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1 Corinthians 15 – 16

“Extreme Makeover: A Glorified Body”

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The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the cornerstone of our faith. If Jesus did not rise from the dead then Paul said our *“faith is futile.”* But not only did he rise from the dead, he rose with a glorified body similar to what all believers will one day receive. When do we get a glorified body? What will it look like? The Corinthian church wondered about this, and so do many Christians today.

In our study in [1 Corinthians 15](#) we’ll see that Paul establishes the resurrection of Jesus as historic fact, the resurrection is central to our faith, and the resurrection is unique to Christianity. Pastor Gary’s teaching outline explains each of these points, as well as brings clarity to the subject of the glorified body being comparable, imperishable and recognizable.

The Resurrection Is Historic Fact

1. In [1 Corinthians 15:5–7](#), Paul gives evidence for the resurrection by listing the eyewitnesses.
 - a. Peter, the reinstated disciple is singled out
 - b. The “Twelve”
 - c. Over 500 hundred people at one time
 - d. James and the apostles
 - e. Paul, the apostle who was *“abnormally born”*
 - i. Paul did not become an apostle the “normal” way. He wasn’t one of the original apostles who saw Jesus before and after his resurrection. Paul saw Jesus – after he had ascended to heaven – when he came down and showed himself to Paul on the road to Damascus. ([Acts 9:1–19](#))

The Resurrection Is Central To Our Faith

2. In **1 Corinthians 15:14–17**, Paul states that the resurrection is central to our faith.
 - a. All “*faith is useless*” and “*futile*” if the resurrection did not take place.
3. The apostles made the resurrection the main point of their message of the gospel.
 - a. **Acts 2:32** – Peter addressing the crowd on the Day of Pentecost
 - b. **Acts 3:14–15** – Peter addressing the crowd after the healing of the crippled beggar
 - c. **Acts 4:10** – Peter and John before the Sanhedrin
 - d. **Acts 5:30** – Peter and the apostles before the Sanhedrin

The Resurrection Is Unique To Christianity

4. The resurrection of Jesus from the dead is what distinguishes Christianity from other world religions.
5. **Revelation 1:18** – “*I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever!*”
 - a. Mohammed couldn’t say this because his bones are in a mosque in Medina.
 - b. Confucius couldn’t say this because his bones are in a tomb in Eastern China.
 - c. Karl Marx couldn’t say this because his remains are in a grave in London, England.
 - d. Gautama Buddha couldn’t say this because he was cremated and his remains were scattered in many shrines.
 - e. There is only one tomb in the world where tourists line up day after day to see absolutely nothing, and that’s Jesus’ tomb!
6. In fact, it’s Jesus’ resurrection from the dead that is the hope of the church.
 - a. **1 Corinthians 15:19** – “*If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men.*”
7. The Corinthian church believed in the resurrection of Jesus, but it’s apparent that they did not believe in the resurrection of the dead for all believers.
8. There are a number of questions many have today concerning the sequence of death, heaven and the resurrection of the dead, including:
 - a. “Do all believers rise from the dead? – Yes!
 - b. “I thought that a Christian went straight to heaven when they died? – They do!
 - c. “If I go to heaven when I die, what rises from the dead?” – A glorified body!
9. Death is inevitable and our bodies will decay, but the good news is that Christians will get a new, glorified body, which raises a few questions including: “When do we get it and what will it look like?”
 - a. For the most part, Christians get their glorified bodies at the time of Christ’s Second Coming, when he returns in the clouds to Rapture the Church.
 - b. How does it work?

- i. Part 1 – When Christians die, their bodies go in the grave but their spirits go to be with the Lord in Heaven. When Christ returns in the air to “rapture” the Church from the earth, at the sound of the trumpet, he brings with him the spirits of all the saints who are in Heaven. Graves will be opened and the bodies of those saints will be raised “*imperishable*” or “*glorified*” and will be reunited with the spirits of those in the clouds with Christ. (1 Corinthians 15:20–23)
- ii. Part 2 – Immediately after that, Christians who are alive on the earth at the time of Christ’s Second Coming will get their glorified bodies as they’re “raptured” from the earth – as they are physically snatched from the earth. (1 Corinthians 15:51–52)

10. **1 Thessalonians 4:15–17** – *“According to the Lord’s own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.”*

The Glorified Body Will Be Comparable

- 11. When you die, the glorified body you get will be comparable to what you have now, only much, much better! (1 Corinthians 15:35–39)
- 12. Your new body will be comparable, and you won’t get a glorified body that looks like a St. Bernard!

The Glorified Body Will Be Imperishable

- 13. The glorified body won’t get sick or tired, it won’t start to smell or sag, it won’t need surgery, and it will never experience death. (1 Corinthians 15:42–44; 53–55)
- 14. It’s ironic that so much time, effort and expense is spent on “propping up” the human body, especially since the body is in continually in the process of “dying.”
 - a. Since 1997 the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery¹ data indicates there has been a 162% increase in the total number of elective cosmetic surgeries.
 - b. In 2008, there were 341,000 liposuction procedures, 2.5 million Botox injections, and 600,000 chemical peel procedures performed in the United States, in the amount of \$12 billion dollars!
 - c. In 2008 Americans spent \$22 billion on cosmetic products, including: skin-care creams, lotions, powders, sprays, perfumes, colognes, lipsticks, fingernail polishes, eye and facial makeup, hair colors, deodorants, bath oils, mouthwashes, etc.!

¹ <http://www.surgery.org/sites/default/files/2008QFacts.pdf>

The Glorified Body Will Be Recognizable

15. The first Adam was made from the dust, and the second Adam (Jesus) came from Heaven.
16. Just as we received a body like Adam's (from the dust) when we were born, so we will receive a body like Jesus (from heaven).
17. The glorified body will be like the body that Jesus had when he rose from the dead – physical, supernatural and recognizable. (**1 Corinthians 15:45–49**)
18. In **1 John 3:2**, John writes: *“But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.”*
19. We will recognize our loved ones and be recognized by them, just as the disciples recognized Jesus, which will make heaven a glorious place!

Discussion Questions

1. Review the introduction to the study guide with your group to provide the appropriate background.
2. Read **1 Corinthians 15:1–8, 12–19, 35–44** to provide an overview for this study.
3. Allow the people in your group to share the name and a few brief details about the relationship they have with someone who is already in heaven.
4. Read and discuss **1 Corinthians 15:5–7**, focusing on the eyewitnesses to the resurrection.
5. Read and discuss **1 Corinthians 15:14–17**, focusing on the fact that the resurrection is central to the Christian faith.
 - a. Review a few of the examples Pastor Gary mentioned from the book of Acts in which the resurrection was the centerpiece of the message. (See #3 above)
6. Review the list of those whose epitaph can't include the text of **Revelation 1:18**. (See #5 above)
7. Read and discuss **1 Corinthians 15:19**.
 - a. Spend a few minutes talking about the people some people place their hopes in.
8. Allow the people in your group to share their thoughts and experiences concerning what they've learned about what happens when a Christian dies. (Review #9i and #9ii above)
9. Read and discuss **1 Thessalonians 4:15–17**.
 - a. Use this link to read Pastor Chuck Smith's commentary on this text.
http://www.blueletterbible.org/commentaries/comm_view.cfm?AuthorID=1&contentID=7239&commInfo=25&topic=1%20Thessalonians

10. The notion of “soul sleep”² may come up in your study time. Please use this link to read an article by Don Stewart on this erroneous doctrine which groups like the Jehovah’s Witnesses and Seventh-Day Adventists adhere to. http://www.blueletterbible.org/faq/don_stewart/stewart.cfm?id=127
11. Read and discuss **1 Corinthians 15:45–49**, focusing on the fact that we will have a glorified body that is recognizable.
12. Close your time by allowing everyone in your group to: ask the Lord to give them the assurance of a home of heaven and/or celebrate the fact that those who have placed their trust and faith in the finished work of the risen Christ will have a home in heaven, where they will be reunited with all of their loved ones who’ve gone on before them.

² Also called “conditional immortality.”