

Paul's First Letter to the Church at Corinth

1 Corinthians

Victory Christian Center Elder Tim Herman September 13th, 2009

The resurrection (Chapter 15)

- V.29-32...baptism for the dead??
 - This scripture is a major teaching for the Mormon church as the foundation for being baptized for their deceased ancestors (since they believe baptism is required for salvation)
 - What did Paul mean "what will those do who are baptized for the dead"?
 - There are numerous theories regarding Paul's meaning
- V.29-32...baptism for the dead??
 - The fundamental rule of interpreting scripture – keep the scripture in its context. The entire chapter is about the resurrection of Christians as a result of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and Paul is now giving examples of how foolish it is to NOT believe in the resurrection (read 15:29-32 for context)
 - Apparently some in the Corinthian church believed they could be baptized for the benefit of the deceased. Paul uses this local cult belief to make his argument that if the Corinthians don't believe in the resurrection, then why would they want to be baptized for the dead?
 - Nowhere else in scripture is the subject of baptism for the dead raised
- V.29-32...baptism for the dead??
 - Note he did not say "*why am I baptized for the dead*", nor did he say "*why are WE baptized for the dead*", but rather he said "*why are 'THEY' baptized for the dead*". Paul terms are in the 3rd person (they) showing that he is NOT condoning baptism for the dead.
 - Near Corinth was a city named Eulis, a prominent area for Greek mythology and where life after death was promoted; the Eleusinian Mysteries were created here and introduces the concept of eternal life. Baptism for the dead was practiced here. It's possible that this is why Paul used 'baptism for the dead' for his argument
- 15:33-34...don't follow ignorant teachers because this will lead to sin
- 15:35-51...How are the dead raised? And, what kind of body will they have?
- "But some will say"...Jesus was only in the grave for 3 days, so how can our "bodies" be resurrected if they have decomposed?
- 15:37-41...lessons from nature:
 - Seeds and plants
 - Humans, animals, birds, and fish
 - Sun, moon, and stars
- 15:42-50...compare the earthly body with the resurrected body

<u>Earthly body</u>		<u>Resurrected body</u>
Dies	v.36	Resurrected
Seed	v.38	Whole plant
Designed for earth	v.38-41	Designed for heaven
Buried in weakness	v.43	Powerfully raised
Natural	v.44	Spiritual
Earth-based	v.49	Heaven-based
Flesh and bone	v.49	Like the Resurrected

Christ (Phil 3:20,21)

- 15:51-58...the resurrection at the Second Coming of Christ

- V.51...not all of us will die, some will be alive for Christ's returns
- V.51 and we will ALL be changed, both the dead in their graves and the living on the earth
- V.52...our bodies will be changed immediately..."in a moment", "in the twinkling of an eye".
- Assuming (for the ease of calculation) that you are standing close to that person so the transmission time from eyeball-to-eyeball can be regarded as instantaneous, and that a person's eyeball is 2.5 cm in diameter, the light would have to travel a distance of 5cm (or 1/20,000th or 2×10^{-4} of a kilometer).
- Since the speed of light is 300,000 (or 3×10^5) km/sec, this means it would take or $1/6 \times 10^{-9}$ seconds (ie $1/2 \times 1/3 \times 10^{-4} \times 10^{-5}$ seconds), or 1/6,000,000,000th of a second to make a person's eyeball twinkle: pretty fast. {Wiki-Answers.com}
 - 15:51-58...the resurrection at the Second Coming of Christ
 - V.52..."at the last trumpet", see 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
 - Is this the same trumpet sound as in Revelations 11:15? If yes, this indicates a mid-tribulation rapture (Corinthians was written 40 years before Revelations)
 - Is it symbolic of the Feast of Trumpets in the Law (Rosh Hashanah), celebrating the Jewish New Year??
 - Paul was likely referring to Matthew 24:31
 - V.53...take off one body, and put on the other (like a garment)
 - 54-55...when this happens, death has been destroyed! Quoting from Hosea 13:14 which was specific to relief the Assyrian oppression, but Paul gave it eternal meaning. It is the FINAL OVERTHROW!
 - 56-58...Therefore...based on everything we have learned about the resurrection, "keep on becoming unmovable" (Greek).