

Raised in Power and Glory

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Date: 28 September 2025

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[0 : 00] The sermon text for today is 1 Corinthians 15, 35-49.

At the conclusion of this reading, I will declare this is the word of the Lord, and the Church, in joyful response to his revelation given to us, will together say thanks be to God.

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.

[0 : 59] There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly one 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. What is raised is 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.

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

[2 : 06] Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven. This is the word of the Lord. Amen. Amen. Heavenly Father, you say that faith comes from hearing and hearing through the word of Christ.

And so, God, we have before us today the word of Christ. Father, would you bring forth faith, God, increased faith among the saints that are gathered here this morning.

And would you bring forth faith among those who do not yet possess that saving faith in Christ.

God, change us, Lord. Change us. We see your power to change in this text.

And that power is at work even now. And so, we ask that you would come change us through this word by your spirit for your glory. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Oh, good morning, church. Good morning, church.

[3 : 43] Maybe for you, it was calculus in high school or college. You know, there's no way that that abstract nonsense could possibly describe our actual world.

Anybody feel that in calculus? Maybe you don't remember taking calculus. Most of you have heard this quote from C.S. Lewis' sermon, The Weight of Glory. In the introduction to his sermon, he likens us to an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at sea.

You know, in many ways, that analogy fits quite well with the state of the Corinthians who disbelieved in the future resurrection of the dead, unable to conceive of its reality.

And so, therefore, they chose instead of believing that to indulge themselves in the far lesser fleeting pleasures of this world. In today's text, Paul is working to baptize their imaginations, if you will, with the truth that we see in God's word.

So, please turn in your Bibles to 1 Corinthians 15, 35-49. If you haven't turned there already, we have our Bibles in the back table.

[5 : 01] They're bookmarked to today's passage. Thank you, Ryan Stiefel. He wanted to keep me honest because sometimes I say that and they're not actually, but they're bookmarked to today's passage. Feel free to keep one of those Bibles as a gift to you.

We're nearing the end of our series, walking through Paul's letter to the Corinthians. And we've been considering throughout this time the church's call to display Christ in all things. And today, we're in the fourth of five weeks in this lofty chapter on the resurrection, this resurrection crescendo, if you will.

And the title of today's sermon is Raised in Power and Glory. So far in this chapter, just to zoom out a little bit and see where we've been, Paul has proclaimed in the first 11 verses the saving message of the God of the Holy Spirit.

gospel of Jesus Christ. And he called the Corinthian church to hold that gospel fast. Within that, he was also declaring the historical fact, the reality of the resurrection of Christ.

[6 : 02] And then in the following verses, it's inseparable link with the future resurrection of the dead who are in Christ. He went on to describe the hopeless state of Christians if Christ has not been raised, but then immediately followed that with an assertion that Christ has indeed been raised.

And that means that we too shall be raised when Christ returns. And on that day, every evil power will be subjected to Christ, and it will be plain to all that God reigns supreme.

So we should live our lives today in light of that, right? Christ's resurrection, as we said last week, it not only ensures our future hope, but it also empowers our present mission.

And then Paul does what he does so well throughout his letters. He raises and answers potential or perhaps actual objections to what he's been arguing.

And so if you look at verse 35, he says, But someone will ask, How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come? And this sort of provides the framework for the rest of the chapter.

[7 : 09] Paul's going to answer that second question in today's passage and that first question in next week's passage. How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come? Now those seem like very fair questions to ask, right?

It's like they're saying, Okay, Paul, help us out here. If the dead are going to be raised, how exactly is that going to happen? I mean, dead bodies decompose really, really fast, right?

Like how is God going to work with that? And what about for guys that have been, I don't know, torn apart by animals? Like the femurs over there and the skulls over there.

Like how is God going to know that they go together? You know, we have questions, Paul. And are you really saying that we're going to be forced to wear these pathetic human bodies again? I mean, we all know that Lazarus was probably not super thrilled with Jesus, you know, in the seventh sign of Christ in the book of John.

Like, really? I'm here again? These are totally fair, innocent questions, right? Which is why Paul responds in verse 36, You foolish person.

[8 : 12] Write this down if you're taking notes. The first thing here that we see is objection and outrage. Paul responds to the Corinthians, You foolish person.

It's literally, it's just fool. It's one word, fool. And we think, yikes, Paul. Take it easy on him, right? Paul's outrage here is a hint that these might not just be innocent questions from an inquisitive Corinthian.

A story will help to illustrate this. A true story that perhaps Paul wants us to recall. In Matthew chapter 22, a religious group known as the Sadducees approached Jesus, trying to trap him in his words.

And the Sadducees, John tells us, do not believe in a resurrection. And so they pose this scenario to Jesus in which there were seven brothers. The first marries a woman, but then he dies.

So his next older brother marries the wife, as was his duty to preserve the family line. But that brother dies, and each of the seven brothers die. And so the Sadducees ask Jesus, In the resurrection, therefore, of the seven, whose wife will she be?

[9 : 23] An innocent question, right? Jesus answered them, You are wrong, because you know neither the scriptures nor the power of God. For in the resurrection, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.

As for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God? I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. He is not God of the dead, but of the

living.

The not-so-innocent question from the Sadducees receives a not-so-soft answer from Jesus. And Jesus exposes the root issue. You know neither the scriptures nor the power of God.

Ouch. I mean, these are the leaders of Judaism that Jesus is speaking to. And you know, Paul had just said in verse 34, the end of last week's passage to the Corinthians, For some have no knowledge of God.

I say this to your shame. Ouch, right? Like, these are the Corinthians who prided themselves in knowledge of spiritual things. Paul exposes how the Corinthians are being led astray by the pagan culture around them into both sinful living and sinful beliefs.

[10:40] So these objections regarding the resurrection of the dead, they reveal not innocent curiosity, but this sinful skepticism that refuses to take God at his word.

And so right here in the opening of this passage, we're confronted with the reality of the darkness of the human heart. You know, we are quite capable of erecting arguments against the truth that God has plainly revealed because it messes with our personal desires and agendas.

We're really good at that. You know, all doubts are not created equal. Okay, there are different kinds of doubts. They come in different shapes and sizes. And we need to do the heart-searching work to uncover the root of our doubts that God might lead us out of them and into deeper trust in him.

And that's what Paul hopes here for the Corinthians. He's now going to direct their gaze at God using nature as teacher. And so the second point here is nature's sermon.

God's unmatched power and creativity. In these next verses, verse 36b to 41, Paul employs three different illustrations or analogies from the natural world to get the Corinthians to consider God's unmatched power and creativity.

[11:56] In light of that, Paul wants them to realize how plausible a resurrection of the dead actually is. And so the first illustration that we see here is that of plants.

Or you might call it a seed analogy. Paul goes to the plant world, and there's four actual distinct lessons that Paul has in using this analogy. So let's look at them. Verse 36b, Paul says, what you sow does not come to life unless it dies.

The first lesson here, the seed must first die. That's metaphorically speaking. That is, the seed must first come to the end of its own existence as a seed, right?

Planted in the ground. And this reminds us of Jesus' words. We quoted this last week, John 12, 24. Jesus said, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone.

But if it dies, it bears much fruit. Now he was speaking then about his own death and the harvest that would come from that. But the principle is still the same, right?

[12:58] The seed is buried, the seed comes to the end of its own existence, and that's a prerequisite for a harvest to emerge. Verse 37, and what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or some other grain.

So here's the second thing that we see here, this lesson, the resulting body has the same identity, but it differs in form. The same identity, but it differs in form. Paul is mixing language here.

He uses the term body to make it clear that what he's really talking about is not plants, but the resurrection of the dead. What you sow is simply a seed, but what comes up from the ground looks nothing like the seed that went into the ground, right?

There is continuity on the one hand. It's the same thing in essence, the same identity, but there's also this radical discontinuity. That plant, it takes on a whole new form that looks radically different from the mere seed that was planted.

The same, but different, right? Verse 38, but God gives it a body as he has chosen. The resulting body is sovereignly determined by God.

[14:10] God is the one who has decided what seeds will produce which plants, and God will sovereignly determine what each of our resurrected bodies is going to be like.

And then Paul says, and to each kind of seed its own body. The resulting body is according to its kind. And Paul is drawing heavily here in these verses on the creation account of Genesis chapter 1.

On day 3 of creation, God spoke and he brought forth the vegetation and the plants and the trees, the text in Genesis says three times, each according to its kind.

Each according to its kind. When Christ returns and the dead are raised, we can be sure that we'll not be some other creature or thing. We will be raised as humans, right?

And as humans that are re-clothed with a glorious and new body. They're going to make these bodies look shabby like mere kernels in comparison.

[15:09] So that's the plant or the seed analogy. And then second, Paul turns to the animal kingdom, to the living creatures. Look at verse 39. For not all flesh is the same, but there is one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish.

On day five of creation, by the power of his voice, God commanded the seas to swarm with living creatures.

He commanded the air to be filled with birds. And then on day six, God created livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth. And by his word, he spoke mankind into existence, creating the male and female in his image and likeness.

What a vast array of creatures God has created. Has he not? Have you been lately to the Roger Williams Zoo or to the Mystic Aquarium?

I love going to the Mystic Aquarium. My handlings have gifted us a membership there. And have you seen there that there's a video on the wall of a deep sea anglerfish?

[16:16] Has anybody seen that, the deep sea anglerfish? Man, those things are awesome and creepy. God made that thing, right? God fought that thing up. The deep sea anglerfish is capable of living thousands of feet in the deep, dark depths of the ocean.

And they're equipped, I don't know if you know this, they're equipped with this bioluminescent like fishing rod type thing that like hangs from their head that lures in the prey. And those giant mouths and those sharp, translucent teeth, I mean, they literally look like sea monsters of the deep.

Right? Now from the deep sea anglerfish to, I don't know, the American bald eagle, right? And the power and majesty of the eagle from the snow leopard, one of my personal favorite animals, and its beauty and strength to mankind that rules over creation and the image of its maker.

The Lord God has created each of these according to his unmatched power and creativity. Now saints, here's what Paul wants Corinthians to see.

If he is able to do that, just look at the animal kingdom. If God can do that from nothing, certainly he is able to raise the dead and fit the dead with bodies for heaven.

[17:34] Paul speaks of plants, living creatures, and finally, earthly and heavenly bodies. This is verses 40 and 41. 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 and glory. So Paul, he's zooming us out. He started with the micro, right?

The seed and the plant and then he zoomed out to the whole animal kingdom and now he's zooming out to the earthly and the heavenly bodies and God has designed such bodies and his inexhaustible power and his inexhaustible creativity.

We are scarcely exploring in 2025 with all of our vast technology, scarcely exploring, you know, the deep depths of the universe. Now it's one thing, you know, to behold the Niagara Falls.

681,000 gallons of water roar into the Niagara River every second. It's awesome to stand there and watch. It's another thing entirely, a different glory to behold the radiance of the sun, right?

[18:46] Coloring the sky with hues of orange and red and pink and purple as it sets or as it rises. And it's another thing still to stare into a telescope and observe those distant planets and stars and to think about how small we are in comparison.

And friends, these things exist each in their own radiance by the creativity and the power of the God of the universe who we believe created all things ex nihilo, that is, out of nothing.

And you know, just as an aside here, science cannot explain the existence of our universe or our world or our race because it's beyond the grasp of science to explain such things.

The existence of science itself, right, as a valid field of study with which we can actually explain the natural world before us, that is evidence for the existence of a God who is outside of us.

Science would not work apart from God. Logic would not work apart from God. That God, the God of the Bible, the God of history, the God who was and who is and who is to come, Father, Spirit, Son, who we were singing about before, by His infinite creativity, by the word of His power, He brought forth all the rich diversity of living creatures that populate this world.

[20 : 07] Friends, the natural world is a living sermon revealing and declaring the unmatched power and creativity of our almighty God. The heavens declare the glory of God and the sky above proclaims His handiwork.

Psalm 19.1. Go check out Matt's sermon on that earlier from this summer. Psalm 19.1. And so in Psalm 148, it's a beautiful song of praise. Every creature, every living thing and even things that are not living like the mountains, they're called to praise the Lord.

Praise the Lord from the heavens. Praise Him in the heights. Praise Him, sun and moon. Praise Him, all you shining stars. Let them praise the name of the Lord for He commanded and they were created.

Praise the Lord from the earth, you great sea creatures and all deeps, mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars, beasts and all livestock, creeping things and flying birds, kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth, young men and maidens together, old men and children.

Let them praise the name of the Lord for His name alone is exalted. His majesty is above earth in heaven. Yes, let us respond to the psalmist's call and give praise to our almighty creator God.

[21 : 25] In church, let us also be moved to trust Him and to take Him at His word. That is what Paul is trying to get the Corinthians to do. If that's what God is capable of doing, then what can't He do?

What can't He do? Surely, if God is able to, from nothing, fit every body in heaven and on earth in appropriate glory, He is also able to raise the dead in Christ and clothe them appropriately with bodies fit for heaven.

Sherlon, I want to ask, are there any areas in which you're allowing your finite, limited perception of things to shape what you believe to be reality?

You know, I suspect for most of us here, it's not the topic that the Corinthians struggled with. Like, maybe we don't struggle with the resurrection of the dead. I don't know. But perhaps it's something else.

Perhaps it's, you know, is heaven really going to be all that great? Right? Can there really be a place where there's no pain, no mourning, no crying, no tears or death?

[22 : 38] Are future heavenly rewards really worth the loss of earthy ones? Is fellowship with God really more precious, more satisfying than worldly treasures?

Perhaps closer to home still. How could there possibly be a purpose to my pain and suffering? This is but a short list of the doubts that we face as we go through this journey of life.

What is it for you though? Do you doubt any of the truths of God's word because you cannot conceive of how it could be true? The text is calling us, brothers and sisters, to fight our doubts, to doubt our doubts by letting the nature, the character, the proven works of God shape our beliefs, not our limited perception of reality.

It's who God is, it's what God is able to do that matters, not our ability to understand or conceive of what might be possible. Having considered nature's sermon, Paul then takes those lessons and he applies it explicitly to the future resurrection of the dead.

That brings us to the third point here. Nature's sermon applied to the resurrection body. So is it with the resurrection of the dead, Paul says.

[24 : 05] What is sown is perishable, what is raised is 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.

In contemplating the unmatched power and creativity of God, Paul has prepared the Corinthians to take in this lofty message about the magnificence of the Christian's future resurrected body, and that as compared with our present earthly body.

So let's look at each of these four comparisons in turn. What is sown is perishable, what is raised as imperishable? Like the seed that must first die.

These present earthly bodies, they're not meant to last, right? These are temporary. Each of us has our own expiration date established by God.

We're reminded here at the inevitable process of decay that this world has been subjected to by God because of sin. But church, in the resurrection of Christ, that process is reversed.

[25 : 20] It's reversed. This renewal is taking place even now. Paul says, for though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day.

2 Corinthians 4.16. And what he's saying here is that when Christ returns and the dead will be raised and we will be given new bodies, heavenly bodies, that are no longer subject to decay, then our bodies will not wear out.

They will not expire. They will endure forever. It is sown in dishonor, Paul says. It is raised in glory. Now we believe, Genesis 1.26 and 27, that every single human life is made with worth, with value, with dignity in the eyes of God. that we are made in his image and likeness.

And so, all mankind has worth and value. And yet, we are each corrupted by the fall. We're stained with sin and therefore we're objects of shame and dishonor.

[26 : 28] We've marred the image of God. And so, we who are in Christ, we walk around with these dual competing natures, right? we're at once saints and sinners.

On the one hand, new creations in Christ. On the other, still of the flesh. Not so when we are raised. Then our bodies shall be raised in glory and beauty and splendor.

Then they shall be holy and righteous, incorruptible. Finally bearing the image and likeness of God. it is sown in weakness.

It is raised in power. Who of us is not often made to feel our weakness? You know, the human body is amazing. It can lift hundreds of pounds and yet be rendered useless by a cold.

Right? The mind can solve complex problems and yet break down due to stress. You know, we can soar to outer space and yet wreck our cars only a minute from our houses.

[27 : 37] You know, when Christ comes and he grants to us our resurrected bodies, they will be raised in power. Then they will go from strength to strength. Then, one commentator writes, there is nothing to weigh down or to exhaust the new body of the resurrection but only power for the life of the new creation.

It is sown in weakness. It is raised in power. Fourth thing Paul says, it is sown a natural body. It is raised a spiritual body. Now, this is a little more perplexing.

I don't think natural here means material and spiritual means non-material because that would go against what Paul has been arguing so far. I think natural means empowered by the human soul and spiritual means empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Tom Schreiner writes this in his commentary what Paul means by a spiritual body is a body empowered and animated by the Holy Spirit. The body is physical but in contrast to one's earthly body it lives in a whole new realm for now it is a body enlivened by the Spirit.

Brother, are you feeling the guilt and the weight of your sin this morning? are you weary of the battle that you can never seem to win?

[29 : 01] I want you to take heart. This text is calling us to take heart. Christ has won and one day you will be clothed with the resurrection body of magnificent glory never again to be stained by sin.

sister, are you feeling weak and weary from suffering this morning? Are you brought low by some pain or tragedy?

Paul is calling us here the Lord is calling us to take heart. The weakness that you feel now it will give way when Christ returns to power to the complete reversal of death's decay for all eternity.

We sing this at Christmas that Christ comes to make his blessings flow far as the curse is found. That certainly includes these raggedy bodies of ours.

You know this reality should inspire something else in us. Namely treating others around us with love and respect. Now I'm borrowing here again from C.S. Lewis from his sermon weight of glory.

[30 : 12] He writes this at the end of his sermon. It is a serious thing to live in a society of possible gods and goddesses. To remember that the dullest and most uninteresting person you talk to may one day be a creature which if you saw it now you would be strongly tempted to worship.

There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. In light of that, Lewis urges Christians to take each other seriously.

He says no flippancy, no superiority, no presumption, but rather real and costly love. Let us see each other, brothers and sisters, with an eye towards the resurrection.

An eye towards the future glory that all of us will have with our resurrected bodies. these are the family members that we will have for all eternity.

And this fits right with this week's lesson in the gospel culture study, noticing the glory in others.

Romans 12, 10, let us outdo one another in showing honor. So Paul has reflected on nature's sermon.

[31 : 27] That sermon is about the unmatched power and creativity of God. He's applied that then to the resurrection of the dead. And now he's going to show how that sermon is affirmed in considering Adam and Christ.

And so that's the last thing that we see here. Nature's sermon affirmed in Adam and in Christ. Look in your Bibles at second half of verse 44.

If there is a natural body, Paul says, 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.

First sub-point here, there is a natural body and a spiritual body. Now Paul, he latches on to that fourth comparison, the natural spiritual contrast. And he points out how that contrast is at play when looking at the first man, Adam, and the last Adam, which is Jesus Christ.

Paul is quoting from Genesis 2, verse 7. That verse says, then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and he breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and the man became a living creature.

[32 : 46] And in contrast to Adam, Jesus Christ became the firstborn of the new creation, the last Adam. He became a life-giving spirit, Paul says.

See, Adam was made alive, but Jesus makes alive. Adam, through sin, was subject to death and decay, but Jesus reverses the process and breathes life to the dead.

And you know, Christ does that even now, right now, in a spiritual sense. And then one day he's going to breathe life to the bodies of the saints who have died and he's going to raise them up to a glorious new existence.

So Paul says in Romans 8, verse 11, if the spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, see there's the first fruits, the Holy Spirit in us, if he dwells in you, then he who raised Jesus Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his spirit who dwells in you.

That's the hope of heaven right there. And so Paul, he's pulling back those analogies he had been using, just like there are different kinds of living creatures, just like the glory of earthly and heavenly bodies differ one from another, so there is a natural body and a spiritual body as we see in Adam and Christ and Paul continues in verse 46, but it is not the spiritual that is first, but the natural and then the spiritual.

[34 : 14] The first man was from the earth, a man of dust, the second man is from heaven. So write this down, the natural comes first, then the spiritual. Paul is underscoring the proper order of things.

He might have been opposing some of the Greek thinking of the day, but either way, he's saying we do not yet possess spiritual bodies fit for the glory of heaven. That should seem pretty obvious to us.

Right now we possess these natural bodies, right? It's just a mere seed. It's a mere seed. The spiritual body that is to come will be something the same but radically different, and this again is seen in looking at Adam and Christ.

Now this time he calls Adam a man of dust. Paul is taking us back not only to Genesis 2 7 that I read earlier, but also to the fall, right?

Paul is pointing to Genesis 3 19 after Adam and Eve had chosen sin, self, over God. We read these words from God himself to Adam.

[35 : 20] He says, By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground. For out of it you were taken, for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

Adam is the man of dust, subject to death, subject to decay. But the second man, that is Christ, he's the man from heaven.

Adam with his natural body subject to death, he came first a mere seed. But then Christ, with his heavenly body, which was impossible to be held down by death, he came revealing what that seed might look like come the harvest.

There is a natural body and a spiritual body. The natural comes first and then the spiritual. And lastly, Paul explicitly establishes our connection with both Adam and Christ, in case there was any confusion.

Third thing, now we wear natural bodies. Then, spiritual. Now we bear Adam's image. Then, Christ. Verse 48, As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust.

[36 : 29] And as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. Just as we, notice he changes it now to the first person, just as we have born the image of the man of dust, we shall bear the image of the man of heaven.

This is really Paul's concluding statement in answering that skeptical question of the Corinthians. With what kind of body do they come? It is a body, Paul argues, of a whole other degree of glory than these present ones.

It's a body imperishable and powerful, a body empowered and animated by the Holy Spirit. It is a body like that of Christ. We shall have a body, saints, we shall have a body in the likeness of Jesus Christ, the man of heaven.

Now if you've never seen the mighty oak tree that results from an acorn seed, then you'll have trouble conceiving what that seed might become, right? But like we were saying earlier, your imagination is not the determining factor, is it?

That seed is going to become an oak tree, even if you think it's just a seed of grass, or lifeless. God is the determining factor, not us.

[37 : 47] And so we look at these bodies of death, bearing the image of the man of dust, we see sin and death and decay at work in them, right?

From our physical ailments, whether it's stubbing your toe, or chronic pain, or worse, to the chaos that we see in our homes, to the violence and the destruction that dominates the news, and it makes these lofty promises of a future resurrection and spiritual bodies of glory seem inconceivable, unimaginable.

But friends, when we look at the majesty and the beauty and the glory of the risen Lord Jesus Christ as revealed to us in Scripture, then all of a sudden what seemed inconceivable is within the reach of our imagination.

We shall bear the image of the man of heaven. John writes, 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.

It's 1 John 3, verse 2. Friends, the dead in Christ shall be raised, not according to our finite human imagination, but according to the power of our creator God and the glory of our risen Christ.

[39 : 10] That is what I think Paul is arguing in this passage. The dead in Christ shall be raised according to the power of our creator God and the glory of our risen Christ. And I wonder this morning, are you among that number?

Are you counted among those who have repented of their sin and believed in Christ? What we've been talking about today is promised not for everyone, but for everyone who belongs to Jesus.

And so I'm afraid, friend, that if you don't believe in Christ as your Lord and Savior, then what awaits you is not eternal life in heaven with a new and glorified body, but eternal destruction in hell under the wrath of a holy God.

But today, as long as it is called today, you have an opportunity to trust in Christ, to belong to him, and to know that these promises do in fact belong to you.

And whether you're an unbeliever or believer in this room, there's one thing I want us to glean from 1 Corinthians 15, and that is we are never told as Christians to abandon reason and logic in the name of faith.

[40 : 27] We're never told to check our brains at the door. In this chapter, Paul has not left intellect, I'm sorry, he's not left intellect and rationality by the wayside.

In fact, quite the opposite. Christians must surely come to faith in Christ. We receive the free gift of eternal life by faith, but that faith is not a blind faith.

It's a reasoned faith. It's built on a solid foundation. Now, to be sure, there are divine mysteries that we will never understand. The Lord calls us to trust in him, and that shouldn't come as a surprise to us.

All the time as parents, we're calling our kids to trust us because they cannot yet fully understand why something must be so. They trust us, though, not blindly.

They trust us because we've proven ourselves trustworthy to them. All the more, our trust in the Lord is based on his proven trustworthiness. But in this chapter, Paul's calling upon the Corinthians not to abandon, but to engage in logic, to think critically and rationally in accordance with what is actually true.

[41 : 39] And we might not always view it this way, but it's truly human pride that says, because I don't know the answers to certain questions, such answers do not exist. It's actually pride.

Perhaps they do exist, and you just don't know them yet. And this is meant to be a call to skeptics and doubters. Have an honest discussion with the Christian and see if there are not answers to

some of your questions.

More importantly, read this and see if there are not answers to some of your questions. Perhaps Christianity is far more reasoned and logical than the caricatures that are out there.

This is also meant to be an encouragement to the saints in this room. We believe in the God who created all things by the word of his power, and he has made an ordered world in which science and logic exist and work.

Christianity offers a logical, coherent, and satisfying worldview because God is infinitely intelligent, perfectly consistent, and he is all satisfying.

[42 : 45] And that means, saints, that we can rest confident in the promise that we see in this passage, that according to God's power, according to Christ's glory, the dead in Christ shall be raised.

In the fourth novel in C.S. Lewis' Chronicles of Narnia series, we're going heavy on Lewis today. The Voyage of the Dawn Treader, a great book.

It's about King Caspian and a brave crew from Narnia that set out on an adventure across the eastern, the great eastern ocean in search of the seven lost lords of Narnia.

Narnia. And they're joined by Edmund and Lucy and their cousin Eustace who are transported to Narnia through a painting in their home in England. And that journey, it takes the crew to the utter east, to the very end of the world.

And in that last stretch of sea, Reepa Cheep, the brave, loyal mouse, he jumps overboard only to learn that that water is sweet to the taste.

[43 : 51] He calls it drinkable light. And so they pull up a bucket for everybody to taste. And Lewis writes this, they felt almost too well and strong to bear it. And presently, they began to notice another result.

As I have said before, there had been too much light ever since they left the island. The sun too large, the sea too bright, the air too shining. Now the light grew no less.

If anything, it increased, but they could bear it. They could look straight up at the sun without blinking. They could see more light than they had ever seen before. And the deck and the sail and their own faces and bodies became brighter and brighter and every rope shone.

And next morning when the sun rose, now five or six times its old size, they stared hard into it and could see the very feathers of the birds that came flying from it. So shall it be with us saints.

When the living water of the Holy Spirit courses through our resurrected bodies, we shall finally be able to behold the glory of the presence of Almighty God.

[45 : 00] Behold, our God shall live with us and be our steadfast light and we shall all his people be. All glory be to Christ.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for this word. God, this is a word of glory. This is a word that is hard to take in. And so God, I again ask you like I started that you would awaken faith in this room.

And God, may that faith move us to courage and to boldness and to passion for Christ and the gospel. May it move us to love those around us with a self-denying love.

God, may it give us hope, a strong hope in what is to come and empower us for the mission to which you have called us. God, we pray all these things in the name of Christ, our King, our Savior, the one who we shall be like when he returns.

Amen. Amen.