

The Resurrection Body

1 Corinthians 15:35-54

There are tombstones all over the world that say, “Here lies ...” and the person’s name. But that really isn’t accurate, because those who were Christians are in heaven with the Lord. However, someday they’ll be reunited with their bodies at the resurrection. This is not only the hope of every believer but also the promise of our Savior. Despite this great hope that we are guaranteed, many believers are still afraid of physical death and what follows.

2 Corinthians 5:8 says Yes, we are fully confident, and we would rather be away from these earthly bodies, for then we will be at home with the Lord.

John 6:39-40 And this is the will of God, that I should not lose even one of all those He has given Me, but that I should raise them up at the last day. For it is My Father’s will that all who see His Son and believe in Him should have eternal life. I will raise them up at the last day.”

Thankfully, the Bible is very clear about what we can expect in that moment and throughout eternity. God clearly answers many of our questions. Let’s begin by reading (*1 Corinthians 15:35-54*):

But someone may ask, “How will the dead be raised? What kind of bodies will they have?” What a foolish question! When you put a seed into the ground, it doesn’t grow into a plant unless it dies first. And what you put in the ground is not the plant that will grow, but only a bare seed of wheat or whatever you are planting. Then God gives it the new body He wants it to have. A different plant grows from each kind of seed. Similarly there are different kinds of flesh—one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish.

There are also bodies in the heavens and bodies on the earth. The glory of the heavenly bodies is different from the glory of the earthly bodies. The sun has one kind of glory, while the moon and stars each have another kind. And even the stars differ from each other in their glory.

It is the same way with the resurrection of the dead. Our earthly bodies are planted in the ground when we die, but they will be raised to live forever. Our bodies are buried in brokenness, but they will be raised in glory. They are buried in weakness, but they will be raised in strength. They are buried as natural human bodies, but they will be raised as spiritual bodies. For just as there are natural bodies, there are also spiritual bodies.

The Scriptures tell us, “The first man, Adam, became a living person.” But the last Adam—that is, Christ—is a life-giving Spirit. What comes first is the natural body, then the spiritual body comes later. Adam, the first man, was made from the dust of the earth, while Christ, the second man, came from heaven. Earthly people are like the earthly man, and heavenly people are like the heavenly man. Just as we are now like the earthly man, we will someday be like the heavenly man.

What I am saying, dear brothers and sisters, is that our physical bodies cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. These dying bodies cannot inherit what will last forever.

But let me reveal to you a wonderful secret. We will not all die, but we will all be transformed! It will happen in a moment, in the blink of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, those who have died will be raised to live forever. And we who are living will also be

transformed. For our dying bodies must be transformed into bodies that will never die; our mortal bodies must be transformed into immortal bodies.

Then, when our dying bodies have been transformed into bodies that will never die, this Scripture will be fulfilled: “Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory. O death, where is your sting?”

For sin is the sting that results in death, and the law gives sin its power. But thank God! He gives us victory over sin and death through our Lord Jesus Christ. So, my dear brothers and sisters, be strong and immovable. Always work enthusiastically for the Lord, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless.

Now that we’ve read the passage, let’s take a closer look at what it says about our bodies after the resurrection.

What will it be like? Our resurrected bodies will not be exactly like our earthly ones. Paul likens the mortal body to a seed and the resurrection body to a plant. Just as the plant is more impressive than the seed, so our new bodies will far exceed our old ones in beauty, function, and glory.

(1 Corinthians 15:51-52) tells us, “*We will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.*” But just how quickly does a blink happen? It takes a third of a second. But rather than worry about a literal amount of time, the point is that God won’t leave us to tarry. Rather, He’ll move swiftly to fulfill His promises.

The Greek word for “twinkling” means “to hurl.” It is used to describe a rapid movement. *Atomos— the word translated as “a moment”—literally means an indivisible moment of time.* (It’s also the word from which we get atom, the smallest unit of ordinary matter.) What do these terms tell us? The change God will bring about in us will happen so quickly we won’t be able to measure it. We literally will not have time.

God gives each person a body as He wishes. We’ll all have common human characteristics, but each person will be unique with a body specifically designed by God.

Our spiritual bodies will be raised imperishable (they will last forever) in glory and power. Because of sin, we’re currently subject to weakness, aging, and death. But in the resurrection, the carnal sin nature that influences our mortal flesh is completely removed. There will be no more sickness, no more death. There is no more shame because of sin, no more frailty dealing with temptation and no more limits to time and space.

When will the resurrection occur?

(1 Thessalonians 4:13-17) tells us that those who have died in Christ will be resurrected when He comes back for His church. Then believers still alive at that time will be caught up with them in the air to be with Christ (known as the rapture). *And now, dear brothers and sisters, we want you to know what will happen to the believers who have (already) died so you will not grieve like people who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and was raised to life again, we also believe that when*

Jesus returns, God will bring back with Him the believers who have died. We tell you this directly from the Lord: We who are still living when the Lord returns will not meet Him ahead of those who have died. For the Lord Himself will come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God. First, the believers who have died will rise from their graves. Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever. The transformation will be from perishable to imperishable (those who have died) and from mortal to immortal (those who are alive). As from Adam, our natural bodies are not perfect but they are good. They were made for life on this earth but not for heaven. Christ is called the last Adam, and our resurrected, spiritual bodies will be as the resurrected body of Jesus Christ, suitable for eternity in heaven. Our resurrection bodies complete the work of redemption. Our new bodies will not be subject to decay or death.

Our resurrection is sure. On that day, no believer in Christ will miss out. The condition of the body (whether buried, cremated, or never found) doesn't hinder the power of God to resurrect it. When the trumpet sounds and Christ calls us forth, *Death is swallowed up in victory.*" Our hope of resurrection makes all our efforts and sacrifices in life worth it.

The reality of the believer's situation; All the Old Testament sacrifices pointed to Christ as our substitute and Savior. A dead savior cannot save anybody. Jesus merely dying for our sins would accomplish nothing without the resurrection. Christians have received the eye witness accounts in the Word stating the resurrection, telling us of all whom Jesus appeared to after His resurrection until His ascension. We have trusted Christ and have been saved. We now believe the Word as the assurance of our salvation.

The death of Jesus, the Son of God, will result in the salvation of many. Jesus' bodily resurrection is also the guarantee of a future resurrection life for all believers (*John 5:26-29, 14:19; Rom. 4:25, 6:5-10; 1 Cor. 15:20,23*).

The Father has life in Himself, and He has granted that same life-giving power to His Son. And He has given Him authority to judge everyone because He is the Son of Man. Don't be so surprised! Indeed, the time is coming when all the dead in their graves will hear the voice of God's Son, and they will rise again. Those who have done good will rise to experience eternal life, and those who have continued in evil will rise to experience judgment and condemnation.

After a little while the world will no longer see Me, but you will see Me; because I live, you will live also.

He was handed over to die because of our sins, and He was raised to life to make us right with God.

But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead. He is the first of a great harvest of all who have died.

Every person should want to be part of God's family, receiving their resurrected bodies and spending eternity in heaven. But it needs to be made clear that there are requirements you must acknowledge before that becomes possible. The following information is to hear, understand and believe.

God the Son - We believe in Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin (*Is. 7:14; Matt 1:23,25; Luke 1:26-35*). We believe in His sinless life, miracles, and teachings, that He died in our place; was bodily resurrected; ascended into heaven; and continually intercedes to God the Father on the behalf of His people. Jesus Christ represents humanity and deity (God) in indivisible oneness (*Micah 5:2; John 5:23, 14:9,10; Col. 2:9*). In His becoming man, He accepted all the essential characteristics of humanity and so became the God-man (*Phil. 2:5-8; Col. 2.9*).

We believe that our Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through the shedding of His blood and sacrificial death on the cross and that His death was voluntary, suffering, for our benefit, the death we deserved (*John 10:15; Rom. 3:24,25, 5:8; 1 Pet 2:24*).

We believe that the power of the death of our Lord Jesus Christ frees the believing sinner from the punishment, the penalty, the power, and one day the very presence of sin; and that he is declared righteous, given eternal life, and adopted into the family of God (*Rom. 3:25, 5:8,9; 2 Cor. 5:14,15; 1 Pet. 2:24, 3:18*).

We believe that our justification (just as if we had never sinned) was made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead and that He is now ascended to the right hand of the Father, where He now mediates as our Advocate and High-Priest (*Matt. 28:6; Luke 24:38,39; Acts 2:30,31; Rom. 4:25, 8:34; Heb. 7:25, 9:24; 1 John 2:1*). We believe that in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave, God confirmed the deity of His Son and gave proof that God had reconciled man to Himself through the work of Christ on the cross. Jesus' bodily resurrection is also the guarantee of a future resurrection life for all believers (*John 5:26-29,14:19; Rom. 4:25, 6:5-10; 1 Cor. 15:20,23*).

We believe that Jesus was God incarnate (*John 1:1,14*); and that the purpose of the incarnation was to reveal God, redeem man, and rule over God's kingdom (*Ps. 2:7-9; Is. 9:6; John 1:29; Phil. 2:9-11; Heb. 7:25,26; 1Pet. 1:18-19*).

The Bible teaches that to obtain salvation, you must believe the gospel message with a sincere heart. There are many ways to say what you believe the gospel means. God knows the knowledge He has brought to you and He knows your heart. One type of acceptable answer would be, ***"I accepted Jesus as my Savior after hearing and believing the gospel message - which is, God sent Jesus to this earth to make God known to man and for the purpose of dying, in my place, for my sins, that is - my redemption. I believe by faith that Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior, and God as the 2nd Person of the Trinity (Father, Son, Holy Spirit), who came to this world in human flesh, the only sinless man, who died on the cross, shedding His blood for our sins and was resurrected from the dead to affirm who He was and to give us hope. It is my responsibility to acknowledge and confess my sins and to repent, turning away from my sins and to ask for forgiveness. Salvation is wholly of God by grace, (unmerited, undeserved favor), on the basis of our trust in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, the merit of His shed blood on the cross, and not on the basis of anything we can do. More importantly, understanding that it is the resurrection of Jesus Christ that shows He conquered death and gives us the assurance that all He said is true. The redemption of man being accomplished by His death on the cross and three days later, the greatest event to ever take place on earth, the resurrection of***

Jesus Christ rose from the dead. Yes, the Resurrection. It is the reason we celebrate Easter and do so in the springtime. It is the beginning of new life. The beginning of our new life, (no matter how old we may be), when we acknowledge that He died in our place for our sins.

By simply recognizing our need for a divine Savior, and accepting Christ's payment for our sins, we do not have to guess, hope or wish but are given assurance, yes we are promised salvation and eternal life. (1 John 5:11-13) states "*This is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.*"

The Gospel message is that God sent a sinless Jesus to be cruelly tortured and crucified and to die for our sins. *Picture in your mind's eye, Jesus hanging on the cross for **your sins personally**. Jesus Christ, the righteous and sinless Son of God, having taken upon Himself man's every sin past, present and future, and paying the penalty of death (once and for all) **in turn gave us His righteousness** (by forgiving our sins). **However** as (Romans 3:22-25) states "This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. But now God has shown us a different way to heaven - not by 'being good enough' and trying to keep His laws, but by a new way (though not new, really, for the Scriptures told about it long ago). Now God says He will accept and acquit us - declare us 'not guilty' - if we trust Jesus Christ to take away our sins. And we all can be saved in this same way, by coming to Christ, no matter who we are or what we have been like. Yes, all have sinned; all fall short of God's glorious ideal; yet now God declares us 'not guilty' of offending Him, if we trust in Jesus Christ, who in His kindness freely takes away our sins. For God sent Christ Jesus to take the punishment for our sins and to end all God's anger against us. He used Christ's blood and our faith as the means of saving us from His wrath."*

(Main body of the above information was drawn from messages by John MacArthur)