

APOSTLE PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS.
1 CORINTHIANS CHAPTER 15.

The resurrection of Christ and the
hope of those who belong to him

Personalized by: Ruperto Bravo Benavente (R.B.B.)

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Bible study · Estudio bíblico

Purpose

Follow Paul's full argument in 1 Corinthians 15, distinguish passages that directly affirm resurrection from passages that explain its implications, and respond with hope grounded in Christ. Read the whole chapter before using this study.

Central passages

1 Corinthians 15:1–11, 12–19, 20–28, 29–34, 35–49, and 50–58. Paul addresses a specific claim: some said there is no resurrection of the dead (15:12).

How to read the references

Direct text: explicitly states an event or promise of resurrection.

Complementary text: clarifies identity, the body, timing, consolation, or consequences. The analysis paraphrases Scripture with verse references; it is not a translation of the RVR1960. Francisco Lacueva's Greek–Spanish interlinear is listed as a reference at the reader's request. No lexical claim

or quotation is attributed to that edition without direct verification.
Doctrinal connections are distinguished from what a verse explicitly states.

Exposition of the chapter

1. The received gospel and its witnesses (15:1–11)

Scripture reference. 1 Cor 15:3–8: Christ died for our sins, was buried, was raised on the third day, and appeared to Cephas, the Twelve, more than five hundred, James, the apostles, and Paul.

Textual explanation. Paul recalls what he received and proclaimed as the heart of the gospel. The witnesses show that the claim was public. “According to the Scriptures” describes the meaning of Christ’s death and resurrection, though Paul gives no single proof text for each detail here. He acknowledges having persecuted the church and credits his ministry to grace (15:9–11).

Doctrinal connection. Christ’s historical resurrection grounds the apostles’ proclamation; our moral progress is not its starting point.

Application. Return to the announcement of Christ crucified and risen when confidence falters; receive grace with gratitude.

2. If there is no resurrection (15:12–19)

Scripture reference. 1 Cor 15:12–19: Paul reasons through the consequences if the dead are not raised.

Textual explanation. This is a conditional argument, not Paul’s own doubt. Without resurrection, Christ has not been raised, preaching and faith are empty, sin remains unresolved, and believers who have died are lost.

Doctrinal connection. The salvation proclaimed by the apostles cannot be detached from Christ’s victory over death.

Application. Grief is real. We can face the question honestly while holding to the testimony about Christ.

3. Firstfruits, Adam, and the end (15:20–28)

Scripture reference. 1 Cor 15:20–23, 26–28: Christ is the firstfruits; then, at his coming, those who belong to him; death is the last enemy destroyed.

Textual explanation. Firstfruits links Christ’s resurrection to a future harvest. The Adam/Christ comparison concerns death and life in the resurrection argument. Read “all” in 15:22 with the clarification in 15:22–23: those who belong to Christ. Paul describes stages, the defeat of enemies, and the handing over of the kingdom to the Father; the Son is not one of the enemies subdued.

Doctrinal connection. The chapter promises the resurrection of Christ’s people; it does not specify every date or interval of the consummation.

Application. We may mourn death as an enemy and still anticipate its final defeat.

4. Conduct and a difficult verse (15:29–34)

Scripture reference. 1 Cor 15:29–32 refers to baptism on behalf of the dead, danger, and the saying about eating and drinking.

Textual explanation. In 15:29 Paul alludes to a practice carried out by others, without describing or commanding it. He uses it as a rhetorical question in his defense of resurrection. That single verse does not establish proxy baptism as a Christian ordinance. His own dangers would make little sense if death were the end. Verses 33–34 call for sound judgment.

Doctrinal connection. Future hope gives meaning to perseverance now; deeds do not become the cause of salvation.

Application. Approach obscure details humbly and allow the chapter’s clear argument to guide interpretation.

5. What kind of body is raised (15:35–49)

Scripture reference. 1 Cor 15:35–44 contrasts the body sown and raised; 15:45–49 contrasts the first Adam and the last Adam.

Textual explanation. The seed pictures continuity and change; it is not a scientific account of material identity. “Natural body” and “spiritual body” are both bodies. The latter is suited to the life of the Spirit, rather than a disembodied existence. Paul contrasts perishability with imperishability, dishonor with glory, and weakness with power.

Doctrinal connection. The person persists and is genuinely transformed. The passage gives no warrant for guesses about age, appearance, or physical composition.

Application. Care for bodily weakness now; the promise does not belittle the body.

6. Mystery, victory, and work (15:50–58)

Scripture reference. 1 Cor 15:51–54 announces that not all will die, yet all will be changed; 15:57–58 gives thanks for victory through Jesus Christ.

Textual explanation. “Flesh and blood” describes our present perishable condition in relation to an imperishable inheritance. The context calls for transformation, not the abolition of bodily life. At the last trumpet the dead are raised imperishable and the living are changed. Paul draws on Isa 25:8 and Hos 13:14 and urges steadfastness because labor in the Lord is not wasted.

Doctrinal connection. Resurrection hope leads to grateful faithfulness. The chapter alone does not establish the precise timing of every end time event.

Application. When tired, grieving, or uncertain, remember the victory given through Christ and the lasting worth of service in him.

Map of direct passages

These passages state the event or promise of resurrection. They are grouped to cover the central biblical witnesses without treating every distant allusion as equally direct.

Christ's resurrection. Matt 28:1–10; Mark 16:1–8; Luke 24:1–12, 36–43; John 20:1–29; Acts 2:22–32; 3:15; 10:39–41; 13:28–37; 1 Cor 15:3–8; Rom 6:9; Rev 1:17–18

The promised resurrection of his people. John 6:39–40, 44, 54; 11:23–26; Rom 8:11, 23; 1 Cor 6:14; 15:20–23, 35–58; 2 Cor 4:14; Phil 3:20–21; 1 Thess 4:13–18

Resurrection and judgment. Dan 12:2–3; John 5:28–29; Acts 24:15; Rev 20:11–15

Final victory. 1 Cor 15:24–28, 54–57; Rev 20:14; 21:4

Map of complementary passages

Earlier witness and hope. Job 19:25–27 (some details of interpretation are disputed); Isa 25:8; 26:19; Hos 13:14; Ps 16:10; 49:15; 71:20

Scripture and apostolic witness. Luke 24:25–27, 44–48; Acts 17:30–32; Rom 1:4; 4:24–25; 10:9; 1 Pet 1:3–5, 21

Union with Christ and present life. Rom 6:3–11; 8:1–11; Col 3:1–4; Eph 1:19–23; 2:4–6

The body, transformation, and comfort. 2 Cor 5:1–10; Phil 3:20–21; 1 John 3:2–3; 1 Thess 4:13–18; 5:9–11; Rev 21:1–5

Context for quoted images. Gen 2:7; 3:19; Isa 22:13; 25:8; Hos 13:14; Ps 8:6

Frequently asked questions

Is resurrection only the soul's survival? No. Verses 35–54 address the body, resurrection, and transformation; disembodied survival is not presented as the final fulfillment.

Does “spiritual body” mean an immaterial body? That is not what the contrast in 15:42–49 says. Paul still says “body” and contrasts a perishable condition with one suited to the age to come.

Does “all will be made alive” mean everyone will be saved? Verses 22–23 frame this part of the argument around Christ and those who belong to him. Compare John 5:28–29, which distinguishes resurrection from final destiny.

Does baptism for the dead establish a command? Paul neither commands nor explains the practice in 15:29. A normative doctrine cannot be built from this passing allusion alone.

Can we calculate the coming or every interval? No. Verses 23–28 and 51–52 give an order and a transformation, not a complete timetable. 1 Thess 4:13–18 provides a further direct witness.

Does “hold fast” (15:2) teach salvation by merit? Paul calls his readers to remain in the gospel they received and considers the possibility of believing in vain. His argument centers on the truth of Christ's resurrection, not earning salvation by performance.

Conclusion

Paul begins with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection and arrives at a concrete promise: those who belong to Christ will be raised, the living will be changed, and death will lose its dominion. Christian hope does not deny present sorrow; it rests on victory given through Jesus Christ and sustains steadfast life.

Study questions

1. What events form the proclamation in 15:3–8, and what role do the witnesses play?
2. How does the argument in 15:12–19 change at the declaration of 15:20?
3. Whom does Paul identify as “those who belong to Christ” in 15:23?
4. What can we say confidently about 15:29, and what remains unexplained?
5. What continuity and transformation does the seed image convey?
6. Why does the appeal in 15:58 depend on the victory in 15:54–57?

References and editorial note

Reina Valera 1960 Bible, 1 Corinthians 15 and the cited passages. Francisco Lacueva, Nuevo Testamento Interlineal Griego Español, bibliographic reference requested by the reader. This English text translates the exposition, not the RVR1960 Bible. Read complete passages in an authorized Bible edition. The supplied professional biography is summarized.

About the compiler



Ruperto Bravo Benavente (R.B.B.) is a senior project developer and process engineering specialist with more than 40 years of experience structuring industrial, agrifood, and infrastructure projects. He lives in Buenos Aires. For this work he is the initiator, compiler, and editorial presenter of biblical and educational study materials. Its doctrinal content should be examined in light of Scripture.

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1

The message

1 Cor 15:1-4

Christ died for our sins, was buried, and was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.



2

The witnesses

1 Cor 15:5-11

Paul names Cephas, the Twelve, many believers, James, and finally himself.



3

The decisive question

1 Cor 15:12-19

If the dead are not raised, preaching and faith are empty, and death still holds its power.



4

Christ, the firstfruits

1 Cor 15:20

Christ has been raised; his victory anticipates the resurrection of those who belong to him.



5

Adam and Christ

1 Cor 15:21-22, 45-49

Death comes through Adam; resurrection life comes through Christ for those who belong to him.



6

Those who belong to Christ

1 Cor 15:23

Christ was raised first; at his coming, those who belong to him will be raised.



7

The last enemy

1 Cor 15:24-28

Christ will subdue his enemies; death will be destroyed, and the kingdom handed to the Father.



8

A difficult reference

1 Cor 15:29-34

Paul mentions a practice without commanding it; his question shows why resurrection matters for present life.



9

The seed

1 Cor 15:35-38

What is sown does not remain unchanged; the seed helps Paul answer a question about the raised body.



10

A transformed body

1 Cor 15:39-49

Paul contrasts perishing with glory and weakness with power; he still speaks of a body, now transformed.



11

The transformation

1 Cor 15:50-53

At the last trumpet, the dead are raised imperishable and the living are changed.



12

Victory and response

1 Cor 15:54-58

God gives victory through Jesus Christ; this hope sustains steadfast work that is not in vain.