

“Heaven”

IV. “Anticipating Resurrection”

In part 3 we looked at *restoration*, but what about *resurrection*? How does the resurrection of Jesus show us more about heaven and earth? Let’s look...

Why is *Resurrection* so important?

John Updike said, “Make no mistake: if He rose at all it was as His body; if the cells’ dissolution did not reverse, the molecules reknit, the amino acids rekindle, the Church will fail. Let us not mock God with metaphor, analogy, sidestepping transcendence; making of the event a parable, a sign painted in the faded credulity of earlier ages; let us walk through the door.”

The PHYSICAL resurrection of Jesus Christ is the cornerstone of redemption – both for mankind and for the earth.

R.A. Torrey writes, “We will not be disembodied spirits in the world to come, but redeemed spirits, in redeemed bodies, in a redeemed universe.” It is crucial we understand the resurrection of the body. That is why Paul wrote **1 Corinthians 15**.

Genesis 2:7 says God formed man from the dust of the earth and breathed life into him and he became a *living being*. The Hebrew word for *living being* is *nephesh*, often translated “soul.” The point at which Adam became a living being was when God joined his body (dust) and his spirit (breath) together. Thus, the essence of humanity is BODY and SPIRIT. Your body is as much a part of you as your spirit.

Death is abnormal because it tears apart what God created and intended for eternity. According to the Bible, a disembodied spirit is unnatural and undesirable. **When we die** it isn’t that the real us goes to the intermediate heaven and our fake, or unimportant, part goes to the grave; it’s that part of us goes to the intermediate Heaven and part of us goes to the grave to await our bodily resurrection. *We will never be all that God intended for us to be until our body and spirit are joined together again in resurrection.*

Anthony Hoekema says, “Resurrected bodies are not intended just to float in space, or to flit from cloud to cloud. They call for a *new earth* on which to live and work, glorifying God. The doctrine of the resurrection of the body, in fact, makes no sense whatsoever apart from the doctrine of the new earth.”

In other words, **if you believe in the resurrection of the body (1 Corinthians 15) you MUST believe in the doctrine of the physical new earth (Revelation 21).**

II Corinthians 5:17 says that we are new creatures in Christ, and that the old is gone and the new has come. Just as we are a new version of the old self once we trust Christ as our savior, the New Earth will still be the Earth, but a new or changed Earth.

I Corinthians 15:42-44, Paul says our natural body is raised a spiritual body and that if there is a natural body, there is a spiritual body.

*Some believe this to mean that Paul was saying our fleshly body is exchanged for a disembodied spirit. But **body** means “corporeal” or “flesh and bones.” The word *spiritual* here is an adjective describing *body*, not negating its meaning. A spiritual body is first and foremost a real body, made of flesh and bones, or it couldn’t be a *body*.

Paul uses **natural** (Greek: psuchikos – lower or bestial nature, sensual)

He also uses **spiritual** (Greek: pneumatikos – non carnal, divine, regenerate, religious)

Jesus’ resurrected body is the model for our resurrected body:

Luke 24:39 The resurrected Jesus declares to his disciples, “Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have.” Jesus was not a disembodied spirit, floating around!

John 2:19 Jesus says, “Destroy this temple (his body), and I will raise it again in three days.” The body that rose was the body that was destroyed.

Philippians 3:20-21 says that the “the Lord Jesus Christ...will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.” If Jesus was flesh and bones in His resurrected body, and you and I will be like Him, we will be flesh and bones in our resurrected body!

John 20 & 21 tells us the resurrected Jesus:

- Continued in his relationships (friendships) that he had previous to his death
- Stood
- Cooked
- Fished
- Ate
- Talked
- Breathed
- Wore clothes

It’s clear that Jesus had a physical, resurrected body, and so will we.

What about the resurrection of Creation?

Paul says in **Romans 8:19-23** that all creation awaits our resurrection, and that creation groans as in the pains of childbirth awaiting resurrection of all things. Remember, as mankind goes, so does the rest of creation. Creation was affected by man's Fall, therefore, creation will be resurrected as mankind will be.

Listen to pp.123-124 of "Heaven" by Randy Alcorn.

Be encouraged that one day, you will be resurrected, as Jesus was, if you have placed your faith and trust in Him as your Lord and Savior! So will heaven and earth!