

1 Corinthians 15 35-49 for growth groups: His resurrection guarantees ours

week commencing 8 April 2024

Warm up: Physical bodies – do we love them or loathe them?

Different cultures at different times answer this question differently. Sometimes bodies are treated with dishonour because it's felt that the soul matters most. In other times, what can be seen and touched is seen to be more important than what is inside.

In your experience, does our culture love physical bodies or loathe them? What evidence?

In today's passage, God through Paul is teaching us about resurrection life, specifically about resurrection bodies. Let's hear what he has to say:

Pray and read 1 Corinthians 15:35-49.

There is a lot here to amaze us. But there are some confusing things too.

1. What is confusing to you in this passage? A word, an idea, etc.

Spiritual bodies, v44? Life-giving spirit, v45?

Some of the Corinthians seem to struggle to get their heads around resurrection life.

2. What image or idea does Paul use to correct and teach them with?

Why is this helpful?

A seed. It's using something we can understand to help us grasp something new. Like a seed going into the ground and coming out as a plant, our bodies will be changed at the resurrection. But there is continuity – we will still have our bodies, though they are changed.

3. In response to the Corinthians' objection (v35), what point is Paul making about God in v38?

They struggled to see how the resurrection could happen, because they couldn't understand how bodies can be raised. Paul describes how God gives bodies to seeds "as he has determined" to illustrate how he can do this in the resurrection.

4. What is the word that repeats in v40-42 to give a sense of what this body will be like?

Splendour (a word we don't use much). Like "stunning beauty". The sun, moon, and stars have different kinds of splendour – so will our resurrection bodies!

5. Draw a table to fill out the contrasts : the body now vs the body then in verses 42-44.

Perishable vs imperishable, dishonour vs glory, weakness vs power, natural vs spiritual.

Which of these descriptions are especially wonderful for you, and why?

6. Draw a second table to fill out the contrasts between Adam and the Lord Jesus v45-48.

Living being vs life-giving spirit, natural vs spiritual, of the dust vs of heaven.

7. In v49 what is the connection between Jesus' resurrection body and us?

We will bear his image – we will be like he is.

8. How does the reality of a coming resurrection body change us now?

Gives us hope for the future when we will be like Christ in our eternal bodies. Reminds us that our bodies now are only like a seed, and also tells us of the eternal embodied future we will have.

9. [only if time] How does the reality of resurrection bodies in a new creation help us engage with people who are yet to believe in Jesus today?

Pray

[Big Idea: His resurrection body guarantees ours.]