

## **The Image Of Dust / The Image Of Heaven**

1 Corinthians 15:23–49

Introduction:

We are in a series on 1 Corinthians called GROW. The church in Corinth had heard the story of Jesus and embraced it with enthusiasm, but over time they stopped growing, and the truth got distorted. The Corinthian church was divisive, immoral, and selfish. Like the Corinthians, we live in a world filled with ideas and practices that are at odds with the gospel. Every day we hear stories about what it means to be wise and spiritual based on our secular culture which can cause us to distort the gospel for our own purposes. Paul challenges believers to GROW and offers some practical advice on how to live as Christians in the midst of a culture that pressures believers to compromise.

### **Image Bearers**

Humanity is created in the image of God and all human life is sacred at every stage of development because of this. This image of God was damaged in the fall, but it will be restored in the lives of believers through Jesus Christ.

### **The Last Enemy Destroyed**

Psalm 8 and Psalm 110 references.

The dominion of death is tied to sin. Sin brought death into the world and it has been the universal experience of spiritual death that has led to the flourishing and reign of the first sin in death.

Christ is the first fruits.

First fruits was the first portion of the crop (or flock) offered to God.

Christ has defeated sin and death through his perfect fulfillment of the law and the atonement he made by his substitutionary death.

### **This Life Is Not The End**

Paul's asks a series of rhetorical questions to show that the resurrection is at the heart of the Christian message.

Those who have been transformed by the gospel can be free from the corrupting power of sin in this life and escape physical corruption at the resurrection from the dead.

How should we live this out?

- Be aware of the corrupting influence that comes from extended periods of exposure to sinful ideas and close friendships with those who are lost.
- Spend sufficient time with the people of God and give them access and authority in your life.
- We are to be in the world, but we are also to guard our hearts and be a positive influence on others.

Many of the Corinthians were influenced by the values and thinking of the culture and not influenced enough by their knowledge of Christ and the essentials of the faith.

Knowledge of God is not the same as knowing God.

Paul offers a strong rebuke, demanding that they wake up from their stupor and stop sinning since their unbelief in the resurrection reflects a lack of knowledge for which they should feel ashamed.

### **The Image Of The Man Of Heaven**

To live in a resurrected body is to experience a new mode of existence, life directed and empowered by the Spirit, suitable to the age to come, in a body untainted by sin and death in any sense.

The image of God has not been lost but merely tarnished or distorted. It does not need to be regained, but to be perfectly restored/renewed.

We live in the tension of the already, but not yet of the gospel and the first fourteen chapters of this letter teaches that God's renewed humanity in Christ will be fully realized only when God raises us from the dead, making us like him.

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