

Raised in Glory

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[0 : 00] Turn your Bibles to 1 Corinthians chapter 15, where we continue this theme on resurrection and read about the resurrection body.

! 1 Corinthians 15, we'll start reading at verse 35 and read through 49.

! But someone will ask, how are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come? You foolish person! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies.

And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body.

For not all flesh is the same, but there is one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish.

[1 : 05] There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is of one kind, and the glory of the earthly is of another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars, for star differs from star in glory.

So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, but what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor. It is raised...

I'm sorry. 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.

If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. Thus it is written, The first man, Adam, became a living being. The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

But it is not the spiritual that is first, but the natural, and then the spiritual. The first man was from the earth, a man of dust.

[2 : 18] The second man is from heaven. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust. And as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven.

Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven. Our text this evening begins with a question.

Two questions, really, but they're both driving at the same point. What kinds of bodies will we have when we are raised from the dead? Now, we might think these questions are innocent.

These are questions merely coming from a place of curiosity. Like questions that maybe some of you children ask your parents at night.

As you're laying in bed, it's time to turn off the lights. And all of a sudden, somehow, you have every possible contemplative question come to your mind right then and there.

[3 : 24] Maybe tonight even that question will be, Could you tell us the full story of Hansel and Gretel? Can you tell us how all of that goes? The whole thing, start to finish, please, mom, dad. Questions they've been saving up all day long.

Surely it's not to stall going to bed, is it, kids? Maybe some of us parents fall into the trap, though, and we love to talk through those questions. It's questions like these in our passage tonight, even. Maybe, kids, that you would think to ask mom or dad. What kinds of bodies will God's people have when they're raised from the grave? Children and adults alike, we're curious to know, aren't we? Now, here in this passage, the people that Paul is addressing, they weren't asking those questions with that humble curiosity that I just spoke of.

What drove those questioners was very different. And we've seen already in chapter 15, Paul is not coming to gladly give an answer with a happy, joyful spirit about him because these Christians are asking questions, because they're marveling with wonder at God.

[4 : 35] No, Paul is rebuking false teaching that's creeping its way into the church. A false teaching that is of grave concern to Paul. So we can actually trace his thoughts here, all the way back to verse 12 of this chapter.

And there, Paul himself asks this question. Now, if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection?

So he has firmly and clearly answered that question and demonstrated to the Corinthians and to us that there is indeed a resurrection. Paul now moves to answer these, what you might call, follow-up questions from among the Corinthians.

So imagine less a child lying in bed saying, but dad, tell me more about the resurrection. And imagine more a scoffer smirking and shaking his head and saying, how ridiculous!

How ridiculous! You really think our bodies will rise from the dead? They've rotted in the ground all these years. Who could believe in the resurrection of the dead? Who could believe that kind of doctrine when you tease it out, even just a little bit, and think about how gross the body will be?

[5 : 50] Try to explain that, Paul. So you see, these questions are filled with doubt and disbelief. What crazy person would believe these kinds of things?

So Paul goes to work here in our passage tonight to answer these questions, and he does not hold back his rebuke, does he? He says unabashedly, you foolish person!

Another translation focuses more so on the questions themselves, saying these are stupid questions. Now as we're going to see, the answers are not foolish or stupid at all.

No, the answers to these questions are glorious and encouraging. They are wonderful answers.

Paul teaches us here about our resurrection bodies in more detail than anywhere else in the Scriptures.

These are valuable, helpful answers that he gives to us. We are given here a taste of eternity. That should fill our hearts with hope and with joy and with eager anticipation for what will be in the age to come.

[6 : 56] So simply asking, what will our resurrection bodies be like? Desiring to know more about our glorified bodies, that is not an inherently bad desire or a bad question to ask.

Paul isn't upset about the question, but the spirit in which these questions were asked among the Corinthians. The spirit of doubt and disbelief, not longing for what will be, not marveling at what will be, but mocking the idea of it all.

Because isn't it true? To doubt the resurrection, or to doubt the resurrection body, is really to doubt the power of God.

It's not wrong to ask, well, what will our resurrection bodies be like when we fully believe that our bodies will be raised? But it is wrong to speak as though resurrection bodies of any sort couldn't be possible, because that is a direct attack on the very nature of God himself.

That is the foolishness that Paul is so vehemently rebuking. So we can ask, what will our bodies be like when they're raised? But don't doubt for a moment that God will raise them when he's said that he will, when he's proven that he can, as he's already raised his son from the dead.

[8 : 21] So all of that to say, heart attitude matters. So tonight, with humble, awe-inspired curiosity, we can ask about our resurrection bodies.

And in these verses that follow tonight, we're taught much about them. We're really taught this basic truth. Our bodies will be the same, but also gloriously different.

Now that's a tough idea to wrap your head around. Our bodies will be the same, but also gloriously different. So to help us tonight, Paul will teach us this truth from three different angles.

He's going to teach us by way of illustration. And then he's going to pivot, and he's going to teach us by way of instruction. And then he's going to pivot again, and he's going to teach us by way of identification.

So we have our three eyes laid out for us tonight. And let's begin with the first, the illustration. And let me read again, beginning in the second half of verse 36.

[9 : 25] What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain.

But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. For not all flesh is the same, but there is one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish.

There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is of one kind, and the glory of the earthly is of another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars, for star differs from star in glory.

So the emphasis here in these opening verses is on, first, continuity. Sameness. Paul is helping us to see that our present bodies, rather than being discarded and done away with, they will be changed.

In fact, that's exactly the word that Paul uses later in 1 Corinthians 15, when we come to verse 51. He says that we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.

[10:38] Our bodies will undergo a great transformation, but our bodies will still be our bodies. It's not swapping out one for another entirely different body.

It's not one body that is raised and another body that stays there in the ground. No, the body that is put into the ground is the body that will be raised. So, we don't have two bodies, one now and one to come.

We have one body, but that body will be transformed. We've had it read already tonight, or actually recited for us from memory. Philippians 3.21.

What will Christ do? He will transform our lowly body to be like His glorious body. Amen. Our confession as well, the 1689, helps us to understand this.

In the second to last chapter, in the second paragraph of that chapter, this is what we read. All the dead will be raised up with the very same bodies, but not, sorry, will be raised up with the very same bodies, not different ones, though they will have different qualities.

[11:48] So, same bodies, not different ones, though they will have different qualities. Now, we're going to talk at length here soon about the different qualities, but our attention first is drawn to the fact that we'll have the same bodies, and it's the illustration that Paul gives us of the seed, which is very timely for us.

Here, it's planting season in Indiana, all of the fields around us having seeds put into the ground. Now, if you knew absolutely nothing about farming, and I mean literally nothing about it, wouldn't that be a strange sight?

Watching all of this heavy machinery being used to prepare thousands of acres of land and to plant millions of little seeds into the ground. If you knew nothing about farming, you would probably ask, what good could possibly come from putting those little tiny black spheres into the ground?

You couldn't possibly imagine that a fruitful plant would come up out of the earth. But, of course, those seeds now buried will be transformed, and from out of those seeds will come various crops. So, for us, from the soybean seed will come the soybean plant, and from the corn seed will come the corn stalk. There is, and this is the emphasis, this organic relationship between seed and what comes from the seed.

[13:21] Of course, the seed that goes into the ground does not stay in its seed state. Paul says that very clearly in his illustration there in verse 36. He says, the seed dies.

Now, technically speaking, as I learned researching farming this week, seeds don't die. What happens is the seed is buried, but it's not dead.

Now, all of that to say, Paul is not seeking to teach us precise agricultural lessons. He's making a simple point. That seed is buried, much like when your physical body dies, and it is buried.

And that seed which is buried, again, doesn't remain in its seed state, just as our bodies won't remain in their natural, decaying state. But life comes from the seed as it undergoes that great transformation in the ground.

You don't plant a seed. Well, you can tell me this, kids. Would you plant a seed, leave it in the ground for four or five months, and then expect that seed to still be there in the ground and call it a successful farming season?

[14:27] Let's go dig up all of our seeds and let's eat them. You might as well go bury a rock in the ground, right? That's as good as burying a seed that doesn't sprout. No, there's a great transformation that takes place.

But in the midst of all this change, there is continuity. There is sameness that we can't overlook. What began with all of the properties of being a soybean remained that way from start to finish. The soybean, that seed, didn't produce a corn stalk. And this corn seed didn't go and produce a soybean plant. So it is with the resurrection body.

Your human body, sewn into the ground, is yet still your human body when raised. One commentator said it very simply. It is not a new body substituted for the old, but the old changed into the new.

To press home this point a little further, look in the passage down at verse 44. Here, Paul is getting at all the differences between your body now and your body when it is raised.

[15:39] And we could read verse 44 with all of those differences and begin to think that Paul is talking about two different human bodies, one that is natural and another body that is spiritual.

But when we read this carefully, we see that Paul is talking about one body that undergoes great change. change. Paul says that little all-important word, it.

It is sown a natural body. Semicolon. It is raised, a spiritual body. You see, there's one point of reference there. It.

That little word, it, tells us that we're talking about one and the same body. What is sown, a natural body, is raised, a spiritual body. Just as there is that organic relationship between the seed and the crop that comes from it, so there is an organic relationship between the natural body and the spiritual body.

So yes, the body you have now remains your body for all of eternity. Did not Jesus Christ have the very scars from the cross upon him when he appeared to Thomas and had Thomas to touch his hands and to touch his side?

[16:53] It was his same body but risen from the grave. The same but gloriously different just as ours will be as well.

Now, we might be tempted to ask, why is this? Why is this how things will be? Well, Paul reminds us as we often need reminding because God willed that this would be.

Look at verse 38. But God gives it a body as he has chosen and to each kind of seed its own body. So God determined this is how our bodies will be transformed.

It's his prerogative. It's his right as our creator and as our redeemer. And he has so determined that our bodies are sown in the ground like a buried seed to rise again gloriously transformed.

So many times in the book of 1 Corinthians we've been reminded that God decides, that God assigns, that God chooses.

[18:02] So many times we've been taught God is in charge. Think back to chapter 7. As it relates to our personal lives, we were told only let each person lead the life that the Lord has assigned to him and to which God has called him.

Then in chapter 12, as it relates to the body of Christ, the church, we are told, but as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them as he chose.

So now here we are. Chapter 15, learning the same truth all over again. But God gives it a body as he has chosen and to each kind of seed its own body.

This is God's wise, sovereign choice that extends even to our very bodies in resurrection. And he has chosen to raise our bodies and to transform them.

And in doing that, does he not stop the mouth of fools? In doing that, does he not showcase his power to all? Is it not fitting to say, look at what the Lord of all the earth can do, taking dead, rotting bodies and to make them live again in glorious splendor?

[19:20] God will do this with these very bodies that we have now. So we've considered something of the sameness of our bodies.

But Paul also draws our attention to the vast differences as well. And we see this transition beginning there in verse 39 as he says, for not all flesh is the same.

And then he gives us this very lengthy list of different kinds of bodies and the different physical forms for all living creatures and even beyond the earth. Different physical forms for even the planets and the stars.

Now maybe you're wondering, why did Paul give this list? It almost seems a bit like a rabbit trail at first, doesn't it? like he kind of got himself off topic here he's thinking about and he's writing about resurrection bodies and before you know it he's caught up talking about the splendor of the stars.

That almost seems like this accidental detour. But it's not. There's clear order and purpose to Paul's words here. In our Sunday school class with the teens, we're learning about how to study the Bible.

[20:35] And one of the things that we've talked about is the importance of lists in God's word. That when you see a list we should pause and we should ask, now why is this here?

Now how do all of these things in this list fit together? Because it's very likely that well if they're listed together they're put together there for a reason. This is a good example.

Here is a list. Why does Paul give it to us? Because he has the creation account in mind. Do you see it there? He's working backwards through the days of creation in Genesis 1.

So we see from the creation of humans and animals on day 6, he works back to the creation of birds and fish on day 5, to the creation of the heavenly bodies, the sun, the moon, the stars on day 4.

This isn't a rabbit trail in Paul's mind. This is a clear connection that Paul is making for us. Consider all the wonders of the created order, the beauty and intricacy and complexities of it all, the immense vastness of the universe itself, and what's more than that, consider the God who made it all.

[21 : 54] Consider who made all of the bodies in heaven and on earth. Can the problem of decay really stop him from raising up glorified bodies out of the grave if the stars can differ from one degree of glory to another because of him?

And they do. We see that the stars, we've learned that the stars differ from one degree of glory to another in great detail. We can see them now and there are some stars that are indeed more grand and impressive than others.

Our sun itself, very awe-inspiring. The fact that it is millions of miles away and yet you can't look at it without damaging your eyes. I mean, permanent damage in less than two minutes if you just stared at the sun.

That's incredible. Or how about solar flares? That's when these little mini explosions occur on the sun's surface. If you've ever seen it on video, kids, it just looks like a little puff of flame.

Just kind of a puff and it's gone. Like, nah, that's nothing. It's a little puff and we're done. But those puffs, from millions of miles away, they can interrupt all kinds of things on earth and above the earth.

[23 : 06] They can interrupt satellite and radio communication. They can impact the very power grid here on earth. It is astounding to consider just for a moment the size and the power and the heat of our sun.

And while we're on the topic of bodies, on the topic of physical matter, the sun itself accounts for 99.9% of the mass in our solar system.

Meaning, all the other planets, or all of the planets, all of the moons, all of the asteroids and comets, everything else in our solar system, including us, make up the other 0.14% of its mass.

That stat alone boggles the mind when we consider our sun. Yet, in comparison to other stars in the universe, our sun is average. Our sun is mediocre.

There are stars that are millions of times brighter than our sun. There are stars that are thousands of times brighter, thousands of times larger than our sun. If the sun were a basketball sitting on a basketball court, there are other stars that would be the arena that the basketball on the court is sitting in.

[24 : 25] Consider, then, not just the creation, but the creator, the maker of heaven and earth, the God who made all of the wonders of the universe, who made the great diversity of bodies, and even within one kind, he made different bodies.

And that's how Paul ends this list. And the end of a list is also often pretty important. How did he end it? Stars to differ from stars in glory.

If God can make the stars to differ from one another in glory, can he not make our bodies to differ in degree of glory as well? Can he not bring forth the spiritual body from the natural, like the corn stalk coming from the seed?

Or maybe a more beautiful picture like the butterfly, coming from the cocoon. Indeed, he can do this, and Paul makes that point now as he transitions from teaching by way of illustration to teaching by way of instruction.

He hammers home the point. In the resurrection of our bodies, they will be the same but gloriously different. Beginning in verse 42, we read, So it is with the resurrection of the dead.

[25 : 43] What is sown perishable, what is sown perishable is raised imperishable. 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. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.

So Paul is describing very clear-cut contrasts in this passage, in these verses. This is what our confession is getting at when it says that we will have the same bodies but with different qualities. Well, here are the different qualities that are given to us. Four of them in particular. We see the first, what was once perishable will be imperishable.

Now, we have many ways of making corpses presentable. The embalming process can trick the mind to some degree to think a dead body looks rather lifelike, to make it look as though perhaps it's not perishable.

[26 : 52] But even so, it's only to a degree. Even the best of funeral home directors can't perfectly mimic life, nor can they make a corpse resistant to decay.

A loved one who has died still does not look like themselves in death, even when embalmed by the very best. Because the natural body is perishable.

It is susceptible to decay, no matter how hard we try to slow that process, no matter how much we try to mask the effects of that. But not so with the resurrection body.

What was once susceptible to decay will no longer be. What was once fragile and frail will be impervious to all of that.

The body raised will be incorruptible, even as Christ was raised from the dead. Not with a body that was rotted and decayed. He didn't come out of the tomb looking gruesome and grotesque.

[27 : 50] No, he was perfectly whole, restored to life, a life that will never end. A resurrection body raised, imperishable. Now the second and the third qualities, they seem to go together.

What was sown in dishonor will be raised in glory, and what is sown in weakness will be raised in power. Now, in death, there is weakness and some semblance of dishonor.

Death is not attractive. One commentator translates that word dishonor as humiliation. And so in that sense, yes, there absolutely is weakness and there is dishonor associated with death.

But even in life, there is a weakness and a dishonor about our natural bodies. Now, we can think of this weakness and this dishonor in three spheres or three buckets, three categories.

First, there is weakness and dishonor associated with our natural bodies simply because we live in a world affected by the fall of Adam into sin.

[28 : 59] And so we encounter sickness and disease and pain and frustration and hardship and in all sorts of ways, we feel those effects in our bodies.

That's one sphere. Here's another. There's also weakness and dishonor associated with our natural bodies very directly as a result of being a follower of Christ in a world that hates Him.

We are opposed by others, scorned because of our faith. That we may not be physically mistreated, but certainly many Christians around the world and through church history have been.

Paul has already given himself in this letter as an example of having experienced this weakness and this dishonor in life. He said way back in chapter 4, he said, for I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels and to men.

We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute.

[30 : 15] To the present hour, we hunger and thirst, we are poorly dressed and buffeted and homeless and we labor working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless.

When persecuted, we endure. When slandered, we entreat. We have become and are still like the scum of the world, the refuse of all things.

That is a man who has known dishonor and weakness in this life. That is a man who has suffered at the hands of the world for Christ, even as Christ himself suffered, right?

In fact, Paul describes Jesus to us in 2 Corinthians 13 saying, he was crucified in weakness, but lives by the power of God.

Paul's life, our lives, to be patterned after our saviors. He is God who took on flesh, who took on a natural body, and in that body he suffered, and he bled, and he died, weak and dishonored in this world.

[31 : 24] So that's the second seer. Here's the third and the final. There is weakness and dishonor associated with our natural bodies because of remaining sin in our lives.

We are continuing to battle against our sinful hearts. There is weakness and dishonor that yet characterizes our lives simply because of our own sin.

Remember when David penned Psalm 8, this wonderful poem that recounted the creation of man. And David said, you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor.

Glory and honor. Yet in the fall, that glory and honor was marred. In the fall, because of sin, we now have weakness and dishonor associated with us.

It goes with us in life. It follows us into death. And it is not until the resurrection when that glory and honor will be fully and finally restored.

[32 : 32] What was sown in dishonor, what was sown in weakness, will be raised in glory and in power. And now finally, the last of those qualities that Paul lists for us, which is really something of kind of a summary statement of all that he's said as well as a kind of introduction to what he's about to say.

Verse 44, it is sown a natural body. It is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.

So by this, Paul means that our bodies in this life are suited for this life. Our bodies are suited to this present earthly life of imperfection patterned after the first Adam.

And our bodies in the life to come will be suited for the life to come. Our bodies will be suited for this future heavenly life of perfection in the new creation, patterned also after the last Adam, Jesus Christ.

Paul then unpacks all of this now in the remainder of our passage and he moves from teaching us by way of instruction to finally teaching us by way of identification. Beginning in verse 45.

[33 : 55] Thus it is written, the first man Adam became a living being. The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural and then the spiritual.

The first man was from the earth, the man of dust. The second man is from heaven. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust. And as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven.

Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven. So Paul continues with his contrasts here in these remaining verses.

These contrasts between the first Adam and the last Adam. And then not just that, but he's also showing how we identify with the first Adam and then how we identify with the last Adam.

Here is how we're connected with the first. Here is how we are connected with the second. But before seeing those connections, Paul explains who each of these Adams are.

[35 : 01] The first Adam, of course, is Adam in the Garden of Eden. Yet again, what does Paul do here? He draws our attention back to the creation account. We see quotes from Genesis 2.

He says, the first man, Adam, became a living being. Or you could say a living creature. So again, Paul is saying, Adam, the first Adam is associated with this life, with this natural world.

We have physical life that we can all trace back to Adam. So to say natural is Paul's way of talking about this life, this earthly existence.

And though Adam had a perfectly, a creaturely perfection about him before the fall, and therefore his natural body was without blemish, after the fall, his natural body was affected by sin.

So Adam aged. He experienced weakness. He lived by the sweat of his brow, toiling at his work, sometimes fruitlessly.

[36 : 07] And ultimately, what did Adam do? The man who was made from the dust returned to the dust. So all of that is wrapped up in Paul's description of the first Adam and his natural body.

The first Adam, he was from the earth, a man of dust. And yet, the natural is not all that there is. We need more than natural life. We need spiritual life.

And it is the last Adam who gives this. And so he is fittingly called a life-giving spirit. And it is spiritual bodies which he gives in the resurrection.

Now, this isn't to say that spiritual bodies involve some kind of disembodied existence. Remember, Paul is actually arguing against that very idea.

He's arguing against the notion that there's no resurrection. There is. And that means there are real physical bodies to be raised. So when Paul speaks of a spiritual body, that's to say a physical body animated by the Spirit, given life by the Spirit.

[37 : 17] It is an embodied existence that's made possible by the Spirit that that body could then live forever in the new heavens and the new earth. So if the first Adam and his natural body were temporal, well, the last Adam and his spiritual body is eternal.

The first Adam was from the dust and the last Adam is from heaven. Really, what Paul is teaching us here is rooted in the teachings of Jesus Christ himself.

Our Savior would often, especially in the Gospel of John, draw this contrast between the natural and the spiritual. He would draw this contrast between what is of the earth and what is of heaven.

Like when he said in John 6, 27, do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life which the Son of Man will give to you.

Or later in that chapter, verse 63, it is the Spirit who gives life. The flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are Spirit and life.

[38 : 28] And of course, what did Jesus say when he found the disciples sleeping in the garden of Gethsemane? The Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. You could say the natural body is weak and that weakness showed itself very clearly.

The disciples succumbed over and over again to sleep. So Paul, he's drawing on a contrast that our Savior taught between the natural and the spiritual, between what is of the dust and what is of heaven.

The first Adam from the dust, the last Adam from heaven. And we can identify with each. We bear the image of each.

All bear the image of Adam and those in Christ will bear the image of Christ himself. From the dust we came to the dust we return as those who bear the image of Adam with bodies like Adam's, but we will not stay in the dust.

Christ. That's the crux of the matter in these verses. We will be raised with bodies that are no longer made of dust, but made to be like Christ.

[39 : 43] Our bodies will no longer bear the image of Adam, but they will bear the image of Christ in every way. You know, in other letters that Paul wrote, he speaks of how right now we are being conformed into the image of Christ.

We are being made into the image of Christ in a moral sense. Or as Paul says in Ephesians 4, in true righteousness and holiness. That's the kind of conformity to the image of Christ that I think we often think of.

When we think of being made into the image of Christ, we think of the inner man. But don't forget that your very body will be conformed to that same image.

All of us who are in Christ, we will all made to look like Christ. Inner man and even outer man. The inner person now being made into his image and the outer person on that final day when Christ returns and we see him.

That man from heaven descending from heaven with the very same body in which he suffered and died, but yet gloriously different after he rose from the dead.

[41 : 01] And he'll do what he says. He'll transform our lowly bodies to be like his as well. That we might inherit what only the imperishable can inherit.

That we might inherit the kingdom of God and that we might live with God in his kingdom for all of eternity. Amen. Let's pray together. Heavenly Father, we have praised you today time and again for revealing yourself to us in your word, for giving us your righteous laws, for giving us the truth of your word that we might know you, that we might know how to relate to you, that we might even have a glimpse of the life that is to come.

We thank you for giving that to us, for filling us with hope and joy and giving us perseverance as we look to the resurrection. Help us to live in light of it, we pray, Father, in lives of holiness that we would be continually conformed to the image of Christ even now as we await that future day when even our very bodies will be made to look like his.

We're so undeserving, undeserving sinners that we were going astray our own way and we praise you that for so many gathered in this room tonight, in love, you've brought us to yourself and you've made us to be your own and you've given us these precious truths to cling to in this life.

We pray that you would be at work in every heart in those who are far from you this evening. Draw them to yourself that they would be made to look like Christ in all of its entirety one day.

[42 : 44] We pray all of this in his name. Amen.