

Notes on the Greek New Testament
Week 83 – 1 Corinthians 15:20-53

Day 411: 1 Corinthians 15:20-28

Verse 20

Νυνὶ δὲ Χριστὸς ἐγήγερται ἐκ νεκρῶν,
ἀπαρχὴ τῶν κεκοιμημένων.

νυνι (originally an emphatic form of νυν)
now

The *now* is logical rather than temporal, 'but as a matter of fact', cf. Heb 9:26; 1 Cor 5:11.

ἐγήγερται see v.4 and the note there on
perfect tense

νεκρος, α, ον see v.12

ἀπαρχη, ης f firstfruit, first portion (set
apart to God)

Cf. Rom 8:23; 11:16. The firstfruits was the first of the harvest which was dedicated to God (Lev. 23:10f). Jesus was not the first to rise from the dead, he himself raised some, such as Lazarus. Nevertheless, Christ is the first to gain resurrection life – to enter into a life no longer subject to death. His resurrection is the "pledge and proof of the resurrection of his people." Hodge

κοιμαομαι see v.6

Verse 21

ἐπειδὴ γὰρ δι' ἀνθρώπου θάνατος, καὶ δι'
ἀνθρώπου ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν·

ἐπειδη since, because, for

θανατος, ου m death

ἀναστασις see v.12

"Paul now draws an analogy between two uniquely representative men: Adam, head of the old creation, in whom all die, and Christ, head of the new creation, 'the first-born from the dead' (Col 1:18; cf. Rev 1:8) in whom all are to be *made* alive in resurrection." Bruce. For Christ as second Adam, compare Romans 5:12-21. "Adam's sin brought disaster not only on himself, but also on all his posterity. But if Adam's sin had far-reaching consequences, so had Christ's resurrection. It concerned not himself only, but also all who should believe on Him. Just as death came into the world through Adam, so did life come into the world through Christ. Paul's repeated *by man* points to the reality of the incarnation. Christ was as truly man as was Adam." Morris

"The argument that humanity is, simply as a brute fact, bound up in the solidarities, vulnerabilities, and consequences of the life and destiny of Adam finds its saving parallel in the gospel assurance that the new humanity is bound up in the solidarities, atoning work, and resurrection victory and promise of Christ as the 'last' (i.e., eschatological) Adam (see 15:45)." Thistleton

Verse 22

ὡσπερ γὰρ ἐν τῷ Ἀδὰμ πάντες
ἀποθνήσκουσιν, οὕτως καὶ ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ
πάντες ζωοποιηθήσονται.

ὡσπερ as, even as

ἀποθνησκω die, face death, be mortal

ζωοποιηθήσονται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 pl

ζωοποιεω give life, make alive

The *all* points to necessary and inescapable consequence. All in Adam (the whole of the human race) are subject to death. *All in Christ* (every believer) are heirs to the life he has gained. There is no support here for universalism.

Verse 23

ἕκαστος δὲ ἐν τῷ ἰδίῳ τάγματι· ἀπαρχὴ
Χριστός, ἔπειτα οἱ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐν τῇ
παρουσίᾳ αὐτοῦ·

ἕκαστος, η, ον each, every

ἰδιος, α, ον one's own

ταγμα, τος n proper order, turn

ἔπειτα then, afterwards

"This proper arranged order explicates both (a) the logic of firstfruits (v.20) as temporally prior to *the rest of the harvest* and (b) the actual situation that Christ has been raised (perfect, 15:4, 12, 14, 16, 17, 20), whereas those in Christ will be raised (future 15:22, 49, 51, 52, 54). ἐπειτα indicates a firmly marked sequence: then or afterward; but may carry more emphasis: *thereafter*, then afterward, since it is often used in deliberate 'enumerations ... of time and order.' (Grimm-Theyer)" Thistleton

παρουσια, ας f coming, arrival, presence

Verse 24

εἶτα τὸ τέλος, ὅταν παραδιδῶ τὴν βασιλείαν τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ, ὅταν καταργήσῃ πᾶσαν ἀρχὴν καὶ πᾶσαν ἐξουσίαν καὶ δύναμιν.

εἶτα adv. then, and then

"There are some who hold that we now come to a third ταγμα or 'order' ... This is not impossible, but it seems unlikely." Morris
The term τέλος will not bear the sense 'last group.'

τέλος, ους n end, conclusion

ὅταν when

παραδιδῶ Verb, pres act subj, 3 s

παραδιδωμι hand over, deliver up

The present subjunctive is read by p⁴⁶ A D but κ reads παραθῶ (aorist subjunctive) while B and G read παραδιδῶ (which might be indicative or subjunctive). The present subjunctive with ὅταν is open ended, leaving the timing unspecified.

καταργεω render ineffective, do away with

ἀρχη, ης f beginning, first principle, power

ἐξουσια, ας f authority, right, power

"Paul's use of πᾶσαν ἀρχὴν καὶ πᾶσαν ἐξουσίαν καὶ δύναμιν reflects what originally denotes the superhuman agencies of apocalyptic, including demonic powers, but may in Paul indicate *every structural power* against which the individual *qua individual* is helpless and held in bondage as victim. Paul neither asserts nor denies that 'demonic' or 'supernatural' power may be included, for he sees all oppressive structures which hinder God's purposes or entrap the human person as instruments which, in effect, represent forces which are hostile to God (see above on 2:6 and 2:8). Corporate and structural sin and evil are 'bigger' and more sinister than the sum of individual acts and attitude, since they form an oppressive network and godless ethos which holds individual persons in a grip of bondage and evil influence." Thistleton

"Paul's thought is that Christ will at the last have full and complete authority over all things and all men, and that he will then 'deliver up' this authority, this rule, to His Father." Morris

Verse 25

δεῖ γὰρ αὐτὸν βασιλεύειν ἄχρι οὗ θῆ ἅπαντας τοὺς ἐχθροὺς ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ.

δεῖ impersonal verb it is necessary, must

It is the stated purpose of God that defines this necessity – δεῖ. There is nothing that can frustrate God's sovereign purposes.

βασιλευω rule, reign

ἄχρι (and ἄχρις) prep with gen; ἄχρι οὗ until, when

θῆ Verb, aor act subj, 3 pl τιθημι place, set, appoint

ἐχθρος, α, ον enemy, one hated

πόδας Noun, acc pl πους, ποδος m foot

Cf. Ps 110:1, though Hayes thinks that there is also clear allusion to Ps 8:6. "Although he is already Ruler of the world, only at his coming again will Christ annihilate all that possesses lordship, claims power, and exercises force (1 Cor 15:24)." Pannenberg

Verse 26

ἔσχατος ἐχθρὸς καταργεῖται ὁ θάνατος·

ἔσχατος, η, ον adj last, final

The present passive καταργεῖται may suggest that the destruction has already begun in Christ's resurrection.

Verse 27

πάντα γὰρ ὑπέταξεν ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ. ὅταν δὲ εἶπη ὅτι πάντα ὑποτέτακται, δῆλον ὅτι ἐκτὸς τοῦ ὑποτάξαντος αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα.

ὑποτασσω subordinate, put in subjection

Cf. Psalm 8:6. "Paul now quotes from Ps 8:6 to explain the dynamics of how ἄνθρωπος (as in v.22), through whom death came, can come to receive 'dominion over all things.' Ps 8:5-8 provides a commentary on the creation of humankind in the image of God as God's vice-regent over the earth (Gen 1:26-30). As in Heb 2:5-8, the glorious destiny of mankind to be 'crowned with glory and honour' and to receive 'dominion over the works of thy hands' (Ps 8:5, 6a) reaches its climax in 'Thou hast put all things under his feet' (Ps 8:6b; Heb 2:a). Heb 2:6b adds, 'God left nothing that is not made subject.' The author to the Hebrews explains that whereas humankind *qua humankind* failed to achieve what God purposed, through *Jesus* the original role was reacquired, and the sovereignty described in Psalm 110 (LXX Psalm 109) was restored. Paul conjoins the same two psalms in vv 24-27 here: 'Christ as the last Adam, the 'son of man'... retrieved the situation which the first Adam lost.' (Bruce) Psalm 8 and Psalm 110 stand together not only in Hebrews but also in Eph 1:20-22." Thistleton

ὅταν see v.24

ὑποτέτακται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s
 ὑποτασσω
 δηλος, η, ον evident δηλον (ὅτι) it is
 evident (that)
 ἔκτος prep with gen outside of, except
 ὑποτάξαντος Verb, aor act ptc, m gen s
 ὑποτασσω

"Paul's point ... is that God the Father has given to the Son unlimited sovereignty over all creation. That, however does not involve any infringement of the Father's own sovereignty." Morris Christ is the means by which the goal of God's purpose is brought about.

Verse 28

ὅταν δὲ ὑποταγῇ αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα, τότε
 [καὶ] αὐτὸς ὁ υἱὸς ὑποταγήσεται τῷ
 ὑποτάξαντι αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα, ἵνα ἢ ὁ θεὸς
 [τὰ] πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν.

ὑποταγη, ης f obedience, submission
 τότε then, at that time
 ὑποταγήσεται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 s
 ὑποτασσω
 ὑποτάξαντι Verb, aor act ptc, m dat s
 ὑποτασσω
 ἢ Verb, pres subj, 3s εἰμι

ἵνα ἢ ὁ θεὸς [τὰ] πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν Cf. Rom 11:36.

This does not undermine the deity of Christ. "Paul is not speaking of the essential nature of either Christ or of the Father. He is speaking of the work that Christ has accomplished and will accomplish." Morris Neil Richardson suggests that Paul is here correcting an error of the 'Christ group' at Corinth (cf. 1:12) who exalted Christ *at the expense of or in place of* God.

Day 412: 1 Corinthians 15:29-34

Verse 29

Ἐπεὶ τί ποιήσουσιν οἱ βαπτιζόμενοι ὑπὲρ
 τῶν νεκρῶν; εἰ ὅλως νεκροὶ οὐκ
 ἐγείρονται, τί καὶ βαπτίζονται ὑπὲρ
 αὐτῶν;

ἐπει since, because, for

ἐπεὶ τί ποιήσουσιν 'what do those people think they are doing who ...'

νεκρος, α, ον dead
 ὅλως adv at all; actually
 νεκρος, α, ον dead
 ἐγειρω raise

There are many suggestions as to the nature of this practice which Paul uses here as an illustration. Mathis Rossi devoted an entire book to the subject. Thistleton includes an excursus outlining the major views – 13 of them in his enumeration.

Grammatically, the most natural interpretation would seem to be that Paul is referring to a practice among some at Corinth of getting baptised on behalf of dead relatives. Morris considers other interpretations but concludes that if this is not what Paul is referring to (without condemnation but also without commendation) then we are left to conjecture. However, Thistleton follows the suggestion of GG Findlay and Marion Raeder, suggesting that "baptism for the sake of (ὑπὲρ) the dead refers to the decision of a person or persons to ask for, and to receive, baptism as a result of the desire to be united with their believing relatives who have died. This presupposes that they would share the radiant confidence that they would meet again in and through Christ at the resurrection of the dead." Findlay, having rejected vicarious baptism writes, "Paul is referring rather to a much commoner, indeed a normal experience, that the death of Christians leads to the conversion of survivors, who in the first instance 'for the sake of the dead' (their beloved dead) and in the hope of re-union, turn to Christ – e.g., when a dying mother wins her son by the appeal 'Meet me in heaven!' Such appeals, and their frequent salutary effect, give strong and touching evidence of *faith in the resurrection*." Thistleton says, "*We see no reason to reject this view ... as the least problematic and most convincing of all.*"

Verse 30

τί καὶ ἡμεῖς κινδυνεύομεν πᾶσαν ὥραν;

καὶ ἡμεῖς 'we also', probably reference to the apostles.

κινδυνευω be in danger, run a risk
 ὥρα, ας f hour, moment

'every hour of the day.'

Verse 31

καθ' ἡμέραν ἀποθνήσκω, νῆ τὴν ὑμετέραν
 καύχησιν, [ἀδελφοί,] ἦν ἔχω ἐν Χριστῷ
 Ἰησοῦ τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν.

ἀποθνήσκω see v.22

Cf. 2 Cor 4:10; 1:9.

νῆ by (with acc. to denote a solemn oath)
 ὑμετερος, α, ον possessive adj of 2 pl your
 καυχῆσις, εως f boasting, ground for
 boasting

Morris cites the translation of Moffatt, "Not a day but I am at death's door! I swear it by my pride in you, brothers, through Christ Jesus our Lord." Morris comments, "It is interesting to see the expression of Paul's basic satisfaction with his Corinthian converts despite the many things for which he had to rebuke them."

A number of important early MSS include ἀδελθοι, i.e. κ A B 33 ... however it is omitted by the earlier p⁴⁶ and also D F G L ... It is easier to account for its insertion than omission.

Thistleton sums up vv.30-31 saying, "Here is a succinct pastoral theology of the *risks*, *fragility*, and *dearest, deepest concerns* of a pastor who is willing to sacrifice all for the gospel in the light of the gathering together of all at the resurrection."

Verse 32

εἰ κατὰ ἄνθρωπον ἐθριομάχησα ἐν Ἐφέσῳ, τί μοι τὸ ὄφελος; εἰ νεκροὶ οὐκ ἐγείρονται, Φάγωμεν καὶ πίνωμεν, αὔριον γὰρ ἀποθνήσκομεν.

κατὰ ἄνθρωπον 'with merely human hopes' (NRSV), 'with human perspectives' (NJB), 'only with human horizons' Thistleton

ἐθριομάχησα Verb, aor act indic, 1 s
θηριομαχεω fight with wild beasts

On balance, it seems most likely that Paul is speaking *metaphorically* here of the troubles he had faced in Asia.

ὄφελος, ους n gain, benefit

The argument is not one merely of *personal* interest. Paul has devoted himself to the preaching of the gospel in the hope that he will "have a share in the gathering around the throne of God when the whole reconciled people of God shall enter fully into the purposed eschatological salvation. *Suffering* has its role in this eschatological and corporate context. Otherwise everything becomes empty, fruitless, and profitless, and his tenacity was for nothing." Thistleton

φάγωμεν Verb, aor act subj, 1 pl ἐσθιω eat
πίνωμεν verb, aor act subj, 1 pl πινω drink
αὔριον Adverb αὔριον tomorrow, the next day, in a short while

"Hayes observes in his commentary that such scepticism as is envisaged would lead the readers to 'act like the frenzied inhabitants of Jerusalem who faced siege and annihilation at the hands of the Assyrians (Isa 22:12-14): instead of facing their fate with repentance and weeping, they decided to 'party like [i.e., as if] there were no tomorrow' ... quoted from Isa 22:13.' In practice virtually all major commentators assume or argue that Paul quotes from this passage. The question which arises is simply whether this quotation *also* coincides with a quotation from hellenistic philosophical or ethical controversy. Epicureanism in its sophisticated form is more than crude materialism, but its opponents readily characterised it as such, especially in popular Stoic-Cynic circles ... The two sources together form an admirable, logical, and rhetorical bridge to vv.33-34, as Eriksson points out. Both Isa 22:13 and 'contemporary anti-Epicurean polemic' equally 'designate the libertine life ... Paul uses it to point to the utter futility of a life without the motivation given by the resurrection of Christ.'" Thistleton

Verses 33-34

"These two verses, especially v.34, expresses the *theological* heart of the chapter and the hinge of the argument. *Knowledge of God* (God's resources, God's grace, God's transformative action through Christ) holds the key to understanding what the resurrection is actually about. The interrelationship between this knowledge of God and daily lifestyle is also fundamental." Thistleton

Verse 33

μὴ πλανᾶσθε· Φθειροσιν ἦθη χρηστὰ ὁμίλια κακά.

πλαναω lead astray, mislead, deceive

Paul seems to cite a popular maxim.

φθειρω corrupt, ruin, destroy
ἦθος, ους n habit: pl morals

'lifestyle'

χρηστος, η, ον kind, loving, good,
merciful

ὁμιλια, ας f company, association

"conveys the notion of a *clique*, a *group*, or a '*gang*' who regularly do things together and to which people 'belong.'" Thistleton. Suggests the strong peer-pressure of such a group.

κακος, η, ον evil, bad, wrong, harm

"The point of Paul's citation is that keeping the wrong kind of company (i.e. that of men who deny the resurrection) may well corrupt good Christian habits, and turn men away from the true position." Morris

"We cannot know whether Paul has in mind a bad gang of complacent and skeptical 'strong' within the church (Hering; cf. D B Martin) or whether he is concerned about the infiltration of non-Christian values through heightened social intercourse and influence from outside. Either or both of these provide practical pastoral warnings based on good social psychology for today. The pressures imposed by 'in-groups' are very strong, and a climate of so-called postmodernity encourages such groups to assume that no shared arbitration is possible or necessary within some larger frame of rationality or worldview." Thistleton

Verse 34

ἐκνήψατε δικαίως καὶ μὴ ἀμαρτάνετε,
ἀγνωσίαν γὰρ θεοῦ τινες ἔχουσιν· πρὸς
ἐντροπήν ὑμῶν λαλῶ.

ἐκνήψατε Verb, aor act imperat, 2 pl
ἐκνηρω come to one's senses, wake up

A verb originally used of becoming sober after drunkenness. 'wake up from your stupor' (NJB)

δικαίως adv (from δικαίος) righteously

Here 'as you should' or 'properly'. Paul calls them to regain a spiritual realism.

ἀμαρτανω sin, commit sin
ἀγνωσία, ας f lack of spiritual perception, ignorant talk

Maybe precisely those who claimed to possess knowledge. But they do not know God nor understand the power of God 'who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist' (Rom 4:12).

ἐντροπή, ης f shame

Praise and shame were matters of great importance at Corinth.

λαλεω speak, talk

Day 413: 1 Corinthians 15:35-41

Verse 35

Ἀλλὰ ἔρεϊ τις, Πῶς ἐγείρονται οἱ νεκροί;
ποίῳ δὲ σωματι ἔρχονται;

ἔρεϊ Verb, fut act indic, 3 s λεγω
πῶς how? in what way

'How is it possible?'

ποιος, α, ον interrog pro. what, which, of
what kind

σωμα, τος n body

How can a body be fit for eternity?

Verse 36

ἄφρων, σὺ ὁ σπείρεις οὐ ζωοποιεῖται ἐὰν
μὴ ἀποθάνῃ·

ἄφρων, ον gen ονος fool, foolish

Thistleton says that σὺ belongs with ἀφρων
"Recent research on rhetoric has firmly established the rhetorical (not simply emotive) force of ἄφρων σὺ. The phrase functions as an *exclamatio* to intensify the argument." The force is not rude but rhetorical, 'how silly!', or Thistleton's 'you nonsense person!'

σπειρω sow

ζωοποιεω give life, make alive

ἐὰν if; ἐὰν μὴ except

ἀποθνησκω die, face death, be mortal

Cf. John 12:24.

Verse 37

καὶ ὁ σπείρεις, οὐ τὸ σῶμα τὸ
γενησόμενον σπείρεις ἀλλὰ γυμνὸν
κόκκον εἰ τύχοι σίτου ἢ τίνος τῶν
λοιπῶν·

"The grammar and syntax do not flow smoothly, partly because, in effect, Paul repeats 'what you sow' twice; or, more accurately, the first ὁ σπείρεις can be construed in either of two possible ways. Paul probably dictates: 'And what you sow – it is not the body which is to come about that you sow but a bare grain.' He breaks off the construction, and begins again to emphasise 'what you sow,' understanding ἐστὶ to be supplied. However, it is equally possible to construe the relative pronoun as an accusative of respect: 'And as to what you sow: it is not the body which is to come about that you sow ...'" Thistleton

γενησόμενον Verb, fut midd dep ptc, m acc
& n nom/acc s γινομαι

The rare future participle τὸ γενησόμενον is correct; p⁴⁶, F and G appear to read γεννησομενον

γυμνος, η, ον naked, bare

κόκκος, ου m seed, grain

τύχοι Verb, aor act opt, 3 s τυγχανω

obtain, attain, experience; εἰ τυχοι for example, if perhaps

σίτος, ου m grain, wheat

λοιπος, η, ον rest, remaining

Verse 38

ὁ δὲ θεὸς δίδωσιν αὐτῷ σῶμα καθὼς ἠθέλησεν, καὶ ἐκάστῳ τῶν σπερμάτων ἴδιον σῶμα.

θέλω wish, will

The resurrection springs from the sovereign power of God. Thistleton cites Findlay saying, "The aorist in this context denotes 'not as he wills' (according to his choice or liking) but in accordance with his past decree in creation, by which the propagation of life on earth was determined from the beginning (Gen 1:11, 12; for the verb cf... 12:18)."

ἐκάστος, η, ον each, every
σπερμα, τος η seed, offspring

The singular, σπερμα is used collectively. Hence the plural has the force 'different kinds of seeds' as we might use the terms 'fruits' or 'cheeses.'

ἴδιος, α, ον one's own

Verse 39

οὐ πᾶσα σὰρξ ἡ αὐτὴ σὰρξ, ἀλλὰ ἄλλη μὲν ἀνθρωπῶν, ἄλλη δὲ σὰρξ κτηνῶν, ἄλλη δὲ σὰρξ πτηνῶν, ἄλλη δὲ ἰχθύων.

σαρξ, σαρκος f flesh, physical body

"It is difficult to find a better translation of σαρξ than 'flesh' (as in virtually all English VSS), but the semantic range in Greek is far wider than Eng. 'flesh'... Rather than referring to some 'part' of the person, σαρξ denotes 'the whole person, considered from the point of view of his external physical existence. Thus Gal 4:13f ('... an infirmity of the flesh ...') (and) 2 Cor 12:7 ('... A thorn in the flesh')... refer generally to physical distress.' (Robinson)." Thistleton

ἄλλος, η, ο another, other
κτηνος, ος η animal; pl. cattle
πτηνον, ον η bird
ἰχθυς, υς η fish

Each has a body given it to suit its own function. We may be confident therefore that God will give us a resurrection body suitable for glory.

Verse 40

καὶ σώματα ἐπουράνια, καὶ σώματα ἐπίγεια· ἀλλὰ ἕτερα μὲν ἢ τῶν ἐπουρανίων δόξα, ἕτερα δὲ ἢ τῶν ἐπιγείων.

ἐπουρανιος, ον heavenly, celestial

The reference is probably to the same celestial 'bodies' referred to in v.41, but could also allude to angelic beings.

ἐπιγειος, ον earthly, of the earth

ἕτερος, α, ον other, another, different
δόξα, ης f glory, splendour

"As there are differences on the earth, so also in the sky. There is a wide difference (ἕτερα) between terrestrial and celestial bodies; and there is a further difference (ἄλλη) between one celestial body and another. The God who made these myriads of differences in one and the same universe can be credited with inexhaustible power ... he has found a body fit for fish, fowl, cattle and mortal man: why not for ... [raised] man? Experience teaches that God finds a suitable body for every type of earthly life and every type of heavenly life. Experience cannot teach us that there is a type of life for which no suitable body can be found." Robertson and Plummer.

Verse 41

ἄλλη δόξα ἡλίου, καὶ ἄλλη δόξα σελήνης, καὶ ἄλλη δόξα ἀστέρων· ἀστὴρ γὰρ ἀστέρος διαφέρει ἐν δόξῃ.

ἡλιος, ον η the sun

The thought is of the glory or splendour given by God.

σεληνη, ης f moon
ἀστὴρ, ερος η star
διαφέρω intrans. be worth more than, be superior to, differ from

"Some patristic writers interpret this allegorically of the different glories of different raised believers. But this is not Paul's point, even if it suggests the broad principle of dynamic diversified life in the resurrection mode of existence." Thistleton

Day 414: 1 Corinthians 15:42-49**Verse 42**

Οὕτως καὶ ἡ ἀνάστασις τῶν νεκρῶν. σπείρεται ἐν φθορᾷ, ἐγείρεται ἐν ἀφθαρσίᾳ·

The contrast in this and the following verses is between two *living* bodies – the present body and the resurrection body (not between the body of the dead and a resurrection body).

ἀναστασις see v.12

νεκρος see v.12

φθορα, ας f decay, corruption, depravity

"ῥθορα denotes 'decreasing capacities and increasing weaknesses issuing in exhaustion and stagnation,' i.e., in a state of 'decay'... The semantic contrast to such 'decay' would not be *permanence* or *everlasting duration*, but *ethical, aesthetic, and psychological flourishing and abundance*, even perhaps *perfection*, and certainly *fulness of life*... To be 'raised' by and through *God* in the power of the *Holy Spirit* entails a dynamic of being that corresponds with the dynamic of the *living God* who acts purposively in ongoing ways, never 'trapped' in a timeless vacuum from which all experience of succession is excluded (see further on v.44). This is more than *imperishability* (NRSV, REB, NIV, NJB) or *immortality* (Collins)." Thistleton

ἀφθαρσία, ας f imperishability, immortality

"The chief objection that the typical Greek had to any doctrine of resurrection was that the body is essentially corruptible. It is, by its nature, subject to decay. He looked accordingly for an existence when the soul would be untrammelled by the corruptible body, when the soul would exist *in incorruption*. Paul associates this very state with the resurrection body." Morris

Verse 43

σπείρεται ἐν ἀτιμῳ, ἐγείρεται ἐν δόξῃ·
σπείρεται ἐν ἀσθενείᾳ, ἐγείρεται ἐν
δυνάμει·

ἀτιμία, ας f disgrace, shame, dishonour

'humiliation' cf. Phil 3:21.

δόξα, ης f glory

Signifies 'weight', 'substance', 'radiance.'

ἀσθενεία, ας f weakness, illness

"'Sown in weakness' expresses Paul's realism about the *frailty, fragility, vulnerability, and constraints* of human existence (including that of Christians) without diminishing the power of the cross, which is the presupposition for the triumph of the resurrection mode of existence." Thistleton

δυνάμει Noun, dat s δυναμις

"If 'weakness,' 'humiliation,' and 'decay' represent the pathos of the dominating *decrecendo* of human mortality 'power' denotes not a static source of competency, but an energising *crescendo* of equipment and capacities for 'splendor' and perhaps unimagined tasks and service yet to come. Such a mode of existence, however, remains *somatic* or *bodily* in the sense described under vv. 42 and 44." Thistleton

Verse 44

σπείρεται σῶμα ψυχικόν, ἐγείρεται σῶμα
πνευματικόν. εἰ ἔστιν σῶμα ψυχικόν,
ἔστιν καὶ πνευματικόν.

ψυχικός, η, ον unspiritual, physical

Thistleton suggests 'natural' to avoid the wrong implications of 'physical.'

πνευματικός, η, ον spiritual, pertaining to the spirit

"This does not necessarily mean 'composed of spirit', but rather 'which expresses spirit', 'which answers to the needs of spirit'." Morris Thistleton argues that Paul regularly uses πνευματικός to denote 'that which pertains to the *Holy Spirit*,' cf. 3:1,3. Hence he here suggests the translation 'it is raised a body constituted by the Spirit' – following Barrett who suggests 'body animated by the Spirit of God,' and Wolff who says "The spiritual body is through and through a body under the control of the divine Spirit, according to v.45 a creation of Christ (cf. also vv. 21-22) who is 'the life-giving Spirit.'"

Verse 45

οὕτως καὶ γέγραπται, Ἐγένετο ὁ πρῶτος
ἄνθρωπος Ἀδὰμ εἰς ψυχήν ζῶσαν· ὁ
ἔσχατος Ἀδὰμ εἰς πνεῦμα ζωοποιούν.

On Adam/Christ comparisons in Paul cf. Rom 5:12-19 and Dunn *The Theology of Paul* pp. 199-204, 208-12 and 241-42.

γέγραπται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s γραφῶ
πρῶτος, η, ον first, foremost, earlier
ψυχή, ης f life, 'soul', living being
ζῶσαν Verb, pres act ptc, f acc s ζω live,
be alive

Cf. Gen 2:7.

ἔσχατος, η, ον last, final
ζωοποιεῶ see v.36

"The first Adam was merely 'a living human being'... By emphatic contrast, the last Adam is not merely 'living', but 'life-giving'." Thistleton

"Christ's characteristic in this office [of last Adam] is that he is a ... 'life giving *spirit*'. Not only is he the pattern for those who are in Him, but He is the source of that spiritual life which will result in the bodies of which Paul speaks." Morris. But we must not lose the reference to the *Spirit of God*. Christ was raised in the realm of the Spirit, by the agency of the Spirit, and is now the one who gives the Spirit. The resurrection is the hope of a full salvation "by an act of the sovereign God which entails the mediate agency also of Christ and the Spirit." Thistleton

"In saying that Christ is life-giving Spirit in the sense of the Holy Spirit, Paul is not introducing trinitarian confusion. Essential, eternal, intertrinitarian relationships are outside his purview here. Rather his perspective is *historical*. He is speaking about what Christ *became* in his identity as the last *Adam* and second *man* (v.47). The oneness or unity in view is economic, functional, eschatological (resurrection and ascension) Christ, as last Adam and second man, has come into permanent and complete possession of the Spirit that the two are equated in their *activity*. The two are seen as one, as they have been *made one* in the eschatological *work* of giving life to the church, that life which has its visible 'firstfruits' in Christ's own resurrection." Gaffin.

Oliver O'Donovan comments, "When Paul returns a second time ... to the comparison of Adam and Christ [cf. 15:21], he introduces a new thought: 'the first man was made a living soul, the last Adam a life-giving spirit ... The first man was from the earth, made of dust, the second man was from heaven ... As we have borne the image of the man of dust, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly man' (15:45ff.). The thought stated in the first contrast is still maintained here. Christ is the life-giver; he restores Adam's children to the life for which they were created. But a new thought is superimposed upon the old one. There is a difference between what was first given, described as 'soul' and 'dust', and what will be given, which is 'spiritual' and 'from heaven'... The categories of 'spirit' and 'heaven' point ... to the authority which belongs to God's reign. Christ, in giving us back our life, has endowed it with authority and power." *The Desire of The Nations*, p. 142.

Verse 46

ἀλλ• οὐ πρῶτον τὸ πνευματικὸν ἀλλὰ τὸ ψυχικόν, ἔπειτα τὸ πνευματικόν.

ἔπειτα then, afterwards

Verse 47

ὁ πρῶτος ἄνθρωπος ἐκ γῆς χοϊκός, ὁ δεύτερος ἄνθρωπος ἐξ οὐρανοῦ.

γη, γης f earth

χοϊκος, η, ον made of earth or dust

See Gen 2:7, maybe an allusion also to Gen 3:19.

δευτερος, α, ον second

After δευτερος ἄνθρωπος the TR includes ὁ κυριος. This would seem to be a conflated text reflecting Marcion's substitution of ὁ κυριος for the second ἄνθρωπος.

Verse 48

οἷος ὁ χοϊκός, τοιοῦτοι καὶ οἱ χοϊκοί, καὶ οἷος ὁ ἐπουράνιος, τοιοῦτοι καὶ οἱ ἐπουράνιοι·

οἷος, α, ον relative pronoun of what kind
τοιοῦτος, αὐτη, οὗτον correlative pronoun
and adj. such, of such kind, similar, like
ἐπουράνιος, ον heavenly, that which
pertains to heaven

"Then we shall have the same form and essence which He now has since His resurrection." Luther. Concerning the promise that those who belong to Christ will be made like him in his resurrection life, see also 1 John 3:2 and Phil 3:21

"Paul calls for eschatological realism. Humankind remains *human and fragile* prior to the resurrection of the last day. Already the new order has begun a transformation at the level of Christlikeness of being 'from the Holy Spirit' in a limited sense that still leaves fallibility and constraint. Those at Corinth must not think and act as if they were already 'there.' Above all, however, the model of the raised mode of being of the raised Christ constitutes a form (σωμα) and total self (σωμα) 'from heaven,' i.e., grounded in the reality of God and the new creation. This renders the resurrection 'body' which lies in the future yet more credible and conceivable, and binds together the *somatic* and the process of *growth in holiness* as *inextricably* the mark of a mode of existence *directed by the divine Spirit, anticipated in Christ's raised life, and decreed by God* (cf. 1 Cor 2:11-15; 3:1-3; 15:21-28, 38-44). It is in the future that 'Christians are destined to become heavenly in the image of the heavenly Man,' i.e., the man 'from heaven.'" Thistleton

Verse 49

καὶ καθὼς ἐφορέσαμεν τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ
χοϊκοῦ, φορέσομεν καὶ τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ
ἐπουρανίου.

φορεω wear
εἰκων, ονος f likeness, image, form

φορεσομεν "The majority of the more ancient MSS read 'let us bear [φορεσωμεν] instead of *we shall bear* in the second part of the verse. If this reading is adopted then Paul is exhorting the Corinthians to put on their heavenly state, progressively make it their own... The context seems to make it clear that *we shall bear* is the right reading." Morris. Metzger and Thistleton also favour the indicative. The subjunctive looks like a primitive corruption which may be the result of mishearing dictation.

Day 415: 1 Corinthians 15:50-53**Verse 50**

Τοῦτο δέ φημι, ἀδελφοί, ὅτι σὰρξ καὶ
αἷμα βασιλείαν θεοῦ κληρονομήσαι οὐ
δύναται, οὐδὲ ἢ φθορὰ τὴν ἀφθαρσίαν
κληρονομεῖ.

φημι say, affirm
σαρξ, σαρκος f flesh, physical body,
human nature
αἷμα, ατος f blood

Denotes humankind in its present weakness and vulnerability.

κληρονομεω gain possession of, inherit
φθορα, ας f decay, corruption
ἀφθαρσια, ας f imperishability,
immortality

Some commentators see here a reference to two groups: flesh and blood signifies those still alive when Christ comes again while 'decay' signifies those who have died. "Neither the living nor the dead at the coming of Christ will go into the kingdom as they are. Both must be changed." Morris. But it is better to preserve the parallelism between the two halves of the verse.

Verse 51

ἰδοὺ μυστήριον ὑμῖν λέγω· πάντες οὐ
κοιμηθήσομεθα, πάντες δὲ ἀλλαγῆσομεθα,
μυστηριον, ου n secret, mystery

The sense is normally of something formerly unknown but now revealed, but the meaning here seems closer to our English word 'mystery'. "Paul cannot and does not say more about the precise nature of the change." Thistleton

"The textual variants reflect complex concerns of theology." Thistleton. See *Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* and Fee for details. The text given here is undoubtedly original. Early amendments seem to have arisen in the wake of Paul's death.

κοιμηθησομεθα Verb, fut pass dep indic, 1 pl κοιμαομαι see v.18

"Some think that Paul means that the second coming will take place in his own lifetime, but this is to press his words illegitimately... [compare 6:14; 2 Cor 4:14; 5:8; Phil 3:11] ... Paul often classes himself with those he is describing without any implication that he is one of them (cf. 6:15; 10:22)." Morris. The meaning is 'not all of *us Christians* will sleep' cf. 1 Thess 4.

ἀλλαγῆσομεθα Verb, fut pass indic, 1 pl
ἀλλασσω change, alter, exchange

"Paul's major concern is *God's orderly plan for humankind* as a corporeity, and for believers as the corporate body of Christ. *It does not matter, he urges, whether you have died or are still alive at the end time: all of us (equally) 'will undergo transformation.'*... This part of Paul's declaration serves to give assurance equally that those who have died lose nothing that will be experienced by those who will still be alive at the parousia, and conversely assures those who might survive that they, too, like the dead, share in the same experience of resurrection." Thistleton

Verse 52

ἐν ἀτόμῳ, ἐν ῥιπῇ ὀφθαλμοῦ, ἐν τῇ
ἐσχάτῃ σάλπιγγι· σαλπίζει γάρ, καὶ οἱ
νεκροὶ ἐγερθήσονται ἀφθαρτοὶ, καὶ ἡμεῖς
ἀλλαγῆσομεθα.

ἀτομος, ον indivisible; ἐν α. in a
moment, in an instant
ῥιπη, ης f blinking (of an eye)

More correctly, the term denotes rapid eye movement – 'shooting a glance' out of the corner of the eye.

ἐσχατος see v.45
σάλπιγγι Noun, dat s σαλπιγξ, ιγγος f
trumpet, trumpet blast

"In both Testaments (Exod 19:16; Zech 9:14; 1 Thess 4:16) manifestations of God are associated with the sound of 'the trumpet.' Additionally, however, 'the trumpet' awakens a sleeping army to be urgently aroused to activity, including possible battle when *the alert* is sounded... Bruce cites ... the 'great trumpet' for the return of the exiles in Isa 27:13 (cf. Matt 24:31) and that of the year of Jubilee (Lev 25:9), as well as the apocalyptic trumpet for the Lord's descent from heaven in 1 Thess 4:16-17." Thistleton

σαλπίζω sound a trumpet
ἀφθαρτος, ον imperishable, immortal

Cf. v.42 "The σωμα will be raised 'without degenerating decay' at the very least; perhaps Paul means also here *the reversal of decay*, i.e., *flourishing*." Thistleton

Verse 53

δεῖ γὰρ τὸ φθαρτὸν τοῦτο ἐνδύσασθαι
ἀφθαρσίαν καὶ τὸ θνητὸν τοῦτο
ἐνδύσασθαι ἀθανασίαν.

δεῖ impersonal verb it is necessary

"Paul stresses the continuity between our present and our future states with a fourfold use (in this verse and the next) of the word 'this': 'this perishable'... (NIV omits all four)." Morris. "The same identifiable, recognisable, and accountable identity ... is transfigured into a *radically different form*, but remains 'this' *created being in all its wholeness*." Thistleton

φθαρτος, η, ον subject to corruption
ἐνδύσασθαι Verb, aor midd infin ἐνδύω
dress, clothe; midd put on, wear
ἀφθαρσία see v.50
θνητος, η, ον mortal
ἀθανασία, ας f immortality