

Allasso

By Pastor Greg
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1 Corinthians 15:35-58

Bunkertown COB

An Amish boy and his father were visiting a mall. They were amazed by almost everything they saw, but especially by two shiny, silver walls that could move apart and then slide back together again. The boy asked, "What is this, Father?" The father, never having seen an elevator before, exclaimed, "Son, I have never seen anything like this in my entire life, I do not know what it is". While the boy and his father were watching, a heavy elderly lady in a wheel chair rolled up to the moving walls and pressed a button. The walls opened and the lady rolled between them into a small room. The walls closed and the boy and his father watched the small circular numbers above the walls light up sequentially. They continued to watch until it reached the last number and then the numbers began to light in the reverse order. Finally the walls opened up again and a gorgeous, 24-year-old woman stepped out. The father, not taking his eyes off the young woman, said quietly to his son, "Go get your Mother."

I know that Paul says, "*we will all be transformed! It will happen in a moment, in the blink of an eye.*"¹ (1 Corinthians 15:52a). But I don't think this is quite what he had in mind. In his discussion with the Corinthian Christians about the resurrection, what he talks about is not turning back the hands of time restoring us to what we used to be, but transforming us into something new. Paul used the Greek word *Allasso*, meaning we exchange one thing for another.

We looked last week at the promise God has given His children, that He would not leave us naked, and the assurance we have in His promises. We dare not wonder IF we will be resurrected. God has promised it, and so it WILL happen. But this leads us to the next logical question. What kind of bodies will we have? What will they look like? What will we be like? And in anticipation to these questions, Paul's description almost leaves us breathless. (**Read 1 Corinthians 15:35-58**)

The key to understanding the question "What will our bodies be like" is found in verse 49. "*Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the*

¹Tyndale House Publishers. (2004). *Holy Bible : New Living Translation*. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers.

image of the heavenly." ² (1 Corinthians 15:49) To understand what these new bodies will be like, we need only look to Jesus. The resurrected Christ looked like Jesus, talked like Jesus, still acted like Jesus, and even thought like Jesus. When He died and rose again, He did not forget who people were, who He was, and what had just happened. People didn't freak out like they had just seen a ghost. He was the same, but His body was not (see Luke 24, and the walk to Emmaus). As Paul argues, the body died, but out of that death came something similar. A seed ceases to be a seed when it dies. But because it dies, it becomes a tree. Likewise, now we bear the image of the first man (Adam), but then we will bear the image of the second man (Jesus). There will be continuity when we receive our Spiritual bodies. They will not be the same, but they will be ours.

Based upon what we see in the resurrected Christ, we will not forget who we are. We will be who God created us to be, except better. The sinful, fallen nature will be gone, but you will still be you. You become transformed (*Allasso*) from:

- Perishable to Imperishable – We all are in the process of dying. Some of us are a little further along in that journey, but each and every one of us has one foot in the grave. We spend billions of dollars every year to forestall this (medicine) or hide it (cosmetics). But from this death we become imperishable. Our new bodies will not be subject to decay, injury, or aging. And they can't be. Death and decay are reminders of sin. God will not permit us to dwell in heaven yet still bear the mark of sin.
- Dishonor to Glory – Because of sin, that which was created to honor God became characterized by dishonor. But that imperfect and dishonored body one day will be raised in glory. With sin removed, we will better be able to reflect the Father's glory.
- Weakness to Power – We are weak not only in physical strength but also resistance to disease and harm. But not so our new bodies. The resurrected Christ was able to enter rooms through locked doors, or vanish from sight while talking with others, all the while able to eat. It makes you wonder what more this

²*New American Standard Bible : 1995 update.* 1995 (1 Co 15:49). LaHabra, CA: The Lockman Foundation.

power might entail, but it will be immeasurable compared to what we now possess.

- Natural to Spiritual – The only place we can presently live is in the natural world. Sure, these bodies are perfectly suited for living here on earth, but not any where else. Since we are to be living in the presence of God, we need a body that is perfectly suited for living in that place. Our spirits now live in an earthly body, but one day they will live in a spiritual body.

Our bodies which are now perishable, dishonored, weak, and natural, will be raised into bodies that are imperishable, glorious, powerful, and spiritual. The things that hindered our service and manifestation of God will be exchanged (*Allasso*) so that, "*the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.*" ³ (Matthew 13:43). We cannot possibly imagine what our new bodies will be like. Even those born of the Spirit struggle to understand these things. "*Dear friends, we are already God's children, but he has not yet shown us what we will be like when Christ appears. But we do know that we will be like him, for we will see him as he really is.*" ⁴ (1 John 3:2). John confessed that even he didn't know what these bodies will be like, but he did point out that we will not see them nor receive them until we first see Christ.

Unlike Lazarus who was restored to life, we will be transformed (*Allasso*) in life. And we must be changed, for to remain as we are is to remind God of sin. We all bear the mark of sin, especially in death. And had God not intervened, no one would make it to heaven. "*but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*" ⁵ (Verse 57). The odor of death, the mark of sin, is removed by Christ our Lord. In Christ, death's sting is removed; it is declawed, defanged, disarmed, destroyed. But only for those who believe. See, these promises are for those who trust Jesus to be their savior. This resurrection, this transformation, is hope for those who have been born from above, born again. And if you have not trusted Him as Savior, may I remind you that time is running out.

³New American Standard Bible : 1995 update. 1995 (Mt 13:43). LaHabra, CA: The Lockman Foundation.

⁴Tyndale House Publishers. (2004). *Holy Bible : New Living Translation*. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers.

⁵New American Standard Bible : 1995 update. 1995 (1 Co 15:57). LaHabra, CA: The Lockman Foundation.