

Victory Through Resurrection

1 Corinthians, Vol. 36

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1 Corinthians 15:50-58

This passage is the wonderful **So *what?*** conclusion to chapter 15. This tells you what the resurrection means for you.

I. **Our Problem** (50)

1 Corinthians 15:50: *Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.*

Flesh and blood:

Cannot inherit is a statement of impossibility.

II. **God's Solution** (51-54)

1 Corinthians 15:51: *Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, . . .*

Behold means ***LISTEN!***

A ***mystery:***

This is divine revelation, recorded for all time in God's word. To reject this is to reject God, or to call Him a liar.

We . . . we: This is the doctrine of ***imminence***, meaning that it can happen at any moment. It has been imminent for nearly 2000 years.

All be changed means that regardless of whether you die before the rapture or not, you are included in the resurrection. You can't make a more clear contrast than between **not all** and **all**.

1 Corinthians 15:51-52: *Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.*

Moment . . . twinkling of an eye means this is an instant thing, not a gradual process.

Last trumpet doesn't necessarily mean the final trumpet blast of all time.

1 Corinthians 15:53: *For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.*

1 Corinthians 15:54: *But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP in victory. . . ."*

The quotation is from Isaiah 25:8.

III. **Our Victory** (55-57)

Now comes a victory song or triumph. It uses words derived from

1 Corinthians 15:55: [From Hosea 13:14] "O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?"

Sting is the Greek word *kentron*, which was used for the sting of scorpions and serpents. Their power to harm is all in their sting, which immobilizes their prey. It hurts, and it kills. Death is personified as a venomous enemy that is rendered harmless.

1 Corinthians 15:56: *The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law;*

The power of sin is the law. That phrase sums up several important theological sections of Romans and Galatians in 7 words.

Galatians 3:24: *Therefore **the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ**, so that we may be justified by faith.*

1 Corinthians 15:57: *. . . but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Galatians 3:13–14: *Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us—for it is written, “CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE”—in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we would receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.*

That leads to the greatest **So what?** statement in the Bible.

IV. **God's Call** (58)

1 Corinthians 15:58: *Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.*

The command **BE** is literally **become**. The Corinthians were lacking in their commitment. The call to them and to everyone else striving to live righteously in this life is the same.

Steadfast translates a word that describes having a stable purpose and refusing to be disturbed from it.

Immovable comes from a fascinating word that underlines the thought of **steadfast**.

Always abounding in the work of the Lord. Knowing Christ and walking in His Spirit in obedience to His word produces the power to do His work.

Ephesians 2:10: *For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.*

Knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord is a glorious promise.

Toil describes hard work to the point of fatigue. It isn't easy, but . . .

Not in vain. The word *vain* means **empty**. It's quite likely the rewards will not be visible in this life. Even the rewards you might see in this life will pale in comparison to eternal rewards.

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