

# In the Blink of an Eye

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 12 May 2019

Preacher: Joshua Winters

[ 0 : 00 ] You can open them up to 1 Corinthians chapter 15. After all that food that's sitting in our stomachs, I think I'm going to have to be extra animated this morning just to make sure none of you fall asleep.

1 Corinthians chapter 15. This will be the last message in our series talking about the resurrection. Just to remind you where we've been, we began this series at the beginning as Paul is reminding the Corinthian church of the gospel, of the good news about Jesus that they must hold firmly to so that they can be saved.

Paul goes on to remind them what the gospel is. The good news about Jesus is that he died for our sins to be forgiven. He was buried.

He was raised back to life from the dead on the third day. And then he appeared to a whole bunch of people. One of those people was Paul himself who writes this.

Paul went from there to talk about what some in the Corinthian church had been saying. There were some in the church who had been saying that there is no resurrection from the dead.

[ 1 : 21 ] That resurrection, it's not a thing that God does. There's no life after death. They were kind of categorically denying it. Paul says there's serious implications to that.

If the dead are not raised, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ hasn't been raised, then this is serious. You're still on the hook for all your sins.

Everything that we've been teaching and preaching about Jesus is a lie. And you've been wasting your time believing this and living this. But that's not the case, said Paul.

Christ has indeed been raised from the dead. And not only that, but his resurrection was the first part of a greater resurrection that God will bring in the future when Jesus returns.

And all who belong to Jesus are also raised from the dead. And Christ comes to rule in his eternal kingdom. From there, we went on to look at Paul's teaching about the resurrection itself.

[ 2 : 29 ] And how Paul said that we will receive new bodies from God as a gift for this new kingdom life that we're going to live in.

These bodies will be physical bodies, but they will be radically different than the bodies that we have now. They will be imperishable, not subject to death.

And we talked a little bit about that. And now we're going to pick it up in verse 50. And finish off this section of what Paul is teaching. He says this, I declare to you, brothers and sisters, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

The kingdom of God is coming. When Jesus returns, he is going to bring the kingdom of God in its fullness and establish it here on earth. And this is going to be a beautiful and perfect forever kingdom.

But the bodies that we have right now, this flesh and blood, is not fit for that kingdom. We have a problem. Our bodies as they are right now are subject to decay, breaking down, wearing out, and death.

[ 3 : 53 ] And so we need a radical transformation of this in order to inherit and be part of this kingdom that Christ is coming to bring.

Now, where did death come from? I haven't really talked about this in this series, but I just want to take a moment to go there this morning. Death is not something that God created us with at the beginning.

I'm going to read what Paul said in his letter to their church at Rome. He said, Sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin. And in this way, death came to all people.

Death came into our world. It wasn't originally part of the way that God created us to live. It came into our world as the consequence, as the punishment, a just punishment for Adam's sin against

God.

And unfortunately, we have all inherited the problem, the consequence of death from Adam, we are cut from the same cloth as him.

[ 5 : 11 ] We're descended from him. He is in us. We are in him. And so we also die. Our bodies die because of the sin of Adam and because of our own sin.

Now, ever since I was a kid, that little thought in the back of my head has been there. That doesn't seem very fair. Why are we held guilty for the sins of one man?

But as one of my mentors used to say, it may not seem fair that we are held guilty for the sins of one man, Adam, but there is a surprising gift of grace that comes along with that.

we can all be forgiven and restored to relationship with God through the action of one man, Jesus Christ.

There's a balance to this inheritance that we receive from Adam. And that's exactly where Paul goes in his letter to the Roman church. I'm going to read just a little bit of it for you in Romans 5.15.

[ 6 : 27 ] He says this, but the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many?

He goes on down in verse 18, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people.

For just as through the disobedience of the one man, the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man, Jesus, the many will be made righteous.

So, death was not originally part of God's design. It's not just a natural part of the cycle of life. It's a disorder.

It's a brokenness that came from God as a punishment for our sin against Him. But the good news is this. God didn't leave us that way.

[ 7 : 46 ] He sent Jesus to do something that would fix that problem. in verse 18, one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people.

Justification for a right standing with God again. Even though we were guilty, Christ did that one thing that was necessary to bring that for all of His people.

Sins against God forgiven. dealt with. But there's still death. There's still this problem of this body that dies.

What about that? Notice that Paul says, one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people.

And life. life is what God promises. Life is what Jesus offered. He said to Martha, I am the resurrection and the life.

[ 9 : 00 ] If anyone believes in me, he will live even though he dies. If anyone lives and believes in me, he will never die, said Jesus.

And of course He meant that in the ultimate sense. resurrection. Life after death. Eternal life. And so as we come back to our passage in 1 Corinthians, it's good news that Jesus has dealt with our need for forgiveness.

But we need something more. We need a change to this because this is going to die. This is perishable. It's subject to breaking down and wearing out.

And if we're going to live forever, we need a change to our bodies. And that's where Paul is going and what he's going to describe for us here.

Let's pick it up again in verse 51. 1 Corinthians 15 verse 51. Paul says this, Listen, I tell you a mystery. We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet.

[ 10 : 27 ] For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. This is one of the most precious verses in the whole Bible.

And from it we learn about this certain hope of the resurrection that those of us who belong to Christ are waiting for and looking forward to.

What do we learn about the resurrection here? One of the first things that I notice is that the resurrection is something that will take place in a moment. Paul says in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, or as some have rendered it in the blink of an eye.

It's not something that will happen as part of a process. It's not like metamorphosis of a caterpillar into a butterfly, something that happens gradually. It's something that God will do instantaneously.

What will he do? He says we will all be changed. The dead will be raised imperishable and we will be changed, transformed, our bodies radically made new, ready for the eternal kingdom life that God has for us to live.

[ 11 : 59 ] when will this take place? We've already heard from Paul that this will take place when Jesus returns. Back in verse 23.

But Paul tells us now that this will take place at the last trumpet. trumpet. This is an event that will happen in the future when Jesus comes and all of his people are raised to life from the dead. This is an event that happens at the end. This is the last trumpet. Jesus spoke a little bit about this with his disciples when he taught them on the Mount of Olives in the week leading up to his crucifixion.

he said this to his disciples. Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call and they will gather his elect from the four winds from one end of the heavens to the other.

[ 13 : 19 ] That's the way Jesus described it. Paul actually talked about this in his letter to the Thessalonians as well. He said this, 1 Thessalonians chapter 4 verse 16, for the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a loud command with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God and the dead in Christ will rise first.

After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. A couple different descriptions of this event, but in each case there's the mention of the trumpet call of God.

When Jesus returns, it will be something that is visible to all. It says he will come on the clouds and every eye will see, but it will also be something that is audible to all.

The trumpet call of God will be sounded and it will signal, Jesus has returned. the moment is here and when that trumpet blast is heard, all of us who belong to Christ will be raised from the dead. Verse 52, back in 1 Corinthians, for the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable and we will be changed.

[ 14 : 50 ] Let's continue on with what Paul has to say here in verse 53. He says, for the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable and the mortal with immortality.

He uses the language of clothing here. The bodies that we have right now, they're like clothes that wear out. They get holes in them, they fade, don't work right anymore.

for us to inherit this kingdom that Christ is bringing, we need a change of clothes, we need a new body, one that's not going to wear out, one that's not subject to breaking down, one that's not going to die ever again.

and that's exactly what Christ will give to all of his people when he returns by his life-giving power, an imperishable body, a transformation so that we will be not mortal but immortal, never to die again.

Paul goes on in verse 54, he says when this has taken place, when this resurrection moment has happened, then what is written in the prophets will come true.

[ 16 : 25 ] Death has been swallowed up in victory. Where, oh death, is your victory? Where, oh death, is your sting?

he borrows from the words of the prophets and points back. Long ago in God's word, God foretold of this time, a time when death, that great predator which swallows up every last one of us, will itself be swallowed up.

It will not be victorious over God's people. God's people will emerge victorious over it. Paul goes on to borrow from the words of Hosea and taunt death.

He says, where, oh death, is your victory? He's going back to the words of Hosea. God said this through Hosea long ago.

I will deliver this people from the power of the grave. I will redeem them from death. Where, oh death, are your plagues? Where, oh grave, is your destruction?

[ 17 : 44 ] I love those words. Death seems to have the last word in every last one of our lives. Not so for God's people.

God will not let death have the last word in the lives of his people. God himself will have the last word against death. And that last word is the victorious taunt of a champion who has beaten the

unbeatable.

We will join with Paul at the resurrection in this taunt and say, where, oh death, is your victory? Where, oh death, is your deadly sting now? But we must be clear, this is not a victory that we have achieved for ourselves.

This is not something that we earned by fighting the battle from our own good behavior, from our own merits. What does Paul say?

[ 19 : 03 ] He says, in verse 57, thanks be to God, he gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our victory over death at the resurrection for all of us who belong to Jesus is not something that we managed on our own because none of us could be death on our own.

This is something that God has done for us and that he gives us. Our victory over death will be because the ultimate champion stared death right in the face and won and that champion is Jesus. The victory God gives us is through our Lord Jesus Christ. and it's a gift. The song that we're going to be singing on the day that we are raised from the dead, yes, we'll join with Paul in this taunt, but it won't be we are the champions, my friends.

It'll be he is the champion, my friends. Look at what he has done for us. And so we should join with Paul, verse 57, and give thanks to God.

[ 20 : 23 ] Paul says, but thanks be to God. Thank you, God. If it weren't for this, if it weren't for what you are going to do, I'd be toast.

I'd be finished. Death would be the last word for me, and I'd be lost. if it weren't for this glorious promise and hope of resurrection, it'd be over for me.

Thank you, God, for this new and glorious body that is like Christ's, that you're going to give to me. We should join with Paul in giving thanks to God.

Finally, Paul wraps up this whole section in verse 58. We've talked a lot about the gospel, about resurrection, Christ's resurrection, and our resurrection, and now Paul brings this all to a close with a final word of encouragement in verse 58.

He says this, therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

[ 21 : 54 ] We come full circle. The first thing that Paul says is stand firm. This truth of the gospel, of the good news of what Jesus has done for you and what he has secured for you, stand firm right here where you've planted your flag and let nothing move you away from this.

Just like he said at the beginning, it's by this gospel that you are saved if you hold firmly to the word I preach to you. There will always be people who come and say this to you or say that to you or you should believe in this.

You should believe in that. you should spend your life going after this and chasing after this instead of Christ and all that Christianity and Bible stuff.

Paul says no, you stand firm on the good news of Jesus where you've planted your flag and let nothing move you. It's by this good news that you are saved.

None of that other stuff and nobody else can give you what Christ is going to give you and what he has done for you. And so stay put, stay with it here.

[ 23 : 17 ] His last word to them is this, always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

What is the work of the Lord? I do think that this applies generally to simply doing what Jesus has asked us to do in every area of our lives.

Absolutely, I think it applies to that. But I think here Paul very specifically is referring to the work of making Christ known for the salvation of other people.

That's the way he uses it in his letter to Timothy. And so I think that's how we should take it mainly here. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, to making Christ known for the salvation of other people.

This is not just something that he says or prefaces with pastors or elders, teachers, preachers, evangelists.

[ 24 : 25 ] This is something he gives to the brothers and sisters, to all of them in general. Give yourselves fully to this work of making Christ known. Others need this gospel too so that they can be saved.

It's work, work of the Lord. It's not always easy. It's not always comfortable, but we're not here to be comfortable and to have it easy.

the Lord has work for each one of us to do in making his good news known. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord.

Why? Why? Because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain. Others may say there's no resurrection.

You're wasting your time with this. no, you're not. In fact, this is what matters most. This is what will outlast this period of life that we have now and last into eternity.

[ 25 : 42 ] Others need to know. Others need to hear. This is why Paul endangered himself and faced opposition and persecution to make Christ known.

he says always give yourselves fully to this work of the Lord. Always. Not sometimes, but always.

Always give yourselves fully. Not give yourselves a lot, but half-heartedly, but fully. fully. As we bring this series to a close, I want to make it clear again that this glorious and certain hope of resurrection, of being raised from the dead when Christ returns, is not for everyone.

It's only for those who are in Christ. It's only for those who belong to Jesus, who believe in him, who acknowledge him as their Lord, their king.

It's not for people who believe in Jesus just as fire insurance, but then just live however they want to, regardless of what the Lord has said, and take his grace as a license, his forgiveness as a license to do all the wrong that they want to do.

[ 27 : 18 ] This is for those who truly belong to Jesus. As in Adam, all die, so in Christ, all will be made alive. Are you in Christ?

Do you belong to Jesus? If you have any doubts or uncertainty about that, if you feel the Holy Spirit's conviction in your life, and you want to talk to someone about that, I would encourage you to have a conversation with someone that you know, knows, and loves Jesus.

And I, of course, would be happy to talk to you about that any time as well. Let's pray. Father in heaven, thank you for this amazing gift that you will give to all of us who are your children.

We can't wait for the day when we will be made new and transformed and live forever with you. We can't wait to see how you will bring this world back to justice and righteousness and order, goodness and beauty and purge all evil.

We can't wait. We long to be a part of that, and we thank you that all of this is ours as a gift through Christ. Christ. It's in his name we pray.

[ 28 : 50 ] Amen. Amen. Whew. Thank you.

Thank you for the work that you put in, and that sermon series was really good. I got a lot out of it. I hope that you guys got a lot out of it too.

I'm going to sing one more song if you guys want to join us, join me. Why don't you stand? Why don't you stand? Everyone needs compassion, a love that's never failing.

let mercy fall on me. Everyone needs forgiveness, the kindness of a Savior, hope of a nation.

Oh, Savior, He can move He can move the mountains. My God, He's mighty to save. He is mighty to save.

[ 30 : 20 ] Forever, author of salvation, He rose and He conquered the grave. Jesus conquered the grave.

take me as you find me, all my fears and failures, fill my life again.

I give my life to follow everything I believe in. Now I surrender.

Savior, He can move the mountains. Oh, Savior, He can move the mountains.

My God, He's mighty to save. He is mighty to save. Forever, author of salvation, He rose, He conquered the grave.

[ 31 : 40 ] Jesus conquered the grave. Shine your light and let the whole world see us singing for the glory of the risen King.

Jesus, shine your light and let the whole world see us singing for the glory of the risen King.

Savior, Savior, He can move the mountain. My God, He's mighty to save. He is mighty to save.

Forever, author of salvation, He rose, He conquered the grave. Jesus conquered the grave.

forever, Jesus, God, save him to save.

[ 32 : 52 ] Jesus broke God, Jesus Christ, he viver in heaven and let the also know anybody and let the sea the heaven God, they're so I love the God, and let the