that, to have the blessing of that is Christ Jesus Himself. He's the first fruit. We're coming later. We're sort of the second installment you could say. In Leviticus 23, God instructs Moses, and I'm just going to read this passage that I just want you to hear what it says. This is Leviticus 23:10, “Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, when you enter the land which I'm going to give to you and reap its harvest, then you shall bring in the sheaf of the first fruits of their harvest to the priest and he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, for you to be accepted. On the day after the Sabbath, the priest shall waive it.” Okay, so the significance of this is that this was a picture foreshadowing the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. First was the Passover, which foreshadowed the crucifixion of Christ. And then on the Sunday, the day after, was the foreshadow as the resurrection of Christ.

I wonder if, when Jesus was talking to His disciples along the road, remember when it says that He talked to them about what the Prophets said about Him? I wonder if this is one of those passages that He addressed with them. But if Christ is the first fruits, that implies there's more to come. Well, what about all the people in the Bible who were raised from the dead? We know the stories of all the people who were raised from the dead? What about them? What kind of a body did they get? We're talking about the resurrected body, but what kind of a body experience or resurrection experience was their experience? Well, Elijah raised a widow's son, remember, he laid himself over the body of the son of the widow, and prayed for him. And God, by His mercy, resurrected that boy who came back with a resurrected body that was still temporal. A little bit later, in second Kings chapter four Elijah raises the Shunammite son, same sort of a scenario, same sort of a setting, but again, a temporal body.

But there's this story...I'm going to read one verse, you don't know if you've heard it, but it's a really interesting, I think it's the most unusual. It is a story of a resurrection of somebody in the Old Testament And it says this in Second Kings chapter 13, verses 20 to 21, "Now it happened, that they were burying a man. And behold, they saw a marauding band, a band of bad people come in to do bad things. And they cast the man into the grave of Elijah." Okay, so they wanted to quickly get rid of the body, give them some honor, perhaps, and get him out of this dangerous situation. And, you know, preserve his body, I suppose. And then he says, "And the man touched the bones of Elijah, and he became alive and stood up on his feet." So there's an interesting story, but again, His resurrected body was a temporal one, he died again. Well, in the New Testament, Jesus raised lots of people from the dead. Remember, the coffin that was being brought down the road, and the widow. Jesus saw the situation, He had mercy and compassion. And He said, "I will raise you, I will bring you back to life." And he came back to life. Jesus raised the young daughter of Jairus, who was a leader in the synagogue. And then of course, we remember Lazarus, one of the best friends of Jesus that he spent lots of time with, and how Lazarus was dead in the tomb, and his body was actually beginning to stink. And Jesus took His time. It was a couple days later, that He came and brought him back to life. Jesus Himself did that. And then remember when Jesus was resurrected, how it says that many from the tombs were resurrected as well, there were many that came to life. And then there's Tabitha in the New Testament that the apostles healed.

So you've got eight people in the Bible, specifically, who you know, almost by name, some of them, who died, but they came back to life, and they had to die all over again, but didn't get a resurrected, glorified body. None of them received that glorified body that's imperishable. They all actually had to go through that death experience all over again. And the resurrection that Paul's talking about though, is a different kind. You see, Paul points out that death came through Adam. Adam, being our head or a representative of mankind who sinned and through his sin, death came to all mankind. First Corinthians chapter 15, verse 21, says this very simply: "For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead." You see, we all inherited our sin nature, our sinful tendency, our natural bent towards sin from Adam. That's what he gave to all of mankind. The disobedience of one brought death, but the obedience of another being Christ brings a great and marvelous resurrection.

Our resurrection is also necessary because Christ has been given the power over all authority and life in this universe. In verses 24 to 27, it says this, "Then comes the end, when He stands over the kingdom, over the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and all power, for He must reign and until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy to be abolished is death. For He has put all things in subjection under His feet. You see, there's a grand and glorious day coming when Christ is going to subdue all rule, all power, all authority that is opposed to Him. And that the last thing to be abolished, the last thing to be cast into hell itself is death.

Death itself, the concept, the ability, the reality, the possibility of death, because of sin, because the wages of sin is death. That's the last thing God is going to cast into the lake of fire; they will be seen no more, it will be a distant memory of the past. And with all authority, he will not only cast death into the lake of fire, but he will also grant to every Christian a new body that is fit for heaven. You see, God has given Christ all authority. And if He has all authority, so as to cast doubt and sin, into the lake of fire, whereby it will be abolished, does He not have the authority to give to us a resurrected body?

But that leads me to a question, when do we get this resurrected body? If this is a gift that we're sort of unpacking here today? So this is sort of like a spiritual Christmas gift, so to speak. When do we get this body? When does this resurrected body become ours? How do we get this body? A little later, we'll look at what do we need to do to get this body. Is there anything that we need to do to get this body?

Well, these bodies are going to be given to us at a very specific time. And there's a certain order to it because look at what it says in verse 23. It says, "But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming." So we're going to get our resurrected, glorified bodies at the coming of Christ. And we'll look at some of the verses that talk about that as well. But there's sort of the first installment where Christ was resurrected. And then there's us. We get our resurrected bodies. Turn with me to First Thessalonians chapter four, verse 13, because it really outlines a little bit more about this. And I want you to read this with your own eyes. Paul, here, again, is talking about the resurrection. He's talking about some other things too. But in First Thessalonians, chapter four, verse 13, to 18, it says this, he says, "But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who weren't asleep." In other words, those who are dead, "so that you will not grieve as those, as do the rest of those who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. And then we who are alive and remain, will be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. And so we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore, comfort one another, with these words."

First Christ gets resurrected, then those that are dead in Christ get resurrected, and those who are alive in Christ, when Christ returns, get resurrected. At the last trumpet in First Thessalonians, For the dead in Christ, they get to rise first, and then the Christians who are alive will be second. You see, even among the Christians, there is an order to when He gives the glorified bodies. Our God is the God of order. He's a God of structure. First, the Christians and then those who are alive. First, the dead in Christ, and then those who are alive afterwards.

But that leads me to another question. What is this body going to be like? We're talking about this glorified, resurrected body, what is it actually going to be like? Well, there's many ways that scripture talks about it, there's many ways that we talk about it. First of all, it calls it sometimes a heavenly body. It's a body that's fit for heaven. We'll talk about that in a minute, but it's a heavenly body. Secondly, it's a glorified body. You see, with this glorified body, we won't have any shame, we won't have any sinfulness, we won't want to hide anything.

And we will be perfect, and we will be fit to perfectly reflect the glory of God in heaven. Our glorified body will always perfectly reflect the glory of God in all of heaven. But it also talks about in our bodies as being imperishable. We know what perishable means...comes to an end. Well, our bodies are not going to perish, they will come to no end; we will never be looking for the prime of life. And we will never go past the prime of life with our glorified bodies. But it also says that our bodies are immortal, they will never die, they will never come to an end. And it also says that our bodies are spiritual. There is an aspect where we can look at each other here. And we can say we're all spiritual beings. And yet I can't see your spiritual part of you. I can see manifestations of that as you love one another and care for one another and fulfill the commands that the Lord is given to us. But we can only see the physical part. But in heaven, it may be that we see the spiritual part plus the physical part. And maybe that's maybe that means that in heaven, when we see the spiritual part of everybody, we won't need to

ask who they are, we will know who they are. Just an idea. But you see, our earthly body is one of weakness. And we're prone to sin with our bodies, we are susceptible to hunger and thirst and our spiritual bodies won't be in heaven. We can go for days without eating or drinking and still live. Because no matter what happens to us, nothing can kill you. Death is abolished. Small little viruses can kill in this world. But in heaven, nothing can kill our bodies. In Heaven, nothing can make our bodies malfunction. They'll always work perfectly. And Paul calls our bodies imperishable. There's nothing in all of heaven that can destroy us or bring an end to us, sickness and ailments, they're going to be a distant memory of the past, injuries or damage to the body, no more. But the most amazing thing is, while in our glorified body, we won't ever participate in sin. I think that's going to be the most amazing thing. As amazing as our bodies are going to be, we won't have you know, sickness and all that stuff. The most amazing thing is, we're not going to go down that path of sin any longer; we will no longer have a single regret, because we walk down the wrong path.

But again, it leads me to ask, what does this body look like? Well, the best way to actually learn and see what this body is like is to look at the Lord Jesus Christ in His resurrected body, because we have several episodes where Jesus does things and I want us to look at some of those.

In Mark chapter 16, verse 12, speaking of His resurrection, it says, "After that He appeared in a different form." That's how scripture talks about His resurrected body; it says it's a different form. To the two of them while they were walking along their way to the countryside, you see, there was something different about this body. So different that Mary Magdalene didn't recognize him at first. When Mary Magdalene saw Jesus, she saw that, okay, here's a person. But she didn't recognize- she didn't put it together that, hey, this is Jesus. This is the resurrected Christ. She didn't know it was Him. Something was so unusual, so different about Him that initially it just wasn't registering. She was seeing a resurrected, glorified heavenly, spiritual, immortal body. And on the one hand, it looked like he was just the gardener. But on the other hand, she didn't recognize who he was. And so there's something very normal about it: a body just like you and I have, and there's something very new normal about it; That's very different than what we know already.

In Luke 24, verse 16, it says that two of the disciples were walking along the road, and they were talking about Jesus and his body not being in the tomb. Jesus approaches them and he starts talking to them. However, their eyes were prevented from seeing and recognizing really who He was. And Jesus asks them, what are you talking about? It's sort of like if somebody were to say, "Hey, why are you guys wearing masks? And you'd say, "Where have you been? Well, here it says, "Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem and unaware of the things which have happened here in these last days?" Like, are you so new on the scene here that you don't really don't know what's going on in town? Here also in their earthly humanity, they weren't able to recognize them right away. In fact, they had a long conversation with Jesus, and they ate supper with Jesus, they explained their hope that Jesus was going to redeem Israel. And they explained to him their disappointment that nothing has changed, and his body is missing. And Jesus takes time then to explain to them about Himself from the Scriptures, and how He actually fulfilled many of the prophecies from the Old Testament.

But listen to what it says in Luke chapter 24, beginning in verse 28, "And they approached the village where they were going, and he acted as though he were going to go further. But they urged him strongly saying, stay with us, for its toward evening, and the day is now nearly over. So he went in to stay with them. And it happened that when he had reclined at the table with him, he took the bread, he blessed it. And after breaking it, he was giving it to them. And then their eyes were opened, and they recognized Him. And He vanished from their site." They had

this whole conversation, this whole leisurely afternoon. They eat supper with Him to talk about Scripture with them. It's not registering that this is the resurrected Christ. And then He makes it so that they can understand that this is Christ. And he disappears, just like that. He doesn't walk out of the room, He just instantly disappears. This body has some sort of amazing new capability that we just don't know anything about. And with that capability, we would always use that capability righteously. See, if we had that capability now, it wouldn't go too well in this world with it. But if we have that same capability that Jesus had, we'll use it righteously, all the time, and always for His glory. You see, our spiritual body is not going to be limited by the physical things around us. Jesus appeared in places it seems sometimes instantaneously. He appeared in rooms without even going through the doorway. He ascended up to the clouds as if that was a normal way to travel at the end. He looked so fully human, and he communicated with people, and yet He was so different. There's a spiritualness about His body. And so there's a sense in which you can say that there's the physical aspect and the spiritual aspect that came together in a new combination. I don't know how else to say it. It's like there's a mystery to this that we just don't know. And yet we want to know, and yet one day we get to see it, and we're going to have it and it's going to be absolutely amazing.

You see, what they actually thought they saw was a disembodied spirit. At one point the Scriptures say they thought they saw a spirit when they were looking at Jesus; they thought this was a disembodied spirit. So sometimes it can appear as physical. This is not a body, this is different. And knowing their doubts, Jesus shows them His hands and His feet. And even with that proof, and the joy of seeing Jesus, the disciples were actually having hard times still believing that this is the resurrected Christ. So Jesus went one step further and He said to let Him eat with them to show that this is a regular physical body. There's a regular physicalness to it. The physical doesn't disappear with the resurrected body.

And He reminded them that the words of Moses and the prophets and the Psalms all speak of Jesus. Everything in the Old Testament points to Christ, which includes the resurrected and glorified body as well. But coming back to First Corinthians 15, Paul explains in verses 35 to 41 a little bit about what this body is like. Because the question comes up, what is this body going to be like? How is it that we can have different bodies in the future? And so Paul basically says there's a body for the sun; there's the body for the moon. And in fact, if you're talking about stars, there's all sorts of different glories of their bodies, because you have small stars, you have medium stars, you have superstars. You have all these different stars, and they all have a different glory to them. He says, God has made bodies for us, we've got skin. He's made bodies for fish that have scales. He's made bodies for animals that mostly have fur. He has made bodies for birds that have feathers. If you think it's weird that God is going to give to us a resurrected body, look around. He's already made lots of different kinds of bodies. It's nothing new. It's nothing out of His character. In fact, it's a bit of an example of what He can already do. And there's something great yet to come with our resurrected body in Christ.

In verse 42, it says, "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a corruptible body or a perishable body, and it is raised and incorruptible body, it is sown in dishonor, and it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, and it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body." You see, he says that our earthly body is sown in weakness, and dishonor. And here's how we are weakened here. Now we are weakened, actually, by our sin. We live a life where we often feel weak, don't we? We have weakness, we have fatigue, we break down, our body wears out. And eventually one day we will expire. Right? We all have a shelf life at 90, maybe 100 years. But in contrast to this body, our glorified body is raised in power. And we are going to have new and greater power and ability to do things. We will have greater strength

and ability that isn't limited by our sin and all the hangings of the curse upon us. It's going to feel boundless and unending; it's going to feel freeing and fulfilling in a deeper way that we can hardly imagine now. We will be able to go further than we thought and accomplish amazing things that will make wireless technology seem like a child's toy.

Just the other day I read an article about how scientists have discovered how to have the brain communicate wirelessly to a computer such that you can type by thinking. So they put a little wire on there connected up to the special part of the letters and words part of the brain. Put up this little device here and wirelessly. You think the letter you think the word it takes the information puts it wirelessly to the device so that then you can type. But it's amazing technology is going to seem like child's play in heaven because in heaven, we're going to be able to go further without all the encumbrances of sin in our life. All of these amazing technologies that we're going to experience in the new eternal state of the new heavens and the new earth, it's all of the technologies, it's always going to be used for the honor and glory of God. We think of this world now with the internet, and you got TV and you got magazines. And in and of themselves, those things are not sinful. But they're often used for sinful purposes. But in heaven, it's not going to be like that. But you see, heaven is going to be a place where God tabernacles with us; He tents with us. He's with us, He resides there, where we can have free access to God. He's gone ahead and He's prepared a room for us in the brightness of His glory in the New Jerusalem because it says in Revelation, chapter 21, verse 23, it says, "And the city of God, the New Jerusalem, has no need of the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has a lumen dipped, and its lamp is the Lamb." You see, His glory is so magnificent, so far reaching, so bright, so illuminating, that there is no need for the sun, or the moon, or night lights, or spotlights or any other kind of light in heaven. His glory is going to appear and penetrate every corner of the New Jerusalem, and we'll be able to see His glory radiate throughout the new heavens and the new earth. We will see and reflect His glory everywhere we go. You see walls and streets and structures, they're not going to impede His glory. And our bodies are going to be designed to live in His glory, which shines everywhere.

But that leads me to another question, why can't we just take this body and go up? Now there's some of us who wouldn't want to take our own bodies, we want a new body. Some of us are in our prime. And we're like, I don't mind this body too much. But eventually we'll get past that prime and you'll say I want a new one. I want the upgraded model. And so why is it that we can't go with this body straight up to heaven? Why do we have to get a new upgraded model that has new features called a heavenly glorified body? Well, for starters, it says in Exodus 33, as God spoke to Moses face to face, God commands Moses to lead Israel into the promised land. And Moses says, I want to know your ways. God, I want to know Your greatness, I want to know that You're with me; You haven't told me who you're sending with me to help me and so I want to see Your glory. I only want to go if you come with me, if you come with us. And he is seeking ultimately God's blessing and God's guidance and God's protection. And he says this very simply: show me your glory and your goodness. And God replies by saying this, "You cannot see my face for no man can see me and live." He agrees to show Moses some of His glory, but only a small amount. And that from the backside of His glory, the tail end of it, so to speak. But if Moses is going to survive seeing His glory, He tells him that he needs to stand in the cleft of a rock, and God will let him see His backside, a small part of it. And then God still covers Moses with His hand. That's how much protection you need: a double layer of protection. The physical layer isn't enough. You need a spiritual layer of protection to protect you from being exterminated by seeing God's glory. And that's why we need a spiritual body because it's sort of like, you know, if you're going to go into outer space, what do you need to live? Well, you need a spacesuit to protect you from the extreme heat to the extreme cold and the radiation. And so in the same way, he says, we need to have a spiritual body, which can cope with and handle the glory of God. It protects us. God's glory would

kill us. We couldn't handle it. We would vaporize. We would die instantly. Our bodies wouldn't be able to handle that. It would be like saying I want to see the glory of the sun. Just pop me right in front of the Sun. Well, as soon as you're popped in front of the sun, you're going to pop out of existence. We need a glorified body if we're going to survive in God's presence. And because of His great love, he has already prepared for you that resurrected body.

Do you remember a few years ago, when North America had the total solar eclipse? I think it was 2017 or 18. And the big news was that the sun was going to get blocked out and a lot of people went to buy one of those special glasses to look at the sun safely. I didn't get one of those. But I did make a little apparatus called a solar eclipse box or something like that. You get a box and you put a little pinhole on the one side. And then on the other side, you have a sort of a viewing area. And then on the bottom, you cut out the bottom part. And so you put it up toward the sun for the pinholes facing the sun and it shines through and it creates a shadow on the inside of the box. And so then you can look up through the box itself. And you can see basically the shadow of what's happening with the Eclipse. And in a sense, that's what Moses saw with the glory of God, it was the tail end; it was this little smidgen it was you know, just barely seeing it was in a sense, like a shadow of His glory. It wasn't the shadow. But that's what it was like. But one day when we get to heaven, we get to stand before God in the safety of our spiritual heavenly body and see Him in His glory and worship Him safely.

But I have a lot of questions. How do we get this new body? Do we have to do something to get it? Does it just sort of happen? Well, if we're going to live with God, there is something you have to do to live with God with this resurrected body. We have to believe that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God from heaven who came down to earth and lived a perfect life. He died as a substitute for us. He suffered the wrath of God in our place. And to prove that, He conquered sin and death. He was resurrected to demonstrate that to the cosmos, to the universe, to all spiritual beings, that He had conquered sin and conquered death. And if you genuinely believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and you put your faith in Him, and you've repented of your sins, with your resurrected body, you get to live with God in heaven for all the remainder days that there are which is forever and ever and ever and ever. And I can't say ever enough because it's forever.

In verse 10, Paul talks about himself as an apostle here a little bit. He says, that it is by grace that he is what he is. In other words, "I'm an apostle, by the grace of God, not something I earned; I didn't do anything special to get this privilege." But you see, by grace alone, we are saved. And by grace, God works through us. And by that same grace, He gives to us a glorified body. But what about those who are not Christians? What about the unrepentant? What about the non-believer? Well, on the flip side, even the unbeliever gets the resurrected body. We get the resurrected body so that we can live with God and love and worship and serve Him and His presence. It's going to be grand, it's going to be glorious, where we are completely forgiven. We experience the fullness of the adoption, and we're going to be lavishly blessed with this resurrected body. But the unbeliever also gets the resurrected spiritual body, which is indestructible and imperishable. It says in John chapter five, "Truly, truly I say to you, an hour is coming and now is when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the son of man. Do not marvel at this for an hour is coming in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice and will come forth, those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, and those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment." You see, they will experience the second death, which is the lake of fire, to experience punishment for all of their sins for all of eternity, in full and complete, unending consciousness. Remember the burning bush that Moses saw? It was consumed with fire, and

yet it didn't burn up or get charred. And in the same way, those who are in hell have an indestructible body where the worm doesn't die, and the fire is not quenched. Believing in Jesus with sincerity, repenting from our sins, trusting that Jesus paid the price for our sins. That's how we are to be saved from the wrath that is to come. And if you were in Christ, you get a resurrected body that goes to heaven.

But at the end of a passage, we have to always ask ourselves, so what? What's the big deal? What do I do different now? How do I now live? How do I now move forward in life? Well, he summarizes this in verse 58. If you look at verse 58 in chapter 15, he says, "Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. Be encouraged, don't lose heart."

Living in this sin cursed world, it's difficult. Doing good can become a tiresome candidate. But because of his promise of a new resurrected body, we must press on. We're going to go live with God and these new heavenly bodies that come with power, and we get to live with God forever in the new heavens and the new earth. And like I said before, we'll never reach or pass our prime. Things will never go downhill when we get to serve God and live with Him forever in that eternal state. And yet, we don't know when Christ is coming back. And so we need to be found faithful, steadfast, immovable; we need to be found faithful for when He returns. Therefore, stand on the Word of God. Don't move from what God has said, don't move to the left, don't move to the right. Don't move backwards in your serving of Him. Don't let up on the gas pedal of loving and serving God. Don't pull back or drift from the pure word of God. In fact, he says, "Always be abounding in the work of the Lord." Our lives need to be overflowing with service to God, so that we are excelling and abounding in that work. How are you doing in that? How am I doing that? We need to evaluate. We need to assess. We need to cut out the fat and strengthen the muscles and invest for the things of God for eternity. When you're discouraged by sin of the squibbled, or the sin in your own life, and it looks like the enemy's winning, stand steadfast on the truth, that Christ reigns, and that He will put all of His enemies under His feet. And the last enemy to be abolished is death itself. When you hear and you see and you read things that contradict God, don't lose heart, but know that your labor is not in vain. Preach the gospel to the lost, for they are where we were: judged and under condemnation. Some of the Corinthians believe the lie that there is no resurrection and it really doesn't matter how you live. But for you and I, we need to not lose heart when we give the gospel to the lost. Many will scoff many will mock. Many will ridicule and perpetually question the truth. Some will even twist the truth to suit their own manmade wisdom. But Paul brings us back to the rock of Christ, His Word, His is resurrection.

Therefore, he says to be steadfast in all truth, be immovable on Christ, the rock and his resurrection, and be abounding and thankfulness to Him because of the gift that He has already prepared for us. Press on and serving Him so that when He comes, you and I will be found faithful. We just celebrated the first coming of Christ. Brothers and sisters, Christ is coming again. He's coming again. Praise the Lord! Be encouraged of what the Apostle John says in First John chapter three verse two, this is the concluding verse: "Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is." To Christ be the glory, great things He has done, great things He is doing, and great things He has yet to do.

Let's pray. Our Father in heaven, we rejoice that Christ died for our sins, and was raised to new life. He being the first fruits and Father, we are humbled to think that we will get a resurrected body that's fit to live in heaven with You, so that we can love You and worship You and serve You all the days of our lives. Father, I pray that these truths that we've looked at and learn from today, that they would encourage us and that we would be steadfast

people, that we would hold to your word that we would not drift. That we would constantly, Lord, eat of your Scripture, that we would nourish our soul with your truth. I pray Father, that we would be people who would take the gospel and share it with the lost and dying world, that we would think more about what you think of us than what the person would think of us. Strengthen us, embolden us. May we walk humbly with you, Lord. We just end by worshipping You for all of Your good works. In Jesus name. Amen.