

First Corinthians Chapter 15

Commentary for February 14, 2021 — The Core of Paul's Gospel

The foundation of the Gospel the apostle Paul preached and taught is contained in **First Corinthians chapter 15**. The entire chapter deals with the concept of "resurrection." Below is an outline of the chapter that is simple and is true to the text¹:

Part 1	Verses 1-11	the resurrection of Christ
Part 2	Verses 12-34	the resurrection of believers
Part 3	Verses 35-58	the resurrection <u>body</u> of believers (& you!)

If I were gravely ill, I would want these verses read to me from several translations (for variety) to comfort me. The entire purpose of all Scripture, outside of the Mystery, is presented in these words of Paul. The *ekklesia* at Corinth needed to be reminded of the basics of their Christian faith. When you read the words "YOU," put yourself into the Paul's message. I quote Part 1 here in full:

"Moreover, brethren, I declare [now] unto YOU the gospel which I preached unto YOU, which also YOU have received, and wherein YOU stand; By which also YOU are saved, if YOU keep in memory what I preached unto YOU, unless YOU have believed in vain.

For I delivered unto YOU first of all that which I also received, how

- that Christ died for OUR sins according to the scriptures; And
- that he was buried, and
- that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: And
- that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve:
- After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.
- After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles.
- And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.

For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet [fit] to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church [*ekklesia*] of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and

his grace which was bestowed upon 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.

Therefore whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so YOU believed.

• 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

¹ This simple outline is from the *Revised Standard Version*, but similar outlines are in many evangelical Bible translations. All quotes are from the King James Version.

Paul's message is compact yet filled with information about your future. If you believe what Paul wrote, you will be in the Kingdom of God at Christ's return to receive immortality and be a participant in the Kingdom of God, millennia before the vast majority of humanity.

Part 2 (1 Corinthians 15:12–34) is about various aspects of the resurrections to glory, who will participate, and in what order. If you do not believe in Christ's resurrection, you will not be raised when Christ returns. That will occur later (1 Corinthians 15:20–24).

Most humanity will be made alive to go through the Great White Throne judgment (told in Revelation 20:11–13). During that time will all the rest be saved and receive immortality and glory from God our Father (1 Corinthians 15:22).² That judgment occurs after the New Heaven and Earth are created, and New Jerusalem comes from heaven (Revelation chapter 21). That judgment also will last 1,000 years (in my opinion) according to 2 Peter 3:8–13.

Part 3 (verses 35–58) presents details of your spiritual body and the spiritual body of every child of Adam. Everyone will become a fully glorified child of God, having the full likeness and image of God the Father and Jesus Christ, as God intended at the beginning in Genesis:

"God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea [and so on].'

... So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them."

• Genesis 1:26–27

We will be given new glorified bodies composed of "**a quickening spirit**," described through comparisons in 1 Corinthians 15:35–50. They will be celestial, glorified, incorruptible (not subject to disease, decay, or weakness), heavenly, with a heavenly image (appearance) — and immortal (undying). By that time, each human being will experience what Jesus told His disciples in John 14:20. We will be one with God our Father and Christ Jesus (1 John 3:2):

"You shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. He that has my commandments, and keeps them, he it is that loves me: and he that loves me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

... If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."

• John 14:20–21, 23

Toward the end of his life, Paul wrote to his colleague Timothy, and their fellow workers about what they were called to teach. Everything was done ...

"... according to his [God's] own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death, and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."

• 2 Timothy 1:9–10

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² See "[Salvation and the Kingdom of God](#)" by Dr. Ernest Martin and my "[Losing Your Salvation](#)" article.