

The Resurrection Body - 1 Cor. 15:35-49

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[0 : 00] Form us so that we become the kind of people that you called us to be. That we would live in the light of what we one day will be.

Father, by your power, come amongst us and teach us. We pray this for your glory.

Amen. It's inescapable and unavoidable.

It will happen. It may come as a surprise through illness or it may come through a tragic accident. It may come at the end of a long and healthy life. But sooner or later, we will all die. Diets can't stop it.

[1 : 04] Gym routines won't stop it. Medication can't stop it. The painful reality is we will all die.

And we will either be buried or we will be cremated. I wonder, have you ever stopped to face up to the reality of your impending death?

To just stop and think about one day I will breathe my last. It can be an unsettling thought, can't it?

Well, for the Christian, the good news is death is not the end. It is the beginning of something wonderfully new. So, look back at verse 21. Chapter 15, verse 21.

For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive, but each in his own turn.

[2 : 21] Christ the first fruits, then when he comes again, those who belong to him. You see, just as sure as death will come, a day will also come when the risen Lord Jesus is going to return and all those who trust in him, all those who belong to him, will be resurrected.

That's an amazing thought. Dead, but made alive again. You see, death is not the end.

It is only the door to a glorious eternity. Now, I'm sure that like me and like others, you've thought, well, what's this resurrection going to be like for the Christian?

What can we expect to happen? Well, that was the question some of the Christians were asking in the church in Corinth. So, look at verse 35.

Someone may ask, well, they certainly did ask, how are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come? Now, this is not the question of a confused Christian, but a doubting sceptic.

[3 : 50] As we've seen through 1 Corinthians 15, there's some we're teaching, some we're believing, that there wasn't a resurrection from the dead. You see, when you bury the dead, the body rots and it decays, it gets eaten by worms.

Or if it's burned at a cremation, it's turned into dust and ash. You don't really expect us to believe that there's going to be a bodily resurrection. I mean, what happens if you're blown to smithereens in midair in a terrorist attack?

Or what happens if you're attacked and mutilated by some wild animal and your part strewn across the ground? You don't really believe that your body is somehow going to be put back together again, do you?

Well, not only will there be a bodily resurrection, it will be a complete transformation. Look at verse 36.

Paul, the apostle, the author who's writing, responds to this question. How foolish! What a stupid thing to say that there's going to be no resurrection.

[5 : 10] How on earth could you possibly believe that our bodies will not be raised and that they will not be made new? You better believe it.

Resurrection Day will be transformation day. We will be utterly and completely changed. We will become all that God intends us to be.

Well, let's see what we have to look forward to on Resurrection Day. Two things are most surely going to happen.

First, we will receive a new physical body. Now, I know I'm the perfect specimen standing before you, but it's going to be made new.

Because some people think that, well, we're going to be nothing more than invisible souls drifting around the sky from one cloud to another. Or somehow, we're just going to be reincorporated into the kind of great circle of life.

[6 : 24] Well, nothing could be further from the truth. If we are Christians, first, our bodies will be wonderfully changed.

Look at verse 36. How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies.

Now, to help us understand this, he's wanting us to think of our dead bodies. When we die, our dead bodies are just like a seed. When you put a seed into the ground and cover it over, it doesn't stay a seed.

It is wonderfully changed. So, verse 37. When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but just a seed, perhaps of wheat or of something else.

But God gives it a body as he has determined. And to each kind of seed, he gives its own body. So, when you put an apple seed into the ground and you cover it and you water it, it's changed from a seed, an apple seed, into an apple tree.

[7 : 47] You don't plant an apple seed into the ground and expect it to produce, well, just another seed just like the one you put in the ground. No, the seed becomes something different entirely.

there's some continuity. It's an apple seed, but it turns into an apple tree. Verse 38. God gives it a body. He gives the seed a body as he has determined.

And to each kind of seed, he gives its own body. Now, just as seeds change into trees, so our physical bodies will be wonderfully changed when we die.

But what kind of body will it be? What are our bodies going to be like? Well, our bodies, second, will be similar but different.

The example here is just to open up your eyes and look at nature. Look at the creation all around you. Look up into the skies and look at the earth.

[8 : 58] Because nature could be divided, if you like, into two categories. But certainly, this is how it's divided here. So look at verse 40. The two categories.

There are the heavenly bodies and there are the earthly bodies. So the created things in the heavens and the created things on earth. But the splendour of the heavenly bodies, so everything up there, the stars, the moons, the planets, well that's one kind of splendour, that's one kind of beauty.

And then of the earthly bodies is another splendour. Everything down here on the earth is another kind of beauty. These earthly bodies are described for us in verse 39.

All flesh is not the same. Men have one kind of flesh, animals have another, birds have another, and fish have another. They're all different kinds of created bodies.

And then if we look up into the heavens, they're described in verse 41. The sun has one kind of splendour, the moon another, the stars another, and stars differ from star in splendour.

[10 : 19] So he's saying, just open your eyes, look at nature, look up at the skies at night, look at the earth all around you. God has designed different bodies or created elements up there, and he's created different elements down here.

Now if God can do that in nature, don't you think God could do that with our physical bodies? The point he is making is, is that we have one kind of body for this present world, and we will have a different kind of body for the new creation that is to come.

Our physical bodies now have one kind of beauty and splendour and greatness. we can do incredible and amazing acts physically and with our minds, but our resurrected bodies will have a different kind of beauty and a different kind of splendour.

Yes, there will be continuity, our bodies will be similar, we'll have arms and we'll have legs and we'll have eyes and we'll have ears, just like the risen Lord Jesus when he came back from the dead, when he met with his disciples.

He ate, he drank, he spoke to them, they could touch him, they could feel him, he was similar to his earthly body, but yet he was different.

[11 : 50] And so it will be with us. We will be wonderfully changed, we will be similar but different, but what is that difference going to be like?

Well third, our bodies will be totally transformed. Look at verse 42. So it will be with the resurrection of the dead.

The body that is sown is perishable, so the body that dies is perishable, but it is raised imperishable. It is sown in dishonour, but it is raised in glory.

It is sown or it will die in weakness, but it is raised in power. Now live long enough in this present physical body, this shell that we have that is us right now, and you will experience just how fragile we really are.

We like to think that we are going to be here forever and ever, but we are not. Our physical bodies will perish.

[13:16] We all get sick, we all develop some kind of illness, we get cancers, we lose our eyesight, we go deaf, we slowly break down, we decay, and we eventually die, we perish.

We continue to look at verse 42, we are told that our bodies, our physical bodies, are dishonourable. A better word is humiliation, for there is nothing pleasant as our bodies get older and become more dysfunctional.

No longer able to control our bladder, we need to be fed and washed. We revert back to the state of a little infant.

Our bodies are dishonourable, shameful. Our physical bodies, we're told, are weak, weak, and as we go on through life, they only get weaker.

We lose our strength, we get arthritis, we no longer have the energy to walk and to run and stand, and we even struggle to have the energy to actually take in a breath.

[14:37] death. We live in a world where our physical bodies ache and groan and cry out in pain, and there is nothing that we can do to stop this process of decay.

Sooner or later, we will all die. die. But, what starts off as perishable, and dishonourable, and weak, is all going to be transformed.

Look what it says in verse 42, it is raised imperishable, a body that will never get sick, or never feel pain, or never go through the process of dying and decaying.

It will be raised in glory. We will always have our full and complete faculties. We will be what we are meant to be.

It will be raised in power. We will always be strong and healthy, and be able to enjoy life and the new creation in all its fullness, running, swimming, jumping, doing all the things that we could possibly imagine to do.

[16:01] Imperishable, glory, power. This is the design, this is the beauty, the splendour of a resurrected body. That means we will not need hospitals, or doctors, or pain management, or carers.

There will be no more funerals to attend, no tears to shed, no struggles to endure, no pain to bear. We will be raised with a transformed new body.

Now I know that some of you suffer with all kinds of physical pains and struggles. Mentally, we struggle, emotionally, we struggle.

And some of you have carried these sufferings and these pains from birth. Others of you have developed them over time, and as we get older, more ailments will come along.

So I want to say to you this morning, Resurrection Day is coming. I cannot answer your questions as to why we have all the sufferings that we do.

[17:23] We can explain it to some degree, and you can talk to me about that more afterwards. But in the midst of your suffering, God gives us the sure and certain hope, of a resurrected body.

It will not be this way forever. It is a blip on the line of eternity. As sure as Christ rose from the grave with a physical body, so you too, if you have faith in Christ and belong to him, you shall rise with a new physical body.

And Christ will make sure that you will get from this earth to the new earth to the new creation. That is what awaits those who trust in him.

But not only will we have a new physical body, we will have a new spiritual body. Look at verse 44. It is sown a natural body. It is raised a spiritual body.

[18:37] If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. The natural bodies that we have and can touch and pinch and feel right now is going to be changed into a new spiritual body.

What will that be? Well, let me explain. We need to follow the process, the order that's here.

First, just like Adam. You see, when we were born, when we entered into this world and breathed our first breath, we were just like Adam, the first man that God created.

So, verse 45, so it is written, the first man, Adam, became a living being with flesh and blood and breathing air in and out, a living being.

That is what we became. Verse 47, the first man was of the dust of the earth. We are just like Adam, created and made and sustained by God.

[19 : 55] But remember what Adam did, the story in Genesis. God made him, God gave him life. But what did he do with that life?

Adam sinned, he disobeyed God. He turned against God. It was no longer God's will, but Adam's will. My way, not God's way.

And what did God say in response to their rebellion? Genesis 3 verse 19 says this, For dust you are, and to dust you shall return.

The consequences of sin, the curse because of sin, is death. Not just physical death, but a spiritual death.

we are completely changed. And we are no different. We are just like Adam. Not only do we physically die, but we spiritually die.

[21 : 03] We haven't got the capacity to live life continually for all eternity, and we haven't got the capacity to keep doing good and right. We're dead spiritually, just like Adam.

Adam. We only need to look through history, and the world will tell you that. We're not getting better, we are getting worse. The world we live in is broken and corrupt because we ourselves are broken and corrupt.

We're not just physically dying and going through the process of decaying, we're a people who are spiritually dead, just like Adam.

But thankfully, all of that has changed. Second, the second Adam. So look at verse 45 again.

So it is written, the first man Adam became a living being, the last Adam a life-giving spirit. So we're to draw a contrast here, it might be a bit confusing because we've got two Adams.

[22 : 14] Okay? So we have the first Adam, that's the first man that God created that we've just been looking at, we can read all about him in Genesis. And when we are born, it's like we are under Adam, Adam becomes our representative, so who he is, we are, so just like Adam, we're dead physically or we die physically, and we are dead spiritually, we're without hope, we are like the first Adam.

And then we have the second Adam, or the last Adam. The last Adam is Jesus Christ. Jesus represents the perfect sinless man, of which there is only one, and that's Jesus himself.

He never sinned, he always obeyed, and he lives forever. He's raised, he's defeated death, he is in perfect relationship with God, he is everything that we should be.

So we have the first Adam, and we're just like him, we are under him, he is our representative. We have the last Adam, who is Jesus Christ, the perfect man.

now, through our faith in Jesus Christ, by trusting in him, we are transferred from the first Adam to the second Adam.

[23 : 50] So no longer are we under the first Adam, we are under the second Adam, so Christ becomes our representative. all that Christ is in his humanity, now becomes ours.

So go back to verse 22. For as in Adam, that's the first Adam, all die, so in Christ, the last Adam, all will be made alive.

If you have turned to Christ, if you have trusted in Christ, not only will you have a brand new physical body, but you will have a new spiritual body, you will be like Christ.

So verse 46, the spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and then after that, the spiritual.

So as we trust in Christ, we become not just the natural people, but a spiritual people. Verse 47, the first man was of the dust of the earth, the second man from heaven.

[25 : 01] As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth. And as is the man from heaven, so also are those who are of heaven.

Christ becomes your life. His perfection, his beauty, all of his goodness and rightness is now credited to you.

So as God looks upon you, he sees you as his own son. So you are no longer under the curse of the first Adam. No longer will you receive that death sentence.

For we have received the life of the second Adam. We have been made new. So now he's given us his Holy Spirit so that we have the capacity to choose and to do what is right and good because of Jesus.

Because of Christ, we have become a new kind of people. So what will this mean for our future? [26 : 14] Well, we will become just like Jesus. Verse 49. And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven.

If you have trusted in Christ, if you belong to him, if you've been transferred from the first Adam to the second Adam, from one life to our new life, you have been given a life giving spirit.

Yes, we are still in our earthly bodies. We still bear the image of the earthly man, which means we still struggle and battle with our sinful nature.

We are not perfect. We sin and we fall and we fail all the time. We have our struggles. But because we are under Christ, because he is our representative, it tells us here we will become like him at the resurrection.

Look at the end of verse 49. So shall we bear the likeness or the image of the man from heaven.

[27 : 34] Isn't that incredible? That I will bear the image of the man from heaven. I will be like Christ. Yes, there is a spiritual change taking place now.

Just flick over one page or maybe two to 2nd Corinthians chapter 3. 2nd Corinthians chapter 3 verse 18.

If we're Christians, there is a spiritual change taking place right now. So verse 18 of chapter 3. And we, the believers, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever increasing glory which comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

So as we journey through our life, if we are Christians, the power of the Holy Spirit is changing us and shaping us to become more like Jesus.

So as we reflect him to the world around us. But back here in 1 Corinthians 15, it goes one better. Not only is a transformation process taking place, 1 Corinthians 15 verse 49 is telling us that that transformation process will be complete.

[29 : 00] The broken image is going to be restored. Right now we reflect something of who Christ is. But on resurrection day we will become like him.

Now that doesn't mean we're going to run around the new heavens and the new earth looking like mini Jesuses. We're all looking the same or anything like that. But we will be like him spiritually. We will have a sinless, obedient, perfect body. Now I know that life can be hard because I feel it and I'm sure that there are times that you feel there is more failure than progress in the Christian life. We struggle and we fall into temptation. Sometimes we don't even put up a fight. We just willingly sin. And the battle with our sinful nature can get us down and we just want to give up and chuck it all in.

Well if that's you, then I want to say to us all this morning, look forward in sure and certain hope that on resurrection day you will rise with a new spiritual body.

[30 : 22] There will be no more sin, no more giving in to temptation, no more falling and failing, just perfect loving obedience, just like Christ.

Have you ever stopped to think about the reality of your own death? That one day you will breathe your very last?

It's inescapable. It's unavoidable. you can try and ignore it and palm it off with jokes and all sorts of things, but you can't hide it.

Sooner or later we will die. I will either stand before you as you are buried or you will stand at my funeral.

It is going to happen. But the good news for the Christian is death is not the end. It is only the doorway into a glorious and eternal future.

[31 : 36] One day the risen Lord Jesus is going to return again and all those who are in Christ will rise. And on that day all sin and all suffering will end.

We will receive a new physical body and a new spiritual body and we will reign with him in the new heavens and the new earth. and the promise of God will become a reality.

Let me read to you the well known words of that promise. Revelation chapter 21 verse 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying Now the dwelling of God is with men and he will live with them.

they will be his people and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes and there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain for the old order of things has passed away.

And he who is seated on the throne said I am making everything new. then he said write this down for these words are trustworthy and true.

[33 : 06] Resurrection day is coming. Christ will return and will raise all those who love him and who have trusted in him.

And you know what? We are to remind each other of this resurrection day as we share in the Lord's Supper.

We're going to share in the Lord's Supper right now and we're going to do it in such a way that reminds each other of the resurrection day that is to come.

Go back to 1 Corinthians chapter 11. Just to back a couple of pages. 1 Corinthians 11 and verse 23.

1 Corinthians 11 verse 23. For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you.

[34 : 19] So Paul has received this teaching from the Lord and he now passes it on to the church and it's to be the practice of the church in every age. The Lord Jesus on the night he was betrayed took bread and when he had given thanks he broke it and said this is my body which is for you do this in remembrance of me.

So in a moment we're going to take this bread together and we remember the death of the Lord Jesus we remember that he died in place of me he was the perfect sinless one who died my death so that I could have life today and for life eternity verse 25 in the same way after supper he took the cup saying this cup is the new covenant in my blood do this whenever you drink it in remembrance of me we're going to drink the juice that we have here and as we do so we remember the new covenant that promise from God that tells us that his life through our faith in him his life becomes my life his future becomes my future because of our union with

Christ we will live we will become like him but not only do we eat and drink and look back in remembrance and thankfulness as we share in this simple meal together we are to look forward and remind each other of resurrection day of the certain hope so verse 26 for whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes one day we will no longer share in this simple meal together because we will be with the risen Lord Jesus and we will eat and we will feast with each other and with him resurrection day is coming and this meal is to remind us to keep our focus to say guys keep on going resurrection day will come so

I want to invite all those who are in Christ and all those who belong to Christ and trust in him to share in this meal as a means of encouraging one another to say come on let's look forward to resurrection day let's trust him for what is to come so as the bread is being passed around I want to invite you to take a piece hold on to it and just to use the time as a quiet reflection to bring your own confession but to thank the Lord Jesus that his death was your death he suffered the punishment that you deserve so that you might have life today and life for all eternity so please if you trust him take the bread and then we will eat together in just a moment but somehow

Thank you.

[38 : 59] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.