

1Corinthians 15:35-44 "A Perishable Body to Become Imperishable"

As we consider the entire 15th chapter of this letter to the Corinthians we have to conclude that Paul was very concerned about some teachings among these people which promoted that the dead are not raised, despite the fact that they obviously believed that Jesus Christ rose bodily from the dead.

With Corinth being in the heart of the Greek world where Greek thought advanced the notion that the material world, including the physical body, was inherently evil, Paul is trying to show the rhyme and reason behind God's plan to raise the dead and especially the resurrection of believers to glory with the Lord.

To have a wrong view here robs the future hope we've been promised in Christ where we will rule and reign with Him in glory in the new heaven's and the new earth. To take away our hope for the future causes us to become complacent here in the present as it relates to what Christ has called us to do in advancing the Kingdom of Christ through the gospel.

But more than that it makes the resurrection of Jesus Christ a non-event since it doesn't touch us personally. In fact, this is the reason the world seems to participate in a collective yawn during Easter time because the reality of the Son of God actually rising bodily from the dead doesn't hit home with them.

Since it doesn't touch them personally they simply gloss over the most important event in all of human history. Because you see, without the resurrection of Jesus Christ you and I are still in our sin and deemed guilty of our sin if we don't have a Savior, who not only paid our debt at the cross, but had that debt accepted by the Father as seen in the Father receiving His Son to Himself in glory after His resurrection.

Jesus Christ is not simply some wonderful prophet or wise man. He is fully God and fully man. He is the One chosen by the Father to represent us and to reconcile us back to God, and if He is still in the grave He is no more a Savior than Buddha or Mohammed, who both are still in the grave.

The resurrection is essentially the Father putting His Amen to the atonement of Christ on our behalf as He joyously accepts the payment for you and me. And now, we can approach the throne of

God, knowing that we have Christ's righteousness put to our account, and we are declared not guilty.

And so, through Christ we have been justified and as Paul says in Rom. 8:1, "there is therefore no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

We can approach the throne of God with confidence as a child approaches a loving father who will not turn away His child, because in Christ our sin no longer separates us from our Creator. Paul and the writer of Hebrew addresses this.

EPH 3:12 "In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence."

HEB 10:19-23 "Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, 21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. 23 Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful."

The Lord will not turn us away. But if Christ is still in the grave then obviously He is not the Savior He claimed to be. But the tomb is empty, the Lord Jesus has risen, it is a fact of history.

We should never treat this as though it's just one more part of being a Christian. There are no Christians without a risen Christ. And if Christ is the first fruits of the resurrection, as Paul describes in this very chapter, then we necessarily will rise bodily in Him one day.

And keep in mind that Paul has already taught these Corinthian believers all about this truth and yet there were those who simply rejected it in favor of the Greek thought of the day instead of believing what the Lord taught in His word.

And so, as we come to our text Paul is anticipating that some there in Corinth stubbornly continue in this attitude and ask such questions as, if there is a resurrection of the dead how in the world will they be raised and with what kind of a body will they end up with?

1CO 15:35 But someone may ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?"

Now, these are legitimate questions for those with inquiring minds. There's nothing wrong with the questions themselves, but the way in which these came to Paul were in a condescending way. How do we know this?

1CO 15:36 "How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies."

If you ask me a question about any matter regarding the word of God, and you're looking for answers which will help you better understand the Lord and His word and His will, there is no way I would ever accuse you of being a fool. There are no foolish questions in that sense.

But if you are not interested in the truth, or you're not interested in answers, but only trying to pick a fight to justify your unbiblical position then it would not be inappropriate in stating that that is a foolish approach to gaining knowledge, because you have no intention of receiving such knowledge.

Paul was a very patient and loving man who loved the sheep placed in his care personally by the risen Christ. He would never abuse Christ's flock or make fun of someone who truly wanted answers to hard questions. But Paul pulls no punches here.

In fact, if you have the NIV it reads, "how foolish." This English translation is much kinder than the original Greek which uses only one word. Fool. Thus the NASB and the KJV use, "you fool," or "thou fool."

Paul is addressing a person, and by extension any group in Corinth who subscribes to this false teaching that believers will not be raised bodily in glory. He's calling them a fool, not simply behaving in a foolish way.

This is strong language and it is meant to show how important this teaching is and how to hinder the truth is not only detrimental to the individuals in that church, but to the entire church.

But none the less these are interesting questions and since Paul has got their attention he is going to address the issue of how the dead are in fact raised and with what kind of a body we will be raised.

1CO 15:36-38 "... What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. 37 When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but

just a seed, perhaps of wheat or of something else. 38 But God gives it a body as he has determined, and to each kind of seed he gives its own body."

As to the issue of how the dead are raised Paul is going to make the argument that in a sense we see a glimpse of the resurrection all around us every day. Now, he has no intention of going too far with this illustration, but it is a valid illustration.

**"What you sow does not come to life unless it dies."**

Many people in Corinth would have been very familiar with such an agricultural illustration. I'm sure many of these people had their own gardens to supply some of their food needs.

Anybody who has ever planted a seed knows that the seed seems dead before it produces a crop. Try it some time. Take that hard dry seed and water it. After a time it becomes moist, swells a bit and the outer shell begins to get soft and begins to peel away and the life of that seed springs forth.

By the way, Paul is utilizing terminology that is not meant to explain cellular science. God is not teaching us here that a seed literally dies. In fact, healthy seeds are not dead, they are in a state of dormancy until which time the conditions around them permit them to come out of dormancy; dirt, sunlight and most importantly, water.

What Paul is doing is showing how something that appears to be dead will come back to life. This is not unlike how Jesus Himself uses similar language to explain things like death appearing as sleep.

**John 11:11-14** <sup>11</sup> This He said, and after that He said to them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I go, so that I may awaken him out of sleep." <sup>12</sup> The disciples then said to Him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover." <sup>13</sup> *Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that He was speaking of literal sleep.* <sup>14</sup> *So Jesus then said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead,*

Paul is equating a seed that is in a state of apparent death with the body of a human being who is dead. It's no more complicated than that.

And like that seed that is planted in the ground a human body after it is buried in the ground will one day be raised with the self-same

body. In the case before us the type of resurrection Paul is addressing is the body of a believer in Jesus Christ who will be raised in glory.

1CO 15:37 "When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but just a seed, perhaps of wheat or of something else."

Can you imagine taking a stalk of wheat and burying it expecting that from it will grow a stalk of wheat just like you planted?

No. The seed you put in the ground is not the mature plant and yet it will still possess all of the elements which makes it either wheat or barley or whatever.

You cannot plant a water melon seed and expect to get an apple tree. Every seed has encoded in it the specific genetic information placed there by God which only produces what that tree or plant will eventually be.

In the same way Paul is saying that when the body is buried in the ground it in essence is like that seed that will one day produce a mature plant.

Now again, this is an illustration Paul is using. He's not teaching that simply planting a dead body will produce a glorified body. He's simply showing us how God is the one who created all things and that all things will produce after their kind as He gives life.

Our bodies will die and we will go to the dust of the earth. But that's not the end, is Paul's point. Just as a seed must die before it produces a beautiful rose, for example, we too must die before we can be resurrected. But just as certain as that rose bush coming to life and producing beautiful and fragrant flowers, so too will all believers be raised to life immortal with their Lord and Savior.

It is just as foolish to question God's ability to take a seed and produce a rose bush as it is to question if God can raise the dead. How hard can it be? After all, He created the entire universe out of nothing. He simply spoke and everything leaped into existence, both non-living matter and living beings, including man.

**Psalm 33:8-9** <sup>8</sup> Let all the earth fear the LORD; Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. <sup>9</sup> *For He spoke, and it was done*; He commanded, and it stood fast.

It's not a big deal for God. Now I know that someone will question how God can raise the dead if they've been eaten by a shark or were cremated, or were blown up in war where part of that

person was able to be found and buried in their home town, and yet other parts were simply destroyed on the battlefield never to be discovered.

How can God bring that person's body together at the resurrection? Someone will say, well God won't do that, He'll just create new hands or legs that were destroyed, or will simply give an entirely new body to the one who was eaten by that shark and eventually distributed all along the ocean floor.

No. That would not be a resurrection. That would be a post creation act on God's part. The whole concept of a resurrection entails the very individual who once was alive will be resurrected as the person he was before death with the distinction that he will be resurrected in glory without any imperfection.

It will be the same body that was destroyed or died or was cremated. Again, if God holds the entire universe together, then believe me He knows where every single atom of His universe is. For Him to gather our bodies together from the four winds if necessary will not be a problem for God.

So, that's the first part of Paul's thought. "How are the dead raised?" They are raised by the same God who created them. He didn't have any problem arranging all of your atoms and constructing your DNA and every single gene of your body when He made you, and He will not have a problem reconstructing you after the seed has been planted in the ground, if you will.

Now as to the issue of what will this body be like, which is the second question in verse 35, Paul begins to elaborate throughout the rest of the text.

But the implied answer is found in the seed illustration. A wheat seed produces wheat. A fig seed produces a fig tree. A human body is raised a human body.

You mean that when we are raised to life we have the same human body? Exactly. But it will be a human body designed for the new earth while it still retains everything human that was put into the ground, without the sin, the curse and all of the corruptible aspects of that former human body.

And by the way, what Paul is describing here is something that other human beings had already experienced first-hand, including himself. And that is the resurrection body of Jesus Christ.

If you want to know what your resurrection body will be like, assuming you are a believer who is indwelt with the Spirit, then simply look to Christ three days after His death as He appeared to His disciples.

**Luke 24:36-43** <sup>36</sup> While they were telling these things, He Himself stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be to you."  
<sup>37</sup> But they were startled and frightened and thought that they were seeing a spirit. <sup>38</sup> And He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts?" <sup>39</sup> "See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." <sup>40</sup> And when He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. <sup>41</sup> While they still could not believe *it* because of their joy and amazement, He said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" <sup>42</sup> They gave Him a piece of a broiled fish; <sup>43</sup> and He took it and ate *it* before them.

A couple things to notice here about the risen Christ. He makes it a point to demonstrate that He is flesh and bone. In other words, a real and living human being who stands before them.

And like any human being He is a breathing living man who once was dead but is now fully alive as He communicates to them and acknowledges a relationship with them which now picks up where it left off a few days earlier.

He is not a spirit, which is to say that he is not a phantom without a body, but one who can be touched. But notice what else the risen Jesus does. He carries on with the normal functions of human beings in a fellowship setting where food and drink are enjoyed.

**Luke 24:42-43** <sup>42</sup> They gave Him a piece of a broiled fish; <sup>43</sup> and He took it and ate *it* before them.

The first thing to acknowledge is that His disciples were now convinced that He was not a spirit but a human being who enjoyed the simple pleasures of life including having breakfast with His friends as they gave Him a piece of broiled fish.

And what does the risen Christ do with the piece of broiled fish? Does He rebuke them for offering the Son of God/Son of Man, who is risen from the dead, a meal to be digested, as though the resurrected Christ should not partake of such a thing?

Absolutely not. Jesus gladly takes the piece of fish and He eats it before them.

Why is this important and what does this have to do with the state of resurrected men?

It is important because Jesus is making it clear that He is still human and as a human being continues to live as a human being even after His resurrection.

But some will argue that though the risen Christ still eats and drinks this is only because He has not yet ascended back to the Father in His glorified state, presumably at which point the need for eating and drinking will cease since that would be disgusting for the God/man to partake in His glorified state.

But when did Jesus say He would eat and drink with them in the future?

**Luke 22:28-30** <sup>28</sup> "You are those who have stood by Me in My trials; <sup>29</sup> and just as My Father has granted Me a kingdom, I grant you <sup>30</sup> that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

The kingdom to which Jesus refers is the eternal Kingdom that was promised to the seed of David, which must necessarily include the One who sits at the right hand of the Father in His glorified physical resurrected body who is going to eat and drink at that time with His people.

Daniel was given a vision of this future eternal Kingdom.

<sup>NAU</sup> **Daniel 2:44** "In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up *a kingdom which will never be destroyed*, and *that* kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, *but it will itself endure forever*.

<sup>NAU</sup> **Daniel 7:14** "And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations and *men of every* <sup>2</sup>language Might serve Him. *His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed*.

**Daniel 7:27** <sup>27</sup> 'Then the sovereignty, the dominion and the greatness of *all* the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; *His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom*, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him.'

It was Isaiah who identifies this everlasting Kingdom with a King whose roots are established in David.



<sup>NAU</sup> **Isaiah 9:7** There will be no end to the increase of *His* government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.

And we know who fulfilled the prophecies concerning this King.

**Luke 1:32-33** <sup>32</sup> "He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and *the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David*; <sup>33</sup> and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end."

<sup>NAU</sup> **Revelation 11:15** Then the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "*The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever.*"

Here's the point. When the risen Jesus says in Luke 22:30 that His disciples will eat and drink at His table in His Kingdom, it is in the context of Jesus employing the imagery of a meal to distinguish who is the greatest in any kingdom.

**Luke 22:27** <sup>27</sup> "For who is greater, the one who reclines *at the table* or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines *at the table*? But I am among you as the one who serves.

And so, when the risen Jesus tells His disciples that they will eat in His Kingdom they fully expected that in that future state, not only the risen glorified Jesus would eat but they too, in their own resurrection, will eat and drink as any human would expect to do.

The reason I belabor this is because too many Christians have been led to believe that it is more spiritual to consider our future resurrection state as a mere spiritual state rather than a physical state. But that is a contradiction in terms since the whole concept of resurrection that Paul describes to these Corinthians is that the same human body that went down into the grave is the same human body that will come up, albeit in a new state without the curse of sin and death.

The problem with thinking that Christ's resurrection, or our resurrection, is somehow only a spiritual resurrection is to miss the point of what a resurrection is. Resurrection involves both a

spiritual and physical aspect because human beings are both spiritual and physical.

The two coexist and they will continue to coexist for eternity because we are first and foremost human beings as God created us, body and spirit.

Simply because we will be resurrected from the dead does not preclude that we will be something other than human as we will live in a physical world in a physical universe which the word of God describes as new heavens and a new earth.

**2 Peter 3:13** <sup>13</sup> But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.

**Revelation 21:1-5** <sup>NAU</sup> Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer *any* sea. <sup>2</sup> And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, <sup>4</sup> and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be *any* death; there will no longer be *any* mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away." <sup>5</sup> And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true."

This new earth will be a restored earth at the resurrection of God's people and we will eat and drink with our King, Jesus Christ, in this new earth, this new eternal kingdom in which righteousness dwells.

<sup>NAU</sup> **Luke 14:15** When one of those who were reclining *at the table* with Him heard this, he said to Him, "Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!"

Eating and drinking is not a metaphor with being spiritually satisfied. Eating and drinking is what human beings do now and as Jesus clearly showed after His resurrection, will continue to do for eternity as we enjoy the fruits of the new earth.

Now, as Paul continues his teaching on the resurrection he points out how everything is designed by God to glorify Himself as He has built into His creation a glory that befits whatever He has made.

**1 Corinthians 15:39-44** <sup>39</sup> All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one *flesh* of men, and another flesh of beasts, and another flesh of birds, and another of fish. <sup>40</sup> There are also heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is one, and the *glory* of the earthly is another. <sup>41</sup> 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. <sup>42</sup> So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable *body*, it is raised an imperishable *body*; <sup>43</sup> it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; <sup>44</sup> it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual *body*.

Again, what Paul is doing here is showing how God is the one determining all of this. God is creator. He is the one who gives life, and He is the one who has clothed all life with whatever body He deems fit for that life form.

He begins with men and ends with fish. Interestingly enough, this is the exact opposite of the order in the creation account where the first living creatures mentioned are fish and then birds on the fourth day of creation, according to Gen.1:20-22.

On the fifth day, according to Gen.1:23-25, God created all of the land creatures. And then on the sixth day man was created. Paul reverses the order here in our text to show the importance of man and the importance of man's resurrection.

Paul then moves from different bodies of flesh to different bodies which display degrees of glory in the heavens and compares them to earthly bodies as he shows how each is different according to God's plan.

1CO 15:40 "There are also heavenly bodies and there are earthly bodies; but the splendor of the heavenly bodies is one kind, and the splendor of the earthly bodies is another."

God is very diverse in His creative genius and perfection. Everything was created for a reason and each serves the function of bringing glory to God; even heavenly bodies. Did David not say, "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands"? (PSA 19:1)

And yet even in the heavens where we have all these heavenly bodies, no two heavenly bodies are identical, just as there are no two people who are identical. Every created thing in the universe is

unique from that stand-point. And Paul points this out in the next verse.

1CO 15:41 "The sun has one kind of splendor, the moon another and the stars another; and star differs from star in splendor."

Notice the pattern here in our text. Paul is describing the sun, the moon and the stars and he is saying that each one is different in splendor. Other translations say that each is different in glory. Each has been given a measure of glory, so that each can glorify the One who made them.

Isn't the reason for the existence of all created things to give glory to God? In fact, the created universe speaks so loudly of the existence of God and the glory of God that the universe alone bears witness to God and therefore holds all men accountable for seeking this Creator God.

ROM 1:20 "For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities - his eternal power and divine nature - have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse."

Paul is saying that just as God has given a measure of glory to all created things, He has given a measure of glory to our present physical bodies, and will one day give a greater measure of glory to our new bodies, which will be resurrected so that we may give glory to the One who rose before us and gave us this resurrection life.

Every single body is different in this world, and our new bodies will be different in degree of glory though retaining its humanness. And so, what comes out of the grave must necessarily be better and more glorious than what went into the grave.

1CO 15:42-44 "So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; 43 it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; 44 it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body."

And so, to answer the second question in verse 35, with what kind of body will they come?, Paul says, it will be a body which is imperishable, a body with no weaknesses, a body which is Spirit filled and ruled.

Some have taken verse 44 as a proof text for a resurrection body that is spiritual and therefore not really physical. The problem with this approach is that it defies any logic according to the text. Paul has been describing a physical body being buried with the result of that same physical body coming back to life.

And the case in point that he uses is Jesus Christ Himself. And he even begins this section of his letter by demonstrating that Jesus Christ rose bodily from the dead and there are numerous people who saw Him and fellowshiped with Him after His resurrection.

**1 Corinthians 15:3-8** <sup>3</sup> For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup> and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, <sup>5</sup> and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. <sup>6</sup> After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep; <sup>7</sup> then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles; <sup>8</sup> and last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also.

So, what does mean in verse 44 when he describes a spiritual body being raised from the dead? Well, the immediate text itself gives the clear answer.

**1 Corinthians 15:42-44** <sup>42</sup> So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a *perishable body*, it is raised an imperishable *body*; <sup>43</sup> it is *sown in dishonor*, it is raised in glory; it is *sown in weakness*, it is raised in power; <sup>44</sup> it is sown a *natural body*, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a *natural body*, there is also a spiritual *body*.

The natural body that Paul describes is contrasted with a spiritual body. And the natural body is clearly that perishable, dishonored (sinful, cursed) body that is sown in weakness which is demonstrated clearly in that it dies.

The spiritual body is first and foremost a body. What makes it spiritual is that the Spirit of God has given it life in that He has first raised that body to life through the resurrection of Jesus Christ as Christ's life has been imputed to that person through faith.

**Titus 3:5-7** <sup>5</sup> He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, *by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit*, <sup>6</sup> whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our

Savior, <sup>7</sup> so that being justified by His grace *we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*

This identifies the first resurrection where we have been brought from death to life.

**Ephesians 2:5-6** <sup>5</sup> even when *we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ* (by grace you have been saved), <sup>6</sup> and *raised us up with Him*, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus,

It is this spiritual resurrection which insures our bodily resurrection which is so closely identified with the Spirit that it can and must be identified as spiritual as opposed to the natural which is identified with death.

**1 Corinthians 15:22** <sup>22</sup> For as in Adam [natural] all die, so also in Christ [spiritual] all will be made alive.

You and I in Christ are presently seated with Christ in heavenly places in an eschatological sense. In other words, though we are in Christ and have all the promises of eternal life presently, we will not enjoy the final aspect of this life until Christ comes back for us in the resurrection.

This is the already/not yet aspect of salvation that I have addressed in the past. We *already* have all the promises of eternal life in Christ, but we are *not yet* experiencing those promises in their fullness. And this is precisely the way Abraham viewed his life of promise.

**Hebrews 11:8-10** <sup>8</sup> By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. <sup>9</sup> By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign *land*, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; <sup>10</sup> for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

Abraham didn't receive the promise in his lifetime, but he is now actively enjoying the presence of God in the present heaven as the final part of his inheritance is yet to come. What he waits for in heaven we wait for on earth; that city built by God which the writer of Hebrews alludes to as something that every human being in Christ will enjoy on the new earth and which John explicitly describes in the book of Revelation.

**Revelation 21:1-5** <sup>NAU</sup> Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer *any* sea. <sup>2</sup> And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, <sup>4</sup> and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be *any* death; there will no longer be *any* mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away." <sup>5</sup> And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true."

Yes, we along with this world groan patiently until Christ comes back for us, but we don't lose hope in the midst of trials and tribulations. One day they will all be gone for us and eternity will be a state of perpetual bliss and glory and paradise where we will be with the Lord forever.

But in the meantime we need to faithfully give this message of hope to a dying world. We need to alert them to the consequences of sin together with the solution to their sin found in the resurrected Christ alone. And until Christ comes back, or we go to the grave first, we need to seek the Lord above all as we bring glory to His name.

COL 3:1-5 "Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup> Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. <sup>3</sup> For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. <sup>4</sup> When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. <sup>5</sup> Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry."