

b. Heavenly. The parallel with what has been noted above is now given here. Argument rages over the form of the verb "shall bear." It is best to take it as a simple future. This fits into the context and shows the obvious connection with the preceding clause. Any suggestion of a hortatory nature is entirely out of the import of the section. We shall be like Him at the Rapture. Then our Adamite past will be exchanged for a Christ-like future. Hallelujah! The great transformation is coming. Just as He has made us different here, so we will have peculiar identities up there. Albeit, we shall all be in His image! Thus, this pericope began with the assertion that there is a spiritual body (v. 44), so it ends with the assurance that we shall receive one!

Conclusion The principle laid down here is clear from the study presented. First one and then the other. But the spiritual always comes last! See how this works out in other portions of the Bible too: Cain and then Abel (Gen. 4); Ishmael and then Isaac (Gen. 16, 21); Esau and then Jacob (Gen. 25); Saul and then David (1 Sam.). Or study the worship which God laid down in the Word: the tabernacle worship first and then the worship without outward items (Heb. 10 and John 4); first law and then grace (John 1). World governments follow the same rule: first the nations of this world and then the government which comes from heaven (Dan. 2, 7, 11). Finally, seek this principle in the manner by which God deals with the human soul: first it is Saul and then it is Paul (John 3; Acts 9). It will always be that way with God. You are natural first and by human birth. You may be spiritual and right with God only as you recognize your natural position first. The new birth follows the human birth. Has there been any change in your life yet? Amen.

THE BOOK OF FIRST CORINTHIANS

"Afterward That Which Is Spiritual"

1 Corinthians 15:45-49

Introduction

1. The Bible presents many principles which find themselves operative throughout the Scripture. Here is one of them: spiritual things develop last. What is eternal comes afterwards. What is natural and temporal comes first. This is a rule you can count upon throughout the Bible.

2. This factor should bring a great deal of encouragement and consolation to our souls today. The natural is surely dominant everywhere. Sin and the expressions of rebellion against God are rampant on every side, but wait--the spiritual is always last! God's best is yet to come. What a hope and direction for which to look.

3. Although the outworkings of this principle are seen from the Book of Genesis, the explicit expression is not found until this text. Mark the instances in which the thought is stated here:

1. TWO ADAMS v. 45.

a. First Adam. The introduction of the word "first" is to prepare the heart for the anti-thetical addition to be given. There is the subtle suggestion here that the Adam of the Bible is the first and any idea of a pre-Adamic race is only idle speculation. Now, this Adam was "made" a living soul. The verb here marks the creative work of God. The verb actually means to "become" or to "come into a new state of being" (John 1:14; Gal. 4:4; Phil. 2:7). The expression "living soul" is indicative of Adam having a soul-centered life. It speaks of self-consciousness. It is a phrase which relates him to this present existence. The word is elsewhere rendered "natural" (2:14).

b. Last Adam. The Bible only speaks of two orders of beings here among men. They are the first and the last. There is no middle one nor a third. This is the only place in the N. T. where Christ is so named. The obvious connotation is that He is the LAST! Those who have tried to find another representative of God following Him are in Scriptural error (cf. false sects like Mormons etc.). Christ is indicated as being a "life-giving spirit." He is not merely "living" but "life-giving." This means He imparts life! Here is the power of communication. The time that effected all of this must be the resurrection, if the context is to have any meaning whatsoever. He lays claim to this title because of His resurrection. The mention of "spirit" brings Him into a realm different than the first Adam. This is that which relates to God.

2. TWO MEN. v. 47.

a. First man. The reference is to Adam who was created by God (cf. v. 45). The phrase "of the earth" points to the whole quality of life which is thus determined. The preposition used shows that his source is the earth. This being the case, he is "earthy." Only here is this term found in the N.T. It's root is in a verb meaning to "pour," thus of earth thrown down or heaped up: loose earth. This same word is used in the O.T. (LXX, Gen. 2:7). Incidentally, this whole verse is a confirmatory passage to the historicity of the Genesis account. Those who deny the literality of that portion will of necessity deny the present one also.

b. Second man. Being "second" the Lord is looked at here in His chronological sequence. Previously He is the "last" to show His finality; He is "second" to show His identity. Many MSS do not include the fact that He is the "Lord," but it is true in any case. His source is given as "from heaven" and this notes both His origin and by

implication His divine nature. The body concerned here is the glorified one from heaven. Thus the second coming of Christ at the Rapture is meant as well as His coming in that same body at the Revelation. It is interesting to observe that there is no term which can adequately describe the material out of which the glorified body of our Lord is composed.

3. TWO COPIES. v. 48.

a. Earthly. Two correlated pronouns denoting quality or character are used here: "as...such." The first Adam and the first man have a counterpart and complement in those who correspond to him as men of dust. As the one has this quality, so the others do also. The context argues for a physical situation and not a moral one.

b. Heavenly. The same pronouns are used here as above and with the same significance. The Lord has those who correspond to Him.

4. TWO IMAGES. v. 49.

a. Earthy. The pronoun "we" is a reference to the believers. It makes a concrete application of the truth presented. The verb "have borne" is an aorist and points to what has been the experience of all believers during their earthly life. It is like "dust" as noted above. The noun "image" signifies a derived likeness. It is like the head on a coin or the parental likeness in a child. It implies an archetype. It is the same term used in some critical Christological passages (2 Cor. 4:4; Col. 1:15). There is no mistake about it, we do bear the stamp of our identity with Adam! There may be three billion of us and all different, but we have a common lot with Adam.