

Theme: The blessings that are poured out on us in Christ Jesus are not only experienced in future glory (though they find their perfect fulfillment in heaven); but they also enrich and empower us *now* as the reign of sin is broken in us and the reign of Christ, the Lord is revealed in and through us.

Background: We are exploring the blessings that flow from the truth that "in Adam all die – so in Christ shall all be made alive" and "by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead" (1 Corinthians 15:22, 21).

Introduction: Joni Earickson Tada and her "confinement"

I. A Quick Review

A. Restored in righteousness

1. Christ clothes himself with our "rags" and takes them to the cross
2. Covering us with his own robes of righteousness – pure, unstained
3. He is the "first fruits" – to be raised from the dead

B. The "Life-Giving Spirit"

1. Renewing the image of God in us
2. Restoring us in God's calling
 - a. Knowledge
 - b. Righteousness
 - c. Holiness

II. Full Transformation! (v. 42-44)

A. Of first importance (15:3, 4)

1. Christ died for our sins
2. He rose from the dead
 - a. The "firstborn from the dead" (Colossians 1:18)
 - b. When he appears we will appear with him in glory (Colossians 3:4)

B. We will be changed

1. To be like his glorious body (Philippians 3:21)
2. We will be like him (1 John 3:2)
3. From a "natural" body to a "spiritual" one (1 Corinthians 15:47, 48)

C. Our transforming glory (42-44)

1. Perishable vs. Imperishable
 - a. This body:
 - 1) Ages
 - 2) Suffers
 - 3) Dies
 - b. The heavenly body (Revelation 21:4):
 - 1) Knows no death
 - 2) Knows no sorrow
 - 3) Knows no crying
 - 4) Knows no pain
2. Dishonor vs. Glory
 - a. This body:
 - 1) Knows the sorrow of shame – whether as victim or perpetrator
 - 2) Suffers embarrassment – we look at our bodies and are embarrassed
 - 3) Succumbs to the ravages of sin
 - b. The heavenly body:

- 1) Clothed in purity (Revelation 19:8)
- 2) An unfading crown of *glory* (1 Peter 5:4)
3. Weakness vs. Power
 - a. Now:
 - 1) Spiritual weakness (Romans 7!)
 - 2) Physical weakness
 - b. Then (Isaiah 41:30):
 - 1) No spiritual weakness
 - 2) No physical weakness
4. Natural vs. Spiritual
 - a. The natural body: "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (v. 50)
 - b. The spiritual body:
 - 1) We haven't seen it yet
 - 2) We will enjoy it forever (Revelation 22:5)

III. Into the Fray!

- A. Stand fast! Immovable!
 1. The foundation of the gospel does not change
 2. "Christ died for our sins"
 3. He is risen from the dead – and we, too, will rise
- B. Abounding in the Lord's work
 1. Pursuing and proclaiming the knowledge of God
 2. Living in righteousness in every area of your life (Philippians 4:8, 9)
 3. Worshiping in Spirit and in truth before our great high priest (Hebrews 10:19-22)
- C. For a glorious end: Eternal blessings and joy that never ends