

1 Corinthians 15:50-58

⁵⁰ I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. ⁵¹ Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, ⁵² 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 shall be changed. ⁵³ For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. ⁵⁴ When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." ⁵⁵ "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" ⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁵⁸ Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

1 John 2:28 - 3:3

²⁸ And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming. ²⁹ If you know that he is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of him. ^{3:1} See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. ² Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. ³ And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

Notes:

(1) Glorification is the end goal of salvation

- we are not just saved from our sins, but saved unto glory in Christ
- if sanctification is journey, glory is destination

Glory is hard to define – honor, splendor, acclaim

- contemporary example: when sports team wins game
- in ancient world, when king returns from battle, he enters city (triumphal entry) with vanquished enemy paraded

Our salvation is God's triumph over sin and Satan

- this is God's everlasting glory

We, in some profound way, will enter into and participate in this

- 1 Peter 5 – passage says it so clearly, without giving away answer
- we will “partake in the glory” | “receive crown of glory”
- you might think, this glory is only for elders, b/c lofty position
- this glory awaits us all – 2 Corinthians 4:17

(2) This glory will be revealed at our resurrection

- so the critical question, spend rest lesson – when?

Romans 8 | critically important passage

- our future is connected to our sonship | aren't we already sons?
- already but not yet
- “futility,” “momentary affliction” | this present life
- Christian hope – we will be freed from the bondage of decay

“decay” – not just sin, but terrible effects of sin

- Genesis 2 – “you may eat of every tree, but TKGE not eat, for in the day you eat of it, you shall surely die.”
- what is this death? Spiritual *and* physical
- so what does glory of freedom from decay look like?

“Pains of childbirth”

- new metaphor to describe agony/pain of this life
- but leading up to a “birth” | connected to our sonship

Glory defined

- freedom from decay
- birth after labor pains

Finally, answer in v. 23 – “redemption of our bodies”

- not just redemption of our souls, but of our bodies
- the Resurrection | resurrected life is full meaning of sonship!
- this resurrection going to be cosmic renewal (all creation involved)

Illustration: *The Lord of the Rings*

- Gandalf “dies” in Moria in Fellowship of Ring
- Sam wakes up at end of Return of King, sees Gandalf alive
- “is everything sad going to come untrue? what's happened to world?”
- curse and sadness of Fall is going to be undone
- not just consolation prize at end, but somehow, will work backwards
- all life will be restored and renewed | get back this life, but richer

Therefore, we do not enter into glory at our death

- otherwise, glory would be a personalized, individual thing
- this is where the Ordo intersects with Redemptive History
- the final step of the Ordo is going to be a corporate experience

Because the glory to be revealed is the final triumph of our king

- remember imagery of retuning king, parading vanquished enemy
- who is that enemy?—death | 1 Cor. 15:26, “last enemy is death”
- so, when we die, and until our Resurrection, not yet entered glory

Timeline

- heaven is “intermediate state” | with Christ in paradise
- but we are waiting for final redemption
- therefore, heaven is not the final goal, not final glory!
- this is depicted in Simpsons – floating around in heaven
- the final goal is New Creation (Revelation 21)

(3) Q: When will we enter into glory? A: When King Jesus returns

“Those who have fallen asleep”

- those who have died
- to convey that death is not end, but one day, we will “wake up”

“Jesus will bring with him those fallen asleep”

- saints in heaven

“We who are alive, who are left until coming of the Lord”

- Christians still alive at time of Jesus’ return to earth

“Coming of the Lord”

- Greek: parousia | technical word, “appearance of king”
- goes back image of conquering king returns to city

“Dead in Christ will rise first”

- this is the final Resurrection | saints in heaven gain back bodies

“Then we who are alive will be caught up together in clouds”

- the Christians on earth will join up with Christ as he returns

This is understood by many to be the Rapture

- what happens next? | go back to heaven
- life on earth continues, with death and decay and sin

Two major problems with this interpretation

- (1) after Resurrection, death/decay continue | no renewed cosmos
- (2) in the return of king (parousia), the king dwells among people

Colossians 3 – we see same principle

- when we see Jesus (2nd Coming), we will enter glory
- and the curse will be undone, death defeated, creation renewed

1 Corinthians 15

- v. 50 – “flesh and blood cannot inherit kingdom of God”
- we in this present corrupt life cannot enter New Creation
- “we shall not all sleep (die), but we shall all be changed”
- “trumpet will sound” – trumpet announces return of king
- when king returns, “the dead will be raised imperishable”
- “death is swallowed up in victory” | death is defeated
- all these things go together at the Resurrection

1 John 2-3

- “when he appears,” “at his coming” (parousia) – 2nd Coming
- our status as children of God is connected to Jesus’ return
- because when he returns, we will “be like him”
- we will gain resurrected, glorified bodies