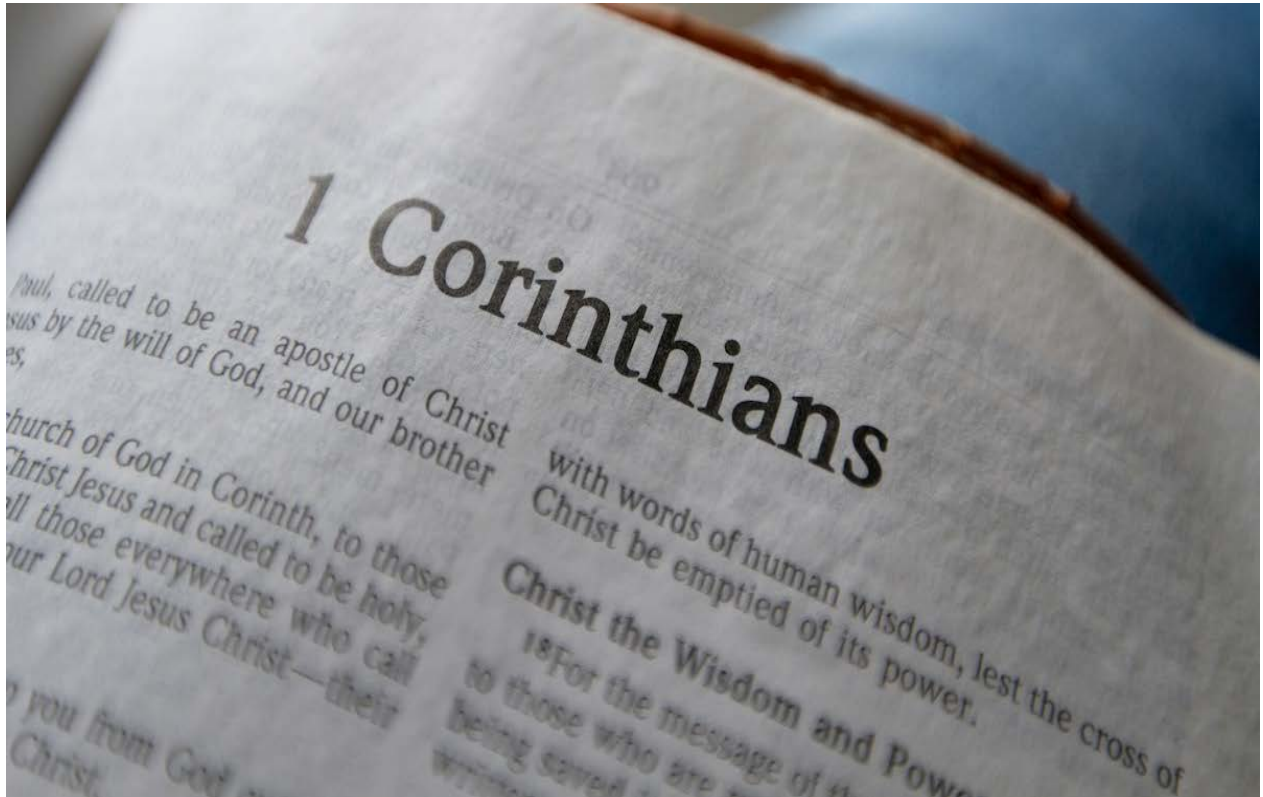


The Glorious Good News

1 Corinthians 15

1 and 2 Corinthians Part 16



T. M. AND SUSIE MOORE

A Scriptorium Study from The Fellowship of Ailbe

The Glorious Good News: 1 Corinthians 15
1 and 2 Corinthians Part 16
Copyright 2024 T. M. and Susie Moore
The Fellowship of Ailbe
www.ailbe.org

Except as indicated, all Scripture are taken from the *New King James Version*. © Copyright 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved. All quotations: Scott M. Manetsch, *Reformation Commentary on Scripture: 1 Corinthians* (Downers Grove: Inter Varsity Press, 2017). All quotes from John Calvin are from *Calvin's Commentaries*, Rev. John Pringle, tr. (Edinburgh: Calvin Translational Society). All quotations from Matthew Henry are from *Matthew Henry Concise Commentary*, E-text version Copyright 1996, 2002 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc. All Rights Reserved. All quotes from Earl Radmacher are from *The NKJV Study Bible*, copyright ©1997, 2007 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All psalms for singing are from *The Ailbe Psalter* (West Grove: Waxed Tablet Publications, 2023).

Cover art: Yahoo images

Introduction to *1 Corinthians 15*

Jesus is coming again. And when He does, we will be changed—forever! No more sin or sorrow. No more frailties or debilitating sicknesses. We will receive a glorified body and will be like Jesus. We will behold Him forever and rejoice in the victory over death and the grave He has accomplished. What a great and glorious future awaits all who receive Jesus and the Good News of the Kingdom.

But there is still more. The Gospel fits us now to live for Jesus and to spread His grace by abounding in good works and being ready with true words.

This is glorious Good News, indeed!

If you find these studies, or any of our other resources, helpful, we hope you will consider making a contribution to help support our work. You can do so by using the donate button at the website or by sending your gift to The Fellowship of Ailbe, 103 Reynolds Lane, West Grove, PA 19390.

We hope you find this study instructive and helpful to equip you for your walk with and work for the Lord. Thank you for joining us.

T. M. Moore, Principal
tmmoore@ailbe.org

1 “IF”

Pray Psalm 125.1, 2.

Those who trust in the LORD
Are like Mount Zion,
Which cannot be moved, *but* abides forever.
As the mountains surround Jerusalem,
So the LORD surrounds His people
From this time forth and forever.

Sing Psalm 125.1, 2.

(St. Gertrude: *Onward, Christian Soldiers*)
All who trust in Jesus, strong as Zion stand!
Naught shall ever move them from their promised land!
Like the hills surrounding safe Jerusalem,
Christ surrounds His Church and holds her in His mighty Hand!
Refrain, v. 1
All who trust in Jesus, strong as Zion stand!
Naught shall ever move them from their promised land!

Read and meditate on 1 Corinthians 15.1-8.

Preparation

1. What is the Gospel?
2. Who saw Jesus, raised from the dead?

Meditation

What could Paul mean by that expression, “believed in vain”? Where the Gospel is concerned, we either believe it or we don’t, right? And we know what the Gospel is: Jesus came among us as Immanuel, born of a virgin, to fulfill all the righteousness of God’s Law, break the power of the devil, bear our sins in His own body on the cross, and thus satisfy God’s wrath against His people. He rose again to new life, opening the way to eternal life for all who believe, and was seen by a substantial array of witnesses, including Paul himself.

This is the Good News Paul preached and taught in Corinth (vv. 1, 3). The Corinthians received this proclamation and were standing in it unto salvation.

If, that is, they “held fast” to the Good News (v. 2).

The New Testament acknowledges in various places the possibility of believing “in vain”, as Paul put it. Jesus sent away from Him certain who claimed to believe in Him and could produce many good works—good to them, at least (Matt. 7.21-23). The writer of Hebrews explained that some of his readers had only “tasted” the salvation of the Lord (Heb. 6.4) and were in danger of falling away because they did not hold fast to it. And in our text, Paul might be seen to have muddied the water of faith by that “if” clause—“if you hold fast”.

The meaning is clear. Not all who express faith in Jesus have truly believed. They believe who follow Jesus and His apostles. They truly believe who stand fast when push comes to shove in life and do not deny Jesus whether by words or deeds. They believe who hear the Word of Jesus and hasten to carry it out.

Merely to say one has “faith” in Jesus is not enough. For true faith—saving faith—brings both inward assurance and outward evidence of salvation (Heb. 11.1). “IF” we truly believe, we will hold fast to and obey the Word of Jesus.

Treasures Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162

It is true that we are saved by grace through faith, and we are not saved by anything that we have done—it is based only upon what we believe (Acts 16.31; Eph. 2.8).

That is how salvation begins. But it doesn't end there. "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2.10). If.

Jesus said, "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven but he who does the will of My Father in heaven" (Matt. 7.21). If.

"Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

for I was hungry and you gave Me food;

I was thirsty and you gave Me drink;

I was a stranger and you took Me in;

I was naked and you clothed Me;

I was sick and you visited Me;

I was in prison and you came to Me" (Matt. 25.34-36). If.

You may choose to disagree, but those activities seem to involve more than a thought process or belief system—gave, took, clothed, visited, came—those are active verbs that involve love.

"LORD, I hope for Your salvation, and I do Your commandments" (Ps. 119.166). Active do.

"Depart from evil and do good; and dwell forevermore" (Ps. 37.27). Active do.

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all those who do His commandments" (Ps. 111.10). Active do.

"These are the things you shall do: Speak each man the truth to his neighbor; give judgment in your gates for truth, justice, and peace; let none of you think evil in your heart against your neighbor, and do not love a false oath..." (Zech. 8.16, 17). Active do.

As the people answered Joshua, "All that you command us we will do" (Josh. 1.16) so we answer to Paul, and to God, "Let it be as You have said, and let it be for the edification of the church" (Lk. 1.38; 1 Cor. 14.12).

All that we actively do along with all that we sincerely believe is how we assuredly "hold fast" (I Cor. 15.2) to the Gospel that Jesus lived, died, and rose again to create. This is ours, if we simultaneously believe and do.

Jesus offers us much joy and encouragement, if.

"If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them" (Jn. 13.17).

For reflection

1. We are not saved *by* good works, but we're not saved *without* them. Explain.
2. What does it mean to have "believed in vain"?
3. Today, how will you show that your faith is not in vain?

The doctrine of Christ's death and resurrection, is the foundation of Christianity. Remove this, and all our hopes for eternity sink at once. And it is by holding this truth firm, that Christians stand in the day of trial, and are kept faithful to God. We believe in vain, unless we keep in the faith of the gospel. Matthew Henry (1662-1714), Commentary on 1 Corinthians 15.1-8

Pray Psalm 125.1, 4, 5.

Pray that God will envelop your church in peace, that all may speak His Word to one another in love and

service for the building-up of the Body of Christ.

Sing Psalm 125.1, 4, 5.

(St. Gertrude: *Onward, Christian Soldiers*)

LORD, do good and care for those upright in heart.

Those who turn to evil shall from You depart.

Sinful men may increase on their way to hell!

Save Your people, let your peace abound in Israel!

Refrain, v. 1

All who trust in Jesus, strong as Zion stand!

Naught shall ever move them from their promised land!

2 The Power of Grace

Pray Psalm 103.1-6.

Bless the LORD, O my soul;
And all that is within me, *bless* His holy name!
Bless the LORD, O my soul,
And forget not all His benefits:
Who forgives all your iniquities,
Who heals all your diseases,
Who redeems your life from destruction,
Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies,
Who satisfies your mouth with good *things*,
So that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.
The LORD executes righteousness
And justice for all who are oppressed.

Sing Psalm 103.1-6.

(Old 100th: *All Creatures that on Earth Do Dwell*)

O my soul, bless the LORD's great Name! His many benefits proclaim:
He pardons sins and heals disease, and from the pit grants us release.

With mercy rich and steadfast love He satisfies us from above,
revives our youth, works righteousness, and justice serves for the oppressed.

Read 1 Corinthians 15.1-11; meditate on verses 9-11.

Preparation

1. How was Paul able to be so fruitful in his ministry?
2. Why did he consider himself "the least" of the apostles?

Meditation

Grace is the starting point of salvation, and only grace can make our salvation fruitful. Paul is the best example of this.

He was an unlikely candidate for salvation, given his hatred for Jesus and the Church, and that he actively persecuted the believers in Jerusalem and elsewhere. But grace is not obstructed by the will of sinful people. Grace follows the will of God. When God was ready to save Paul, no amount of his willing otherwise could prevail to frustrate God's plan.

God continued his grace to Paul so that his salvation would not be in vain. He prepared Paul, sent Barnabas to work with him, opened doors of opportunity for ministry, sustained him faithfully, and blessed his work abundantly. All this was the grace of God at work in Paul, as he himself testified here. It was only by grace that Paul was able to do the work and realize the fruit of ministry throughout the Roman world.

We need grace every day. We must not take the grace of God for granted, presuming on His largesse by failing to thank Him for grace past and appeal to Him for grace sufficient for all our times of need. God intends to spread His grace through us to others, who will give Him thanks and praise as they enter the Kingdom of grace and taste of the goodness of Jesus (2 Cor. 4.15).

Apart from the Lord and His grace, we can do nothing. Seek grace daily and live it out fully. As you do, God will bless your work and bring glory to Himself. For this is why He shows us grace each day.

Treasures Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162.

“...so we preach and so you believed” (1 Cor. 15.11), and that was the point, all along.

One of the most admirable traits about Paul, Moses, David, and Peter is that they did not let their past sins hamper their present ministry.

Paul, as he admits in this passage, “persecuted the church of God” (1 Cor. 15.9). Moses murdered a man (Ex. 2.12); David committed adultery and then had the innocent party murdered (2 Sam. 11.1-24); and Peter denied three times even knowing the Lord Jesus (Jn. 18.17, 25, 27).

But their sin led to repentance and forgiveness and taking up the Kingdom work prepared for them to do. And we are called to do the same, regardless of whether or not we feel worthy, or crippled by past sins. We, too, are forgiven, and called to go forward in our walk of faith.

“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.
Do not cast me away from Your Presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit.
Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners shall be converted to You” (Ps. 51.10-13).

A grievous misleading takes place when one Christian leads another astray, to believe that salvation is about them, or about how happy or entertained they should be at church, or about how healthy and wealthy their newfound faith will make them. Pray this prayer, then bingo, problem-free living with a touch of bliss.

I fear that is why many believers fall away from the faith, because they have been misled from the get-go about what to expect. As the saying goes, “Unhappiness is the difference between what we expect and what we experience.” Jesus said, “These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world” (Jn. 16.33). Expect trouble. It happens. Don’t be disappointed when it does. Be ready for it. Dress for it (Eph. 6.10-17). But by all means, experience Jesus, through His Word and through prayer; and ask for the Holy Spirit to dwell within you.

In Jesus and in serving Him—within His Kingdom, as King and Lord—we experience peace. In the world, where we all happen to live now, we will most assuredly have tribulations and troubles. We may even get sick, be poor, and not be hugely popular. But we do take heart, and find encouragement, in the fact that our King has overcome everything.

And the point to our salvation?

It is to get to work to offer this gift to everyone in our Personal Mission Field. Because as Paul stated, “as for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak” (Eph. 6.19, 20).

And whether this Gospel is heard from my lips or from yours, makes no difference. But what is important? That the Gospel is preached, and others believe (1 Cor. 15.11).

For reflection

1. What is the Gospel? How would you explain the Gospel to an unsaved friend?
2. What has the Gospel done for you? That is, how has the grace of God through the Gospel affected your

life?

3. Whom will you encourage in the grace of God today? How should you prepare for that now?

Paul says all this in order to show that despite his great sins and unworthiness, the grace of God was not given to him for nothing. Ambrosiaster fl. 366-384(), Commentary on Paul's Epistles

Pray Psalm 103.17-22.

Thank God for His grace in saving you, keeping you, growing you, and using you for His glory.

Sing Psalm 103.17-22.

(Old 100th: All Creatures that on Earth Do Dwell)

But evermore to those who fear the LORD brings lovingkindness near;
His righteousness to them extends and to their children without end.

He rules upon His throne in heav'n; His sovereign rule o'er all is giv'n.
You angels, bless the LORD, rejoice, who live in strength to heed His voice.

All you who serve Him, bless the LORD, all you who heed His righteous Word!
Let all throughout the cosmos whole unite to praise Him, with my soul!

3 If, Then, But

Pray Psalm 16.10, 11.

For You will not leave my soul in Sheol,
Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.
You will show me the path of life;
In Your presence *is* fullness of joy;
At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Sing Psalm 16.10, 11.

(All to Christ: *Jesus Paid It All*)

Soon Your glory I shall see, for as Jesus rose again,
You will come to gather me to my home with You in heav'n.

Refrain v. 11

Make me know life's way! Pleasures fill Your hand.
Fill my life with joy each day! Before Your face I stand.

Read 1 Corinthians 15.12-28; meditate on verses 12-28.

Preparation

1. What did Paul say about our faith if Jesus is not risen from the dead?
2. What does Christ's resurrection guarantee for all who belong to Him?

Meditation

Evidently, there was some influence of the Sadducees operating among the Christian community in Corinth. The Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection. They did not think that resurrection was essential to a meaningful faith. Plus, Christianity was much more believable to the pagan mind if the resurrection were simply removed. All that loving, sharing, singing, and praying together seemed reasonable enough. *If* you set aside the resurrection, *then* you'll attract a more sophisticated crowd.

Let's make Christianity as easy and agreeable to our wrong-believing neighbors as we can. That way they might become Christians and join our church!

Yeah, that's stupid.

Paul preached the resurrection as the heart and core of the Gospel (v. 15). If there is no resurrection, then there is no forgiveness of sin. No forgiveness, no hope of escaping judgment. You are still in your sins (vv. 16, 17). If you're hoping in a resurrected Jesus when there is no resurrection, then you're a fool, of all men most pitiable (v. 19).

But Christ *is* risen, just as Paul preached; and all who belong to Him will be raised with Him at His coming (vv. 20-23). And in that day His Kingdom will be fully established and He will put all His enemies under His feet, including the last enemy, death (vv. 20-26).

So don't be stupid. Hold fast to the true Gospel and live in the resurrection life of Jesus, now and forever.

Treasures Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162

Neither Agatha Christie, nor Stephen King, have penned a more horrifying line than this:
“And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!
Then those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished” (1 Cor. 15.17, 18).
Alas, there is no hope. All is lost. We are bound for hell—eternally. All of us.

Still. In. Our. Sins.

But then here are the most exhilarating verses, which no writer can top for sheer joy:
“But now Christ IS risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive” (1 Cor. 15.20-22).

All. Forgiven. Through the risen and living Lord Jesus Christ.

But if we are hoping for this without the shedding of blood, we are mistaken:
“For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul” (Lev. 17.11).
“And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission” (Heb. 9.22).
“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him” (Rom. 5.8, 9).

And if we are hoping for salvation without the resurrection of the sacrificed Lamb, we are mistaken:
“Jesus said to her, ‘I AM the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die’” (Jn. 11.25, 26).
“...that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection...” (Phil. 3.10).

The two men in shining garments, standing by the empty tomb, asked the dead-Body seeking disciples:
“Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen!” (Lk. 24.5).

Indeed, He is risen, just as He said (Matt. 28.6).

And God is “all in all” (1 Cor. 15.28). Our hope is built on nothing less.

*My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus' name.*

*When He shall come with trumpet sound, O may I then in Him be found;
Dressed in His righteousness alone, faultless to stand before the throne.*

*On Christ the solid Rock I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand,
All other ground is sinking sand.*
(Edward More, 1834)

For reflection

1. Belief in the resurrection of Jesus is indispensable to true Christian faith. Why?
2. To you, what are the most important features believers enjoy in the new life Jesus has given us by His

resurrection?

3. What do you most look forward to on the day when Jesus returns?

All who believe in Christ, have hope in him, as a Redeemer; hope for redemption and salvation by him; but if there is no resurrection, or future recompense, their hope in him can only be as to this life. Matthew Henry (1662-1714), *Commentary on 1 Corinthians 15.12-19*

Pray Psalm 16.5-9.

Thank God that Jesus has risen from the dead and that He is your portion and cup! Rejoice in His salvation, and ask the Lord to give you someone to share Jesus with today.

Sing Psalm 16.5-9,11.

(All to Christ: *Jesus Paid It All*)

My portion and my cup are You, my Savior dear;
You help and hold me up and ever keep me near.

Refrain v. 11

Make me know life's way! Pleasures fill Your hand.
Fill my life with joy each day! Before Your face I stand.

I bless Your Name, O LORD; my mind instructs each night;
You teach me by Your Word and guide me in the right.

Refrain

You are ever with me, LORD; in You I shall not fall.
But rejoicing in Your Word, I abide within Your call.

Refrain

4 Bad Company

Pray Psalm 142.1-3.

I cry out to the LORD with my voice;
With my voice to the LORD I make my supplication.
I pour out my complaint before Him;
I declare before Him my trouble.
When my spirit was overwhelmed within me,
Then You knew my path.
In the way in which I walk
They have secretly set a snare for me.

Sing Psalm 142.1-3 (5, 6).

(Dix: For the Beauty of the Earth)

With my voice, O LORD, I cry—hear my plea for mercy, LORD!
My complaint mounts up on high, bringing You my troubled word:

Refrain vv. 5, 6

LORD, You are my Refuge strong! O receive my plaintive song!

When my spirit faints away, You my falt'ring pathway know;
where I take my journey they traps have hidden to my woe.

Refrain

Read 1 Corinthians 15.1-34; meditate on verses 29-34.

Preparation

1. What did Paul do daily?
2. To what did he call the Corinthians to awaken?

Meditation

Baptized for the dead? Sounds like the influence of yet another sort of “bad company” troubling the Corinthian churches. Their Sadducee friends tried to persuade them that the resurrection didn’t matter, and now these unnamed false teachers were teaching them to pray for the dead. But why pray for the dead if the dead don’t rise?

Dumb.

Paul once again pointed to his own example (vv. 30-32). Would any sane person continue to endure what he has endured, to “die daily” as it were, for something that was not true? What “advantage” is there in that (v. 32). Instead of calling people to die to themselves like he was, he should have been telling them to live it up, to have their best life now because soon enough they’d all be dead!

But he didn’t preach such nonsense because it wasn’t the truth. And only the truth of Jesus, resurrected from the dead, can lead us into the righteousness and good works God has prepared for us from before the foundation of the world (v. 34). If the Corinthians would be more circumspect about hanging around with bad company, and more diligent in listening to the truth from Paul, they would be growing more and would be more eager to proclaim the truth of Jesus to those who did not know Him (v. 34).

Were they ashamed of how they were living their faith in Jesus? They should have been (v. 34).

Treasures Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162

It seems that every story written needs to have a crisis point. Some tragedy or conflict must arise, that then must be resolved, that then needs to come to an end, so that they all live happily ever after, or not, as in the case of Little Red Riding Hood.

But for the Christian life, I suggest, we omit the need for crisis, and just live within the usual daily dying (1 Cor. 15.31). Why add to the difficulty by allowing, or even inviting, unsavory characters into the scenario? As Jesus said, “Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble” (Matt. 6.34).

“The righteous should choose his friends carefully, for the way of the wicked leads them astray” (Prov. 12.26). “Do not be deceived: ‘Evil company corrupts good habits’” (1 Cor. 15.33). “He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will be destroyed” (Prov. 13.20). “Go from the presence of a foolish man, when you do not perceive in him the lips of knowledge” (Prov. 14.7).

We are warned by Jesus, by Solomon, by Paul, and many other writers of Scripture to avoid bad company and evil influences; but how often do we let the unsavory flavor our lives through, not only people, but other sources—internet, TV, movies, books, magazines, influencers, etc. etc.? Maybe we don’t hang with corrupt people, but we surely let the enemy of our souls influence us through his perverse lies and screams for tolerance.

If we are not daily in God’s Word, solidifying what we believe, we are a blank canvas open for other paint to smear and deface us. We become unsure of what is right and what is wrong. So, “Take firm hold of instruction, do not let go; keep her, for she is your life. Do not enter the path of the wicked, and do not walk in the way of evil. Avoid it, do not travel on it; turn away from it and pass on” (Prov. 4.13-15).

Paul was not kidding when he wrote: “Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall” (1 Cor. 10.12). And here he is, once again, warning the church to be careful about what we allow to color our minds and hearts, souls and spirits (1 Cor. 15.33).

For indeed, our enemy is a “roaring lion” with no other purpose than to destroy (1 Pet. 5.8). And he, as Jesus said, “was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it” (Jn. 8.44). Why would we ever willingly write him into the script of our lives?

Bad company. Avoid it.

For reflection

1. What are some ways “bad company” tries to insinuate itself into your life?
2. How can you recognize when bad company is seeking to turn you from the Lord?
3. How can believers help one another avoid the snare of bad company?

Let us not be joined with ungodly men; but warn all around us, especially children and young persons, to shun them as a pestilence. Let us awake to righteousness, and not sin. Matthew Henry (1662-1714), Commentary on 1 Corinthians 15.20-35

Pray Psalm 142.4-7.

Pray that you will know the Lord’s accompanying Presence throughout this day, and that He will arm you with His Word to serve Him with yours.

Sing Psalm 142.4-7.

(Dix: For the Beauty of the Earth)

LORD, look to my right and see: None takes notice of my plight.
Is there refuge left for me? Is my soul out of Your sight?

Refrain v. 5, 6

LORD, You are my Refuge strong! O receive my plaintive song!

Hear my cry, LORD, I am low! They are strong who seek my soul.
Jesus frees from every foe; He will keep and make me whole!

Refrain

Out of prison lead me, LORD; thanks and praise to You shall be.
Righteous men armed with Your Word will Your grace bestow on me.

Refrain

5 Destined for Glory

Pray Psalm 8.3, 4.

When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers,
The moon and the stars, which You have ordained,
What is man that You are mindful of him,
And the son of man that You visit him?

Sing Psalm 8.3, 4.

(Aurelia: *The Church's One Foundation*)

When I regard the heavens, the work of Your own hand,
the moon and stars which all in their courses You command,
then what am I, O Savior, that You take thought of me,
or I should know Your favor and thus delivered be?

Read 1 Corinthians 15.1-49; meditate on verses 35-49.

Preparation

1. What must happen for us to obtain a glorified body?
2. How should we regard our lives in this fleshly body?

Meditation

The resurrection of the dead—our resurrection—which will occur at the return of our Lord Jesus, is fraught with mystery. We can only speak of it analogically for now. But we can get an idea of what lies ahead for us, for we are destined for glory in the glorious Presence of our Lord and Savior forever. And if we know what lies ahead, we can also know how we must live in our present lives.

Paul teaches us to think about our lives there and then in the light of familiar things here and now. A seed has a certain beauty and utility, but it only realizes its full potential when it dies as a seed and begins to grow as a new life (vv. 35-38). And as all seeds are not alike, but produce different kinds of living things, so it is with us. No two human beings are alike in every way; thus, our glorified bodies will reflect those dissimilarities, though all who believe will be transformed in glorious and eternal ways (vv. 39-41).

Our present bodies and lives are corrupt in many ways; in the resurrection, we will be beautiful and glorious as Jesus is, because we shall see Him as He is (vv. 42-45; cf. 1 Jn. 3.1-3). For now, while we are still in our natural bodies, we must long for and aspire to realize more and more the true spiritual beauty and glory which God is preparing for us. We are made in the image and likeness of God, and He is at work within us to transform us increasingly into the likeness of Jesus (vv. 46-49; cf. 2 Cor. 3.12-18).

The clearer our vision of our destination there and then in glory, the more fervent shall be our desire to approximate that vision increasingly here and now. We are headed for good company, friends—gloriously and eternally good company. Let's focus on that, increasing in Jesus from glory to glory, and cast off all the bad company that increases our corruption.

Treasures Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162

“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard,
nor have entered into the heart of man
the things which God has prepared
for those who love Him” (1 Cor. 2.9).

“The body is sown in corruption,

it is raised in incorruption.
It is sown in dishonor,
it is raised in glory.
It is sown in weakness,
it is raised in power.
It is sown a natural body,
it is raised a spiritual body” (1 Cor. 15.42-44).

“Beloved, now we are children of God;
and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be,
but we know that when He is revealed,
we shall be like Him,
for we shall see Him as He is” (1 Jn. 3.2).

“What shall I render to the LORD for all His benefits toward me?
I will take up the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD.
I will pay my vows to the LORD now in the presence of all His people.
Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of His saints” (Ps. 116.12-15).

“Destined for Glory.”

For reflection

1. What does it mean for you to set your mind on the things that are above, where Christ is, seated in glory (Col. 3.1-3)?
2. Can we expect to be transformed into the image of Jesus if we have no clear sense of what the image of Jesus is? Explain.
3. We are destined for glory, there and then and here and now. What are the implications of that for your day today?

*The human body in its present form, and with its wants and weaknesses, cannot enter or enjoy the kingdom of God. Then let us not sow to the flesh, of which we can only reap corruption. And the body follows the state of the soul. He, therefore, who neglects the life of the soul, casts away his present good; he who refuses to live to God, squanders all he has. Matthew Henry (1662-1714), *Commentary on 1 Corinthians 15.35-50**

Pray Psalm 8.5-9.

Give thanks to God that He has appointed us to glorify Him in this life, knowing that He will give us glorified bodies in the life to come. Commit your day to serving Him for His glory.

Sing Psalm 8.5-9.

(Aurelia: *The Church's One Foundation*)

Yet we in Your own image with glory have been crowned,
to worship and to serve You throughout creation ‘round.
These works that sing Your glory in our poor hands are placed,
that we may rule before You to magnify Your grace.

Let every beast and creature, in sky or sea or field,
in our hands bring You glory as we Your favor wield.
Let all things sing Your praises, let all declare Your worth!
O LORD our Lord how great is Your Name in all the earth!

6 Always Abounding

Pray Psalm 90.12-15.

So teach *us* to number our days,
That we may gain a heart of wisdom.
Return, O LORD!
How long?
And have compassion on Your servants.
Oh, satisfy us early with Your mercy,
That we may rejoice and be glad all our days!
Make us glad according to the days in which You have afflicted us,
The years *in which* we have seen evil.

Sing Psalm 90.12-15.

(Landas: *My Faith Has Found a Resting Place*)

LORD, teach us all our days to note that wisdom may be ours.
Return, O LORD, have pity on those servants who are Yours.
Each morning let Your love appear that we for joy may sing.
And make us glad for every day You us affliction bring.

Read 1 Corinthians 15.1-58; meditate on verse 50-58.

Prepare

1. How shall believers in Christ be changed?
2. What must we do until then?

Meditation

A day is coming when at last we shall lay aside our mortal flesh and be clothed with immortality. This, too, is the work of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we shall see Him as He is. Then death will be destroyed and the grave will be overcome. Then all corruption will cease, and we will be incorruptible because of the victory Jesus has won for us in His life, death, resurrection, and reign (vv. 50-56).

With this end in view, we must be diligent to attend to every good work for which we have been saved (Eph. 2.8-10).

All our conscious activities are exertions of energy—work. They must be done in the Lord, that is, consciously before Him and for His glory, in His strength, according to His Word, as an expression or extension of His rule, and for the demonstration of His living presence and love.

As we await the day of Christ's return and of our being transformed, we must be "always abounding" in such work. Every moment, and everything that fills those moments, can be done in the Lord and thus bear fruit for Him. But we must be steadfast about this—set, fixed, determined, unwavering, conscious and conscientious—so that we engage and perform all our work in the Lord.

Prayer is the vehicle that can sustain such an outlook. Planning is where abundant labors begin. And we must be immovable, always in all things remaining on task for the Lord, so that our work may demonstrate His Presence, purpose, power, and promise.

Treasures Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162.

We will all be changed—

“In a moment,
In the twinkling of an eye,
At the last trumpet” (1 Cor. 15.51, 52).

God likes the blast of the trumpet.
No one can sleep through that.

One Sunday night service years ago, a visiting speaker, in ownership of a trumpeting ram’s horn, began to deliver the sermon. I’m embarrassed to admit my mind began to wander, and I was not paying proper attention to his message. When suddenly, out of nowhere, he blasted that ram’s horn and I almost levitated out of my pew. Holy cow! Most assuredly my heart was racing, but he now had my full and undivided attention!

When Jesus returns there is not a soul on this planet that will miss it. It will be impossible to overlook or sleep through. “For the trumpet will sound and the dead [and alive] will be raised” (1 Cor. 15.52). “Incorruptible, and we shall be changed” (1 Cor. 15.52). How utterly, completely, and absolutely amazing.

There is only one entity who gets a kick out of death and that is Satan. Our enemy. He hates us and everything about us. And he enjoys the sting that we feel when a loved one dies. He rejoices at our revulsion towards our last enemy. But guess what, Satan? Death will be “swallowed up in victory” (1 Cor. 15.54).

God has given us this victory through our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

God spoke through the prophet Joel, saying:
“Blow the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in My holy mountain!
Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; for the day of the LORD is coming” (Joel 2.1).

“For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words” (1 Thess. 4.16-18).

Also encourage one another to: “Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Cor. 15.58).

There is much work for us to do until that Day, “so that our work may demonstrate His Presence, purpose, power, and promise.” We keep on keeping on to prove our thanks to Him for this ultimate victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. And one day we will say:

“As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness;
I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness” (Ps. 17.15).

Always Abounding.

For reflection

1. How can believers encourage one another with the promise of the Lord’s return?
2. Why must we seek to be always abounding in good works until then?
3. Whom will you encourage in good works today?

After having proved the resurrection of the dead, Paul urges the Corinthians to progress energetically in the ministry of the Word,

in confession, in love of neighbor, in patience, and to build up the Lord's church in every good work, and shine forth the glory of God. Tilemann Hesshus (1527-1588), *Explication of 1 Corinthians 15:58*

Pray Psalm 90.1-11, 16, 17.

Pray for the work God has given you for this day, that you may do it for His glory and with a view to His soon return.

Sing Psalm 90.1-11, 16, 17.

(Landas: *My Faith Has Found a Resting Place*)

LORD, You have been our dwelling place from generations gone.
Before the mountains came to be, before the earth was born,
before the worlds, and long before men on the earth first trod,
from everlasting long ago, O God, You are our God!

You turn men back to dust and say, "Return from whence you came!"
A thousand years are in Your sight like yesterday the same.
You sweep away our lives with ease, like grass that sprouts and dies.
Your wrath consumes us and we live dismayed amid our sighs.

You set our sins before Your face; our secret sins You know.
Our days decline in fury as we sigh to see them go.
And though we live for eighty years, yet hard and sad the time,
for soon it goes when Your great wrath consumes us in our prime.

Now let Your work to us appear; our children show Your might.
And let Your favor rest on us; show mercy in Your sight.
The work that You have given us, confirm, and to us show,
that we Your chosen path may walk and in Your precepts go.

7 Received? Deliver!

Pray Psalm 71.14-16.

But I will hope continually,
And will praise You yet more and more.
My mouth shall tell of Your righteousness
And Your salvation all the day,
For I do not know their limits.
I will go in the strength of the Lord GOD;
I will make mention of Your righteousness, of Yours only.

Sing Psalm 71.14-16, 3.

(Solid Rock: *My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less*)

But as for me my voice I raise to sing in hope and constant praise!
With saving grace my voice will swell Your never-ending grace to tell.

Refrain v. 3

A Rock of habitation be; command Your Word to rescue me;
my Rock and Fortress ever be!

Review 1 Corinthians 15.1-58; meditate on verses 1-4, 50-58.

Preparation

1. What is the Good News Paul received and delivered?
2. To what should receiving the Good News lead us?

Meditation

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is not something merely to receive. “Have you received Jesus?” we may sometimes ask. And well we should, as often as we can. Because the Gospel *must* be received—believed, welcomed, embraced, and committed to with all our soul and strength. That was certainly how Paul received Jesus and the Good News of forgiveness and everlasting life.

Jesus lived, died, and rose again. Thus, He accomplished the righteousness we need to dwell forever with God, took away the debt of sin that we owed, and opened the way to new Kingdom life in the Holy Spirit. This is the Good News we have received.

But there’s more to this Good News. Jesus is coming again. And when He does, we will be changed—forever! No more sin or sorrow. No more frailties or debilitating sicknesses. We will receive a glorified body and will be like Jesus. We will behold Him forever and rejoice in the victory over death and the grave He has accomplished. What a great and glorious future awaits all who receive Jesus and the Good News of the Kingdom.

But there is still more. The Gospel fits us now to live for Jesus and to spread His grace by abounding in good works and being ready with true words (Acts 1.8; 2 Cor. 4.15; Eph. 2.8-10; 1 Pet. 3.15). What we have freely received, we freely deliver to others by every means available to us (Matt. 10.8; 1 Cor. 9.19-23).

Have you received the Good News? To whom will you deliver it today?

Treasures Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162

“Whom have I in heaven but You?”

And there is none upon earth that I desire besides You.
My flesh and my heart fail; but God is the strength of my heart
and my portion forever” (Ps. 73.25, 26).

By many people, both past and present, the Gospel has been declared.
And when we heard the Gospel, like the Corinthian people, we:

1. Received it.
 2. Stand faithfully in it.
 3. And are saved by it.
- IF
4. We hold fast to it. (1 Cor. 15.1, 2)

But truly, what could possibly be more important to us than the Gospel?
Who would we ever choose besides God, His Son Jesus, and His Holy Spirit?
What else is there to hold fast to?
What other Person or belief could be so worthy of our trust and love?
Where else would we go?
As Peter asked, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life” (Jn. 6.68).

“Those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion,
which cannot be moved, but abides forever” (Ps. 125.1).

Jesus, as He prayed for His disciples, prayed also for us in this way:
“I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may
be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe
that You sent Me” (Jn. 17.20, 21).

This Gospel is better than Good News; it is the Best News ever delivered to humankind.

“I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly” (Jn. 10.10).
Delivered. Received. Deliver.

*No one ever cared for me like Jesus;
There's no other friend so kind as He.
No one else could take the sin and darkness from me;
O how much He cared for me.*
(Charles Weigle, 1932)

We dare not keep it to ourselves.

For reflection

1. How did you receive the Good News about Jesus? Who delivered it to you?
2. What does it mean for you to hold fast to this faith?
3. To whom will you deliver this Good News today?

*All true Christians believe that Jesus Christ, and him crucified, and then risen from the dead, is the sum and substance of
Christianity. All the apostles agreed in this testimony; by this faith they lived, and in this faith they died. Matthew Henry
(1662-1714), *Commentary on 1 Corinthians 15.1-11**

Pray Psalm 71.21-24.

Pray that God will enlarge your Personal Mission Field and that He will strengthen and equip you every day to serve Him for His Kingdom and glory.

Sing Psalm 71.21-24, 3.

(Solid Rock: *My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less*)

Increase my greatness, comfort me, and unto You shall praises be.

Your truth I will exalt full well, O Holy One of Israel!

Refrain v. 3

A Rock of habitation be; command Your Word to rescue me;
my Rock and Fortress ever be!

My lips with joy and praises ring; to You, Redeemer, praise I bring!

I praise Your goodness all day long; LORD, humble all who do me wrong.

Refrain

Questions for Reflection or Discussion

1. What is the Good News we have received?
2. How does receiving the Good News relate to doing good works?
3. What will Jesus destroy when He returns? What will He make new?
4. What is the work of the Lord? Why should we abound in it?
5. What's the most important lesson you've learned from this part of our study of 1 and 2 Corinthians?

For prayer:

The Fellowship of Ailbe

The Fellowship of Ailbe is a spiritual fellowship in the Celtic Christian tradition. Our goal is to promote revival, renewal, and awakening, following the teaching of Scripture and the example and heritage of our forebears in the faith.

The Fellowship of Ailbe offers many opportunities for training, prayer, personal growth, and ministry. Visit our website at www.ailbe.org to learn more.

We hope you found this study helpful. If so, please consider making a gift to The Fellowship. You can contribute to our ministry by using the donate button at the website, or by sending your gift to The Fellowship of Ailbe, 103 Reynolds Lane, West Grove, PA 19390.

Thank you.