

PLANTING FOR ETERNITY

If we were to take a drive around Graves County and the surrounding area, we would recognize one thing in large numbers: crops. Many individuals around this area are farmers and those who are not, tend to have a garden in their back yard somewhere. Any of us who has been around farmers or gardeners know about the process of planting and reaping. Usually we see the seeds being planted during spring and the harvest occurring during fall. Regardless of when the planting time is, we know how the process ensues. A tiny seed is planted into the ground. If we don't know seeds very well we might not even know exactly what we are planting. Over the weeks, we see the seed watered and fertilizer placed on it. Soon we begin to see a tiny little sprout spring from the ground. Eventually the entire plant is full-grown and it is time to harvest. The farmers or gardeners will go out to their fields and reap the crop that they have grown.

In this last chapter of 1st Corinthians, Paul talks once again about the Resurrection and the type of body we will have once we are in eternity. He compares it to the planting of a seed. He says that right now we are in our natural body, which is similar to the seed. Eventually, with the watering and nurturing of our body, we will grow a "spiritual body" which is incorruptible. Some things about the Resurrection we may not understand. Some things were not meant for us to understand, but were things we are to believe in faith. If we understood all these aspects, then we would be equal with God. The things that Paul explains, we should take to heart and rest on the hope of our Resurrection.

1 Corinthians 15:35-58

BODY

Paul begins by discussing some of the questions he had been asked such as, "How are the dead raised? What kind of body will they have when they come?" Paul wanted his readers then and even today to understand about the process of planting. Paul described that a seed must be dead before it can grow into a mature plant. He also goes on to explain that there are different types of flesh present on this earth, such as flesh for humans, flesh for animals, birds, etc. He is telling us that our heavenly bodies will be much different than are our earthly bodies. Our heavenly bodies will be similar to nothing we have ever imagined. All we do know is that we will have a heavenly body once we die and go to heaven. In verses 42-44, Paul explains a little about our heavenly body, as it will not be corrupt, but incorruptible; not have dishonors, but glory; not have weakness, but power, and not be a natural body, but spiritual. Our body will be unlike anything we can imagine. While we do not know all the specifics, we must just have faith and believe in God to take care of all the details.

FIRST BODY

While there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. Adam was the first natural body and Christ brought the life-giving Spirit to us. Verses 47-49 describe how the first body, Adam, was made out of earth and specifically out of the dust of the ground. Jesus, our example of the spiritual body, is from heaven. All of us were similar to Adam as we were born “out of dust” with a natural body and born with an ingrained sin nature. Once we receive salvation, we are born of the Spirit and become similar to Jesus Christ in that aspect. As we were all born in the image of Adam, the image of man, we will all be in the image of God when we are resurrected. We will reflect the image of God in terms of character and glory.

THE MOMENT

Paul then goes on to explain exactly what it will be like in the moment when Christ returns. He discusses the idea that not everyone will have died before Christ returns, but that some will still be alive during the return of Christ. Whether we are dead or alive, we will all be changed in one moment. Paul describes it as the “twinkling of an eye.” That’s some quick changing! The trumpet will sound and those who are dead will be raised in incorruptible bodies and those who are still alive will be changed as well. At this moment, death will have lost all of its victory. There will no longer be any sting to death as we will be raised to life and changed to a body that is incorruptible. With all of these wonderful descriptions that Paul had just penned, he wanted the Corinthians, as well as each of us, to be steadfast and immovable. He wanted these people to allow Christ to work through them as He had already worked in them. He wanted them to realize that their future was secure and to live their lives with that magnificent assurance.

Amy Carrico