

Studies in 1 Corinthians

Lesson XXXXVIII: Final Defeat, Final Victory

Text: *1 Corinthians 15:50-58 (NLT)*

50 What I am saying, dear brothers and sisters, is that our physical bodies cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. These dying bodies cannot inherit what will last forever. 51 But let me reveal to you a wonderful secret. We will not all die, but we will all be transformed!

52 It will happen in a moment, in the blink of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, those who have died will be raised to live forever. And we who are living will also be transformed. 53 For our dying bodies must be transformed into bodies that will never die; our mortal bodies must be transformed into immortal bodies.

54 Then, when our dying bodies have been transformed into bodies that will never die,^[a] this Scripture will be fulfilled:

“Death is swallowed up in victory.^[b]

55 O death, where is your victory?

O death, where is your sting?^[c]”

56 For sin is the sting that results in death, and the law gives sin its power. 57 But thank God! He gives us victory over sin and death through our Lord Jesus Christ. 58 So, my dear brothers and sisters, be strong and immovable. Always work enthusiastically for the Lord, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless.

NOTES

a. Some manuscripts add *and our mortal bodies have been transformed into immortal bodies*

b. Isa 25:8 c. Hos 13:14 (Greek version).

Questions for Discussion

1. Why can't we in our present physical state "inherit the Kingdom of God"? (vs. 50; cf. John 3:3-5)
2. What "wonderful secret" does the apostle Paul reveal in verse 51?
3. Some view verses 51-53 as evidence for a pre-tribulation rapture. Does the context of chapter 15 confirm or negate this idea? (cf. vv 23-28)
4. What will the resurrected body be like, according to verses 53-54?
5. What does the word "victory" mean to you? How does the resurrection of the dead ensure our victory over death? Why is it important that death be defeated? (vv 54-57; cf. vs. 22)
6. How does the promised resurrection give us energy for Christ in the here and now? (vs. 58)