

**"THE MYSTERY OF THE RESURRECTION"**

**Introduction**

1. What a NT "mystery" is
2. Examples of such mysteries
3. This mystery here

**1. THE FIRST PART OF THIS 'MYSTERY'**

- "we shall not all sleep"
- Explanation of this "sleep"  
**OBSERVE:** If death is meant, why is it called "sleep"?
- The believer's death is like a sleep:
  - (i) nothing to fear in it
  - (ii) a rest from the toils of this life**APPLICATION:** We may fear; but such are ignorant fears

**2. THE SECOND PART OF THIS "MYSTERY"**

- "we shall all be changed"
- this change will affect two classes of Christians:
  - (i) the living
  - (ii) the dead
- The Nature of this change: v.53
  - (i) corruptible bodies – altered for ever
  - (ii) mortal bodies – immortalised**APPLICATION:** This is the problem of the ages which no philosopher could solve: DEATH. Now it is solved by Christ through the gospel.  
**ILLUSTRATION:** a handsome man/woman in their prime – not so in old age. But...

**3. THE TIME IT WILL TAKE FOR THIS "CHANGE"**

- a "moment" ("atom"); "twinkling"  
**ILLUSTRATION:** one tick of clock / one blink  
**DOCTRINE:** God's glorious power does all this in one split-second.  
**ILLUSTRATION:** Christ's transfiguration

**4. THE TIME WHEN THIS CHANGE WILL OCCUR**

- "at the last trump" (v.52) = "trumpet" so called because:
  - (i) the O.T. refers to trumpets for various uses (See Numbers 10:1-10)
  - (ii) but this is the last time in history (See 1 Thes. 4:16-17)  
**OBSERVE:** History will end with the blast of God's trumpet: "Time is over: History is finished!"  
**APPLICATION:** We should remind ourselves often of this great event. It is a comfort to the believer in old age when our strength fails.

**5. WHAT ARE WE TOLD FURTHER ABOUT THIS GREAT CHANGE TO A CHRISTIAN'S BODY?**

Paul has spoken of 4 wonderful improvements to the body at the last day: v.42-44

- (i) "sown in corruption – incorruption"
- (ii) "sown in dishonour – glory"
- (iii) "sown in weakness – power"
- (iv) "a natural body – a spiritual body"

**OBSERVE:** The same body, but more beautiful and perfectly suited to heaven.

**ILLUSTRATION:** the cycle of the butterfly

**6. HOW DOES PAUL FURTHER EXPLAIN THIS?**

By the illustration of a seed: v.37-38

**ILLUSTRATION:** a packet of flower seeds / acorn / sycamore.  
What does this illustration show us?

- (i) the resurrection body will come from our present earthly body:
- (ii) it will be different in appearance

**7. CAN WE BE SURE THE RESURRECTION BODY WILL BE DIFFERENT?**

See v.35-38. The appearance will be quite different, surely:

- (i) the present body is suited to life on earth but not to heaven
  - (ii) the resurrection body will be suited to heaven
- ILLUSTRATION**: the grub and the butterfly. God, surely, has given this as a perfect illustration.

**8. ALL THIS IS ORDERED MOST WISELY BY GOD**

- 1) Adam was earthly: Christ heavenly
  - 2) Adam's children are earthly: Christ's people will be heavenly
- See v. 45-49

**ILLUSTRATION**: an astronaut has a space-suit

**9. ALL THIS IS SAID TO MAKE US TRIUMPHANT**

See v.54-57. "Victory"! This is a victory over every enemy:

- (i) sin
- (ii) Satan
- (iii) death
- (iv) sorrow

**CONCLUSION**

We owe all this to the love of God and the obedience of Christ:

"Because I live..."

"I am the resurrection..."

**Q.** Do you believe this?

**PSALM**

**68: 18 -21**

**118: 15 – 21**

**16: 8 - 11**