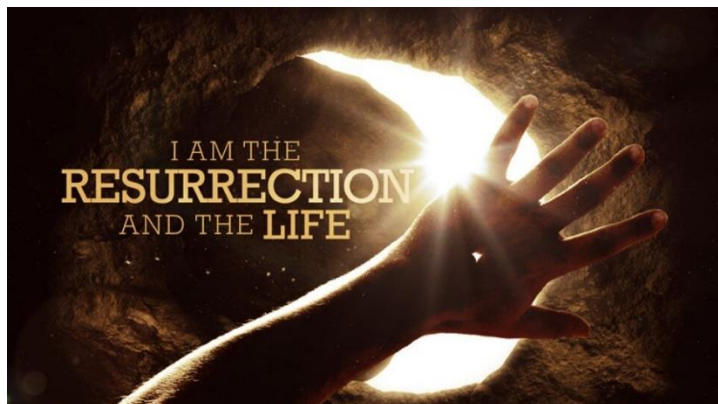


The Resurrection and Transformation of the Human Body

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As a young man, D. L. Moody was suddenly called upon to preach a funeral sermon. He hunted all through the Four Gospels trying to find one of Christ's funeral sermons, but searched in vain. He found that Christ broke up every funeral He ever attended. Death could not exist where He was.

When the dead heard His voice, they sprang to life. Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25). This well-known saying of Jesus means that He possess the authority and power to raise the dead. Someday Jesus Christ will raise the dead and give new bodies to His redeemed saints. In this study, we are going to investigate the transformation of the believer's human body. What will our bodies be like when they are raised from the dead or immediately transformed at the event of the Rapture?

It's interesting to contemplate that the believer possesses a *judicial* fitness secured for us by the blood of Christ (Rom. 5:9), a *spiritual* fitness secured for us by new birth, the possession of a new nature (2 Pet. 1:4), and a *physical* fitness to be secured for us at the Rapture when we receive our resurrected and transformed bodies (Rom. 8:23).

Romans 8:23 declares:

"And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit (*regeneration, sealing, filling of the Spirit*), even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to wit (that is to say)*, the redemption of our body" (*the time we will receive a body that is set free from sin, disease, and death*).

I. A transformation will occur

There are two significant transformations will occur at the Rapture. The dead Church Age will be raised with a transformed body and the living Church Age saints

on earth will also receive a transformed body without dying. But what will our transformed bodies be like? Let's investigate this in Scriptures. Our bodies, whether resurrected or instantly transformed at the Rapture will be the same in nature. So what kind of bodies will receive at the Rapture?

❖ Our transformed bodies will be immortal.

1 Corinthians 15:52

"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible (*receiving a transformed body*), and we shall be changed" (*the living saints will receive a transformed body*).

The word "incorruptible" means that the transformation which occurs will result in a body that will no longer be subject to physical decay or corruption. It will be imperishable and immortal. In other words, our new bodies will never die again! Think of how wonderful this will be. Death will never again be part of our human existence. We will live eternally with a body that will never again grow old, suffer, and experience death.

❖ Our transformed bodies will be changed.

The word "changed" (Gk. *allasso* - "to make other than it is" – 1 Cor. 15:52) speaks of something totally different. This is a word that means to cause one thing to cease and another thing to take its place. It means to exchange one thing for another. Here is good news. We are going to exchange our old and worn-out bodies for new ones! We are going to exchange our bodies of corruption for immortality. We are going to exchange our vile bodies for a glorious new body that is free from sinful impurity, sickness, disease, and pain.

Philippians 3:20-21 says:

"For our conversation (citizenship) is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body (*a lowly, humiliating, and sinful body destined for death*), that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body (*identical to Christ's perfect character and physical perfections*), according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (*the same power that Christ will use to bring the universe under His rule during the Millennium is the same type of power that will transform our bodies*).

Here the word “change” in the Greek language means a change in form. It points to something that is transformed. This is what is going to happen at the event of the Rapture. Out with the old and in the new! You know, as we get older the more we realize that our bodies need a change! We need a new body. The old will be exchanged for the new! Our sin wracked, sick, and scarred bodies will be totally changed like a caterpillar being transformed into a butterfly. We shall all be changed! Our sanctification will be complete! We will undergo a physical and spiritual metamorphosis and be given a totally new body that is free from physical and spiritual defilement. Yes, in the coming day we will receive a transformed body just like Christ.



The glorious promise of Romans 8:30 which made in eternity past will come to pass: “Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.” Yes, we will receive a transformed, glorified, perfect body.

“Complete in Thee,
No work of mine
Could take, dear Lord,
The place of Thine.
Thy blood hath pardon bought for me,
And I shall stand
Complete in Thee.
Yea, justified, oh, blessed thought,
And sanctified, salvation wrought.
Thy blood hath pardon bought for me,
And glorified I, too, shall be.”

Today our present bodies are breaking down. The second law of thermodynamics is in place. Everything is breaking down. Our bodies become diseased, deformed by arthritis, and begin to deteriorate from a physical perspective over time.

The word “vile” (Phil. 3:20) refers to the humiliating and lowly state of our present bodies which are still connected with sin, disease, and sickness. We see this type of body at every funeral as it lies within the casket.

The bodies we possess today are humiliating as they move back toward the grave. We become frail and weakened as we come to the end of our road. It’s amazing how youthfulness flies away from us, then our middle-aged years fly away from us and then finally old age sets in and this too will one day fly away from us. But we can be sure that someday we will get a new body that will never die and one that will be like Christ’s resurrection body. We will no longer possess a “vile” body but a glorious body that resembles Christ’s spiritual and physical perfections. This does not mean that we will all have the same physical appearance of Christ, but our transformed bodies will possess the same physical perfections as Christ’s body – no disease, sickness, and death.

Dr. Harry Ironside frequently emphasized to his friends and relatives that he didn’t want an elaborate funeral of an expensive tombstone when the Lord took him to Glory. He requested that his final resting place be marked only by a plain, wooden slab reading which said: “Harry A. Ironside, Sinner Saved By Grace, Moved until Renovated and Repaired.”

Our bodies will also possess the same spiritual perfections as Christ’s body which is free from sin and moral impurity. We will be morally like Jesus when our bodies are transformed.

1 John 3:2

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.”

Today it does not appear what we shall be since our bodies have not been completely transformed from a moral and physical perspective. Our bodies are not yet glorified. First, our bodies have not undergone a perfect moral transformation. We still sin with our bodies because they are connected with the Genesis Fall and curse.

We won’t be totally freed from the curse until our bodily transformation occurs. Second, our bodies have not yet gone through a perfect physical transformation.

They are also wearing out from a physical perspective. The moment we are born we begin to die. I know that sounds rather morbid, but it is true.

We sometimes look in the mirror as we get older and pretend to be something we are not! Let's face it, we are all getting older. There is no such thing as eternal youth in our present earthly bodies. We need to get a new and transformed body to discover the eternal fountain of youth.



Someone said:

"My body knows how old I am but my mind refuses to believe it. I am simply youthfully challenged."

Another said:

"It's not the first wrinkle that is scary. It's the chain reaction that follows."

Others have said:

"The older I get the older old becomes."

"I'm not old, I'm retro."

Introduction: In one of his lighter moments, Benjamin Franklin penned his own epitaph. It seems he must have been influenced by Paul's teaching of the resurrection of the body. Here's what he wrote:

"The Body of B. Franklin, Printer
Like the Cover of an old Book
Its contents torn out,
And stript of its Lettering and Guilding,
Lies here, Food for Worms,
But the Work shall not be wholly lost:
For it will, as he believ'd,
Appear once more
In a new & more perfect Edition,
Corrected and amended by the Author."

❖ Our transformed bodies will be different.

As we continue to investigate the transformation of our human bodies at the event of the Rapture of Church we want to focus on the resurrected and transformed bodies of Church Age saints. Of course, the transformation of the raptured saints who are still alive at the Rapture will possess the same kind of glorified body as those resurrected. Together we will share a similar redeemed and transformed body. So let's get a better understanding of the kind of bodies we will receive at the Rapture and possess throughout eternity.

In 1 Corinthians 15:35-50 Paul is dealing with the skeptics of the physical and bodily resurrection of Christians. In responding to their questions about the resurrection of Christian bodies he gives us a detailed analysis of what our transformed bodies will be like. In summary, he concludes they will be different bodies. They will not be the same bodies that go into the ground, but a different type of body suited for eternity.

A. There are the questions posed by the skeptics.

When speaking about the transformation of our resurrection body, Paul anticipated two questions from his unbelieving critics and opponents of the resurrection. Greek philosophical dualism taught that bodily and physical resurrection was not only incredible but actually undesirable. Acts 17:25 says, "And when they heard of the resurrection some mocked ..." The denial of bodily resurrection was also part of the Gnostic teaching. Their teaching involved the idea that the "resurrection" is purely spiritual (immaterial in nature) and happens at conversion.

2 Timothy 2:18 says this of Hymenaeus and Philetus:

"Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some."

Apparently the errant teaching being propagated by the false teachers was that the physical was not spiritual and therefore would not be a part of the resurrection body. They ridiculed the resurrection of the physical body. Anticipating their assaults against the literal, bodily, and physical resurrection, Paul provides us with the most complete treatment of this subject as found anywhere in the Scriptures.

1 Corinthians 15:35

“But some *man* will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?”

- The first question deals with the method of resurrection (“How are the dead raised up?”).

How can a body be raised from the grave after being dead for many centuries? How can a body which has returned to the ashes be remade or reconstructed? How can a body that has been dispersed and disintegrated be brought back together?

The simple answer to this first skeptical question is that God will accomplish all of this by His mighty power. The same God who made the stars and millions of galaxies spinning in space can resurrect the bodies of people and make them into a new body. Paul is going to explain that the resurrection is not merely a reconstruction of the old body but a complete renewal of the previous body.

- The second question deals with the characteristics of the resurrection body (“With what body do they come?”).

What kind of body would people have who previously suffered from deformities and who died early on in life, perhaps as a baby? The critics thought about many difficult situations which would tend to make bodily resurrection improbable, if not impossible. How could life come out of cremated ash? What about a person eaten by a shark?

This primary objection to the bodily of physical resurrection has to do with the reconstruction of the body out of the same elements that it formerly possessed. The opponents of the resurrection saw this as a problem and a valid reason to deny the resurrection of the human body. They reasoned this way: If someone died at sea and sailors buried him in the sea, a fish might eat his body. The atoms and molecules of his body would become part of the fish. If a fisherman caught and ate the fish, the body of the fish would then become part of the fisherman’s body. If the fisherman died and an undertaker buried him in the ground, and someone eventually sowed wheat over his grave, the fisherman’s atoms and molecules would go into the wheat. A third person would eat the wheat and the cycle would continue. How could the first person’s body ever come together again?

One of the strangest articles I have read on the difficulties of bodily resurrection was the one titled "Who Ate Roger Williams." This great fighter for religious liberty, and the founder of the first Baptist church in America in Providence, R.I., died and was buried in a very insecure casket. The result was an apple tree broke in and a large root went right through his body. This led to some very strange speculation. Since part of the body of Roger Williams would have been absorbed by the root and taken up into that tree, it is probable that some of these molecules became part of its apples. Thus, the foolish question--who ate Roger Williams?

The problem of bodily resurrection is a theological one that men have been wrestling with for centuries. How is God going to get the body of Roger Williams back together again for the resurrection? This gets enormously complex, if you think of how his molecules could end up scattered all over the world, and becoming parts of many other bodies which will also be in the resurrection.

This may sound absurd, but it has been a serious theological issue since the early church. Tertullian, one of the ancient church fathers, was a fighting fundamentalist on this issue. He insisted that the very same features one had when they were buried is the body that will rise at the resurrection. Every hair and every tooth of this body will be raised, and not a fraction will be lost. This may have been a great comfort to those who died with a fine head of hair and a full set of teeth, but what about those who had lost their hair and teeth? Are they to be stuck forever with the same body that was buried, or can they anticipate some improvement in their resurrection body?

Even more perplexing were the questions about the Christians that were fed to the lions, or those many who were burned at the stake. More modern Christians have added their own examples of problems with the body. What of those lost or buried at sea, and eaten by sharks or other predators? What about those who have died in planes and various explosions where the body has disintegrated without a trace? There are just too many seemingly hopeless cases where the body, for all practical purposes, ceases to exist. These complex situations have led to much doubt about the doctrine of the resurrection of the body.

Augustine, way back in the 4th century, spent a good deal of his time writing answers to all kinds of questions about the resurrection of the body. What about abortion? Will these little bodies be raised, and if so, what kind of body will they

have? He concluded that we will all have equal bodies. All will be like Christ in the prime of life, and so all children will have mature bodies, and all old people will have young bodies. All defects will be done away with, and all that is lacking will be added so that none need fear they will have a body they do not feel comfortable with. Of course, this has been the teaching of the Bible and the Christian belief of the early church. It should be our belief as well when we study the Scriptures.

But the Greek Philosophers and critics of the resurrection in Paul's day would ask, "How can God raise up these types of bodies and what kind of body would they have if they are raised? There are always some smart alecks in the crowd trying to place doubt on the miracle of the resurrection. To such mockers, Paul spoke directly: "Thou fool" (vs. 36)!

These people must have gone to dumb school! How senseless and thoughtless to not believe in the resurrection. God's sovereign power can do anything! Today, we have many who are schooled in the liberal brainy universities, and they try to reject all the miracles of the Bible. They are secular humanists who hate Jesus, God and everything to do with the miraculous. Yes, they are still rejecting the resurrection of Christ and the bodily resurrection of His followers. Paul calls them "fools" who disbelieve in the resurrection. They should put on their dunce hats and stand in the corner of the classroom.

Paul uses the expression "fool" to draw attention to the senselessness of the questions, the seeming stupidity that marked these questions.

1 Corinthians 15:36-37

"Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened (made alive), except it die. And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain."

Belief in the resurrection body was like belief in seedtime and harvest. If a person believes in the miracle of the seed and harvest you must also out of necessity believe in the miracle of the resurrection.



In countering the critics, Paul emphasis the miracle God performs in seedtime and harvest and then likens this miracle to a similar miracle performed by God's power which is to bring the body back from its previous existence with a new body. Yes, God will "put together all the pieces" (all the previous molecules) and return our former bodies to us. But once again, our resurrection bodies will not merely be reconstructed – they will be renewed (brand new). There is continuity in the resurrection (it will be our body), but there is not exact identity.

Like the stalk that comes from the seed is different than the seed, so our resurrected bodies will be different. They will not be the same type of body as our present ones, and the exact type of body which goes into the ground. Paul is teaching that bodily resurrection is a total miracle like seedtime and harvest. However, we must remember that what comes up at the harvest is usually more beautiful than what was planted. This is especially true of tulips. Few things are as ugly as a tulip bulb, yet it produces a beautiful flower.

If at the resurrection God would only put us back together again, there would be no improvement. I would like a lot of improvement for all eternity!

Seed and Harvest



Like seedtime and harvest, our bodies in the resurrection will be different than the bodies that go into the ground even as there is a difference between the seed and the harvest, between the flesh of animals, and the brilliance of stars as Paul will teach us in this section of Scripture. God will not merely reconstruct our old bodies but remake them as new bodies for the Eternal State.

The resurrection of the human body is a belief in the supernatural power of God to bring forth brand new bodies from the graves which have been disintegrated, destroyed by fire, or dead for thousands of years.

All questions of the skeptics, critics, and liberals are full of hot air!

Paul concluded in Acts 26:8:

“Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?”

Like seed to harvest, God will raise the dead; however, they will not be like the old bodies, merely reconstructed, but new bodies renewed and totally different in many ways.

“We shall rise, Hallelujah! we shall rise!
Amen! We shall rise! Hallelujah!
In the resurrection morning,
When death’s prison bars are broken,
We shall rise, Hallelujah! We shall rise.”

B. There are the answers given to the skeptics.

What will the believer’s resurrection body be like? In 1 Corinthians 15:35-50 Paul is now answering legitimate questions about our resurrected and transformed bodies, the kind of bodies we will all receive at the event of the Rapture. He basically concludes that our bodies will be different than our present ones, but they will still maintain certain characteristics from our old bodies. There will be differences but also similarity.

I. The difference is illustrated - 36-41

The Bible teaches that the body which God resurrects someday will have similarities to the one that died (individual looks, personalities, etc.), even as a plant has a relationship to its seed. However, the resurrection body will also be different in many ways (no more blemishes, infirmities, faults) even as a seed is different from the plant or harvest it produces. Paul illustrates the difference between our present body and the future resurrection body.

Three illustrations are given to prove our resurrection (transformed) bodies will be different.

a. The agricultural analogy (vv. 36-38)



In 1 Corinthians 15:36 Paul begins the counter the foolish arguments: “Thou fool, that (*the seed like the human body*) which thou sowest is not quickened (*made alive*), except it die” (*the harvest demonstrates a death to life cycle*).

Paul calls the bluff of these false teachers and explains the seed to stalk analogy. The human body that dies is sown (like a seed) when it is placed in the ground and dies (decays). However, after the seed dies, a new stalk or life emerges. In the same way, only after the human body dies can one be sure that a resurrection body will emerge. There is a death-to-life cycle in the planting of a seed and so it is with the human body.

The emphasis is on being “quickened” (made alive) into a new plant. Our old bodies are not going to be simply reconstructed or reworked but totally renewed for the Eternal State. We are getting a brand new one – a new model!

1 Corinthians 15:37 goes on to explain:

“And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body (*the stalk*) that shall be, but bare grain (*you sow the bare seed of grain*), it may chance (*per chance germinate into a plant*) of wheat, or of some other grain.”

In other words, the seed you sow turns into full-grown stalks of wheat or some other grain related to the seed that was sown. However, what goes into the ground and dies is not the same thing that comes out of the ground. It is something altogether different and new! This is the way its going to be with the resurrection and transformed body.

A farmer does not sow a cornstalk in the ground to get another cornstalk. No! He sows corn kernels. He sows seed in the ground and what comes out of the ground is not another seed but a stalk that is different from the seed and yet related to the seed. This is the way it will be in the resurrection. Our resurrection (transformed) bodes will be related to the body that went into the ground but also be different in

many ways. There is continuity with the seed but also difference. The same will be true with the body we have today and our future resurrection body.

1 Corinthians 15:38

“But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.”

What happens in the seed to stalk harvest is also true in the resurrection. God will give us a new body “as it hath pleased him.” Don’t miss this point! I’m thankful that God is pleased to provide me with an eternal body someday that will never die. In fact, as every seed brings forth a stalk or plant, so every Christian body that dies and is sown in the ground will result in a resurrection body.

Verse 38 speaks of our “own body” which suggests each of us will have our own personalized body. It indicates that we won’t all look alike in the resurrection but retain our distinctive looks and personalities, while at the same time, our bodies will be totally different in their design.

Robert Gromacki comments on this:

“Just as all men have natural bodies with distinct, personal characteristics (fingerprints, height, color), so all believers will have resurrection bodies with distinguishing marks of personal identity. We will not all look like Christ or like each other, and yet we will all have spiritual bodies with the same properties.”

Jesus’ resurrection body was recognizable to people who had previously known Him. Mary recognized His voice (John 20:16). We are told that the only reason the disciples did not recognize Him was because their eyes were “holden” - not because Jesus was not easily recognized (Luke 24:16, 31).

Yes, we will be different, as the seed to stalk analogy indicates, but we will still be recognizable in our resurrection bodies. We will still be recognized as Harry, John, Betsy, and Darlene.

Acts 1:3

“To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.”

1 Corinthians 15:5

“And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once ...”

We have learned that the resurrection body will be a new body, not the old body reworked; however, it will be a body that possesses a relationship to the original one, even as there is a relationship between the seed and harvest.

b. The animation analogy – vs. 39



Paul is now going to reason that all animated or living things possess different types of flesh to prove the resurrection body will also be vastly different.

1 Corinthians 15:39

“All flesh *is* not the same flesh: but *there is* one *kind of* flesh of men (*skin*), another flesh of beasts (*fur*), another of fishes (*scales*), and another of birds” (*feathers*).

This second analogy involves animated life which consists of various forms of flesh - the differing kinds of flesh for men, animals, birds, and fish. All flesh is not the same flesh. The cell structure is different. So much for evolution! I’ve never seen scales growing on a man! I’ve never seen a fish with feathers. Where is the missing link? There is none! All flesh is different. Likewise, the resurrection and transformed body we will possess someday will be different than our natural bodies we have today.

Of course, there are similarities in that all living things have flesh but there is still distinction. In the same way, our resurrection body will possess similarities to our present-day bodies and yet be very different in many ways from our present bodies.

Pet lovers take note! Paul did not teach here that animals will be resurrected. He only used them as an example to show there is difference between the flesh of animals and therefore a difference in the resurrection bodies or people. Phido will not be raised from the dead, but Phido’s master will be raised from the dead.

c. The astronomical analogy – 40-41

1 Corinthians 15:40-41

“There are also celestial (heavenly) bodies, and bodies terrestrial (earthly): but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another (they are different). There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory.”

A third analogy relates to inanimate (nonliving) objects of creation. The “celestial or heavenly bodies” (sun, moon, and stars) differ from “the terrestrial earthly bodies” (great mountains, canyons, oceans, etc.) and the “glory” (beauty and splendor) of the heavenly bodies differ from the glory of these earthly bodies.



In addition (verse 41), the heavenly bodies themselves differ from one another in the way they display their splendor and brilliance. Some stars shine brighter than others and their brilliance and brightness is far more spectacular. Astronomers will certainly agree with this finding. In the same way, our resurrection bodies will possess a marked difference between our present physical bodies on earth. As the stars differ, so our resurrection bodies will be different than our present earthly bodies. Of course, at the same time all the heavenly bodies possess a similarity in that they express splendor and glory. However, they are different. The same will be true in the resurrection. Our bodies will be similar to our previous bodies in various ways (looks, personality, etc.) and yet they will be totally different in their design or makeup.

So what kind of body will we have in the resurrection day? It will be different than our present bodies.

II. The difference is explained – 42-50

“So also (by way of comparison) is the resurrection of the dead” (1 Cor. 15:42). Paul now applies the differences he just explained within the agricultural, animation,

and astronomy analogies to the bodily resurrection of believers. Our new body is going to be totally different in many wonderful ways.

What will our transformed body be like?

1. It will be a body incapable of dying – vs. 42

1 Corinthians 15:42

“So also *is* the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption.”

The moment we are born we really begin to die. Slowly our bodies begin to move toward the grave. We are cycled for death. However, when we receive a new body, it will never die again. The cycle will stop! We will never grow old in our resurrection bodies! We will always have perfect health and never be subject to dying again. Sound pretty good to me! No more doctors, hospitals, optometrists, Medicare, health insurance, etc.



1 Corinthians 15:52 again reminds us:

“In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we (*the mortal who are still living*) shall be changed.”

The word “corrupt” has the idea of moving away from the origin condition. The body will decay, disintegrate, decompose, and perish (John 11:39). However, when the human body of the Christian will be raised in “incorruption.” This means it will never again know deterioration and retain its condition of excellence and beauty. Nothing will invade the body to cause it any kind of deterioration, sickness, pain, disease, etc. Its condition will be permanent, durable, and eternal. Never growing old, tired, or weary, our resurrected and transformed body will maintain its freshness and quality of life forever.

At the present time our bodies are subject to disease and death. When they are placed in the grave they decompose and return to dust. But it will not be like this

with the resurrection body. Our resurrected and transformed body will no longer be subject to sickness or decay. We will never experience any more heart problems, cancer, and other diseases or maladies that lead to death since it will be a body that can never die.

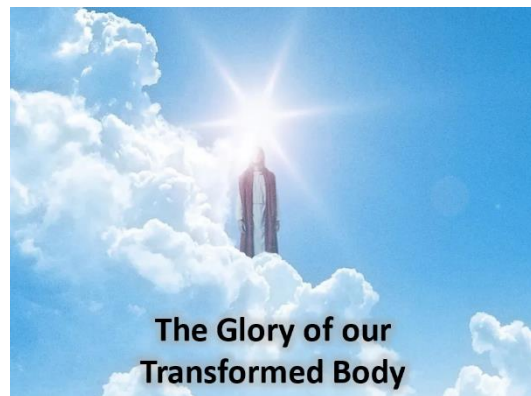
As we have already seen, someday we will experience the joy of an incorruptible, never-ending, undying body (1 Corinthians 15:52-57). Our transformed body will never suffer the physical effects of the curse and experience death.

2. It will be a body of indescribable glory – vs. 43a

1 Corinthians 15:43

“It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power.”

It is “sown in dishonour.” In Philippians 3:21 it speaks of “our vile body” which is lowly, shameful, and humiliating in nature for it is the vehicle through which sin operates and which slowly causes the body to deteriorate. There is nothing very majestic or glorious about a dead body. The body, when it dies, is seen to be in a dishonorable state. Even the best mortician cannot beautify the body and bring back its youthfulness.



**The Glory of our
Transformed Body**

But it will be “raised in glory.” The word glory connoted a body that is resplendent, bright, beautiful, and perfect. In general, the word “glory” speaks of a state of magnificence and splendor. It the Biblical word that best describes the resurrection and transformed bodies of God’s saints.

There is a three-fold glory of the resurrection body.

a. The glory refers to magnificent beauty.

The word “glory” would indicate something that is beautiful. The new and transformed body that we receive at the resurrection will be a body of spectacular

beauty. This means our resurrection body will be free from wrinkles, scars, the marks of age, overweight, and any traces of disease or sin. Our resurrection bodies will never grow old! Our bodies will be beautiful bodies that are no longer subject to the Genesis curse in any way. Time and sin will no longer affect them.

b. The glory refers to majestic shining.

Our resurrection bodies will also express an outward glory and magnificence forever as they shine and reflect our state of purity and eternal reward that we have received.

Matthew 13:43 brings out this aspect of the transformed body:

“Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.”

This is not the event of the Rapture but the Second Coming and the resurrection of Old Testament saints. Whether an Old or New Testament saint, the Bible clearly reveals there will be a resurrection and transformation that is similar in nature. The bodies that we receive will be bodies of glory and splendor as they shine and display brilliant light.

At the Second Coming of Christ to earth, there will be a shining associated with those who are transformed to enter the earthly theocracy or Millennial Kingdom. The Old Testament saints will shine as they enter the messianic kingdom. Their shining will be associated with their newly resurrected bodies in conjunction with the rewards associated with their righteous living earthly living.

Matthew 13:43 is reminiscent of Daniel’s writings which spoke of the resurrection of Old Testament saints at the commencement of the Millennium. Daniel 12:3 reveals the same thought of shining with resurrection: “And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.” Daniel likens the resurrection bodies of Old Testament saints to shining, emanating a light of brilliance from their bodies in direct proportion to the level of the rewards they have received. This means that God’s saints will outwardly radiate and shine in their resurrection bodies as they reflect the eternal reward that they have received because of their righteous acts. This shining or radiance will be one way that we will glorify the Lord for all eternity.

1 Peter 5:4 also speaks of shining in our transformed bodies:

“And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.”

Our real crown will be the ability to radiate and reflect Christ’s glory in our redeemed, resurrected, and transformed bodies in proportion to our service rendered unto the Lord and the eternal rewards we have received. Our bodies will apparently consist of a shining glory that we will be able to display throughout eternity.

One preacher said:

“I remember when I lived in the Northeast, there was this tree that blended in with all of the rest ... unto Fall cam. That’s when it would become the most brilliant and the most beautiful of all the trees in our area. Seeing that beautiful tree always made me think of the resurrection when some pretty ordinary people will literally burst forth and shine with differing degrees of glory, depending upon their love and loyalty to God. Amazing stuff is coming people!”

c. The glory refers to moral purity.

The New Testament gives some clear indication on this.

Romans 8:30 again reminds us:

“Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.”

Glorification relates to our bodies and the time when we will be morally like Jesus in our transformed bodies.

Romans 8:18 adds this:

“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory (*moral glory, pristine perfection*) which shall be revealed in us.”

There will be a glory (beauty and splendor) associated within us when we receive our transformed bodies. This will be an inward glory or beauty associated with our new bodies. When we become like Jesus Christ we will in some measure share His

moral beauty and holiness. In other words, there is an inward moral transformation that we will experience in our new bodies at the event of the Rapture. This is the moral glory and perfection that will be revealed in us!

Colossians 3:4

“When Christ, *who is* our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory” (*sharing in His glorious moral likeness*).

We will manifest throughout the unending ages of time the glory of moral and spiritual purity in our newly transformed bodies. We will sing:

“O, that will be glory for me,
Glory for me, glory for me,
When by His grace I shall look on His face,
That will be glory, be glory for me.”

Introduction: Before coming to church last week, I was putting my brief case in the trunk of the car and accidentally hit my head. I had not opened the trunk far enough and it was at my head level. I really hit my head hard and it left a little mark on my forehead. Before Church I asked my wife for two Advil for I could feel a headache coming on from the recent episode. You know, I was thinking how wonderful it will be when we get our glorified bodies. We will no longer need any Advil or painkillers. We won't need vitamins and other medical attention. We are going to get a perfect body that will never experience any more pain, suffering, and medical emergencies. It's going to be a perfect body suited for the Eternal State.

Sadly, a recent poll showed that only 36% of American adults believe that, after you die, your physical body will someday be resurrected. 54% do not believe so and 10% are undecided.

3. It will be a body of immense power - 43b

1 Corinthians 15:43 goes on to say: “...it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:”

When the Bible says our bodies are “sown in weakness” it underscores the fact that we are a fragile tenement of clay. We are weak, prone to illness and ultimately death. How easily the strongest of us are cut down! We could hang over them the

notice: “Fragile, handle with care.” Of course, our bodies are never so weak as when they lie cold in death. But the Bible teaches that these frail and weak bodies will one day be raised in power. This is amazing to contemplate.

The power of our resurrection bodies indicates several things.

- Our powerful body will not be subject to natural weakness.

The fact that our bodies will be “raised in power” should be a tremendous encouragement to us. As we advance in older age, weakness increases, until disease and death strip a man of all his strength. We have all witnessed our friends and family dying and we have seen them in a weakened and unhealthy state of living. Our present bodies are sown in dishonor and weakness. Our bodies are not a thing of beauty but weakness and humility as we grow old. But in eternity our new bodies will have complete power over disease and the present weakened state we experience. Our bodies will never age. They will always remain young, new, strong, and vibrant.



- Our powerful body will not be subject to the laws of nature.

Although the body we will possess someday will be physically tangible and real (Luke 24:39), we must remember that the resurrection body of Jesus could move from one place to another in a moment’s time and disappear at will.

Luke 24:31

“And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.”

In Christ’s resurrection body Jesus could vanish in a moment’s time. If we are going to possess the same physical perfections and capabilities of Jesus, then we too will be able to move about in such as way as this.

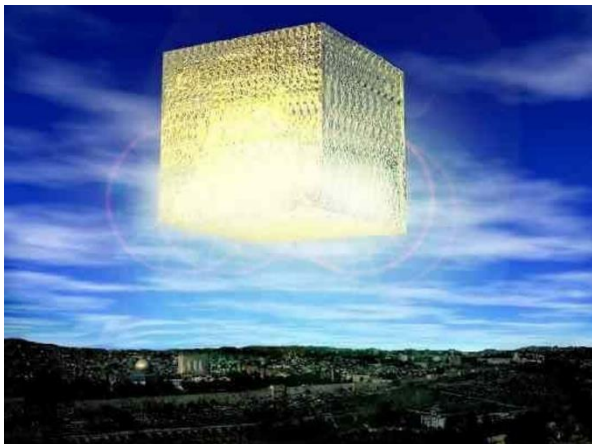
Acts 1:9

“And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.”

In His resurrection body Jesus could descend straight up. John 20:19 gives us more information: “Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.” Here is something else to reflect on. With His resurrection body Jesus could enter a room where the doors were locked. All of this suggests that our resurrection bodies will be powerful and therefore will be able to perform new unimaginable feats.

M. R. De Haan comments that our resurrection bodies “will be able to rise above the laws of time and space. They will be able to travel great distance in the winking of an eye. They will be able to pass through unopened doors.” There is, indeed, a real sense in which the accounts of the post-resurrection appearances of Christ in Luke 24; John 20 and 21; and Acts 1:1–9 shed light on the nature of the resurrection and transformation of our own body.

You see, our transformed bodies will be very powerful bodies. They are sown in weakness but raised in power with new, unimaginable, powerful abilities. Like Jesus, with our transformed bodies we will be able to move about at will, vanish, reappear, and move through closed doors. Imagine being able to move about all over God’s universe in a moments time. In fact, our transformed bodies we will be designed in such a way that we will be able to defy the laws of nature and move in and out of the New Jerusalem (our heavenly city) that will apparently hover over the earth during the Eternal State.



Revelation 21:1-2

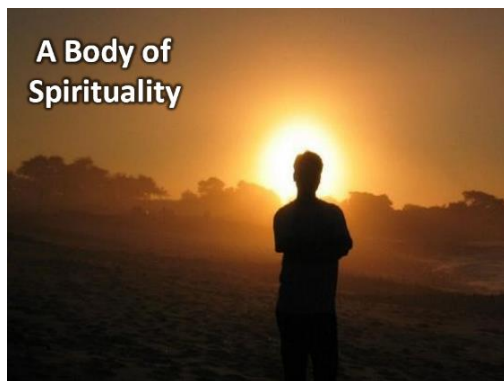
“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven (hovering over planet earth), prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.”

Jack Hunter concluded:

“Swift as the lightning flashes we shall go on our way through God’s vast and wonderful creation, serving Him. Possessing a constant supply of inward energy, we shall be capable of every form of service required of us.”

4. It will be a body of impeccable spirituality - 44

Paul now explains the spiritual characteristic of our transformed body.



1 Corinthians 15:44

“It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.”

We must be very careful at this point and emphasize that the word “spiritual” does not mean nonmaterial or incorporeal. Some people have the idea that in the resurrection we will be nothing more than disembodied spirits roaming about, and that the nature of the resurrection body is not physical but only an immaterial spirit being. This is not true.

Although our resurrection body will possess characteristics of the spirit world in the way it will be able to move about, this is not Paul’s emphasis here. The meaning of the word “spiritual” is not referencing an immaterial or non-physical composition of the resurrection body. The reference to a “spiritual” body in the resurrection speaks of the spiritual state of the resurrected human body. As we have seen, we are going to be morally like Jesus, sharing in spiritual perfections (“when he shall appear, we shall be like him” - 1 John 3:2). Yes, we will not only behold Him, but we shall be like Him in the day of our transformation!

Many years ago, in the city of New York, during the days when liberalism was called modernism (back in the 1920s) the modernists had an argument about the spiritual nature of the resurrection, claiming it was only spiritual – not physical. The liberal, who rejected the miraculous, claimed the resurrection body was only spiritual (immaterial) in substance. He didn’t believe in the miracle of bodily resurrection at all. A very famous liberal Greek scholar from the University of Chicago read a paper on the passage from this verse in 1 Corinthians 15:44. His paper put the emphasis

on the word *spiritual*. He concluded by saying, “Now, brethren, you can see that resurrection is spiritual because it says it’s spiritual.” The liberals all applauded, and somebody made a motion that they print the manuscript and circulate it.

Well, another very fine Greek scholar was there, and he stood up. And when he stood up all the liberals were a little uneasy. He could ask very embarrassing question. He said, “I’d like to ask the author of the paper a question.” Very reluctantly, the good doctor stood up. “Now, doctor, which is stronger, a noun or an adjective? A very simple question, but I’d like for you to answer it.” He could see the direction he was going and didn’t want to answer it, but he had to. “Well,” he said, “a noun is stronger, of course.”

“Now doctor, I’m amazed that you presented the paper that you did today. You put the emphasis upon an adjective, and the strong word is the noun. Now let’s look at that again. ‘It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.’”

He then said, “The only thing that is carried over in resurrection is the body. It’s one kind of body when it dies, a natural body. It’s raised a physical body, but now a spiritual body that is dominated by the spirit—but it’s still a body.”

And, you know, they never did publish this paper of the liberal! They decided it would be better not to publish it. Here is the point. just a simple little exercise in grammar took the air out of this liberal argument. Let God be true and every man a liar!

The spiritual body is not referring to an immaterial or incorporeal body but a physical body with the spiritual characteristic of pristine perfection. After His resurrection Jesus was not merely a spirit or immaterial being floating around. We know that the resurrection body of the Lord Jesus was composed of flesh and bones. He said, “a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as you see me have” (Luke 24:39). Jesus still maintained the crucifixion scars (John 20:27), He ate food (Luke 24:42-43), and people actually touched the risen Jesus (Matt. 28:9). These are all understood as relating to a material and physical body.

Jesus died on the cross with a physical body and He rose again with a physical body to complete redemption’s plan for mankind which included the promise of a

redeemed body someday. Jesus' resurrection body was - and had to be - a material or physical body. Our salvation and resurrection depend upon it!

1 John 4:2-3

“Hereby know ye the Spirit of God (*what messages or teachings are being backed by the Holy Spirit*) very spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh (bodily, physically) is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh (*bodily, physically*) is not of God: and this is that *spirit* of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.”

The heresy of Docetism taught by the Gnostics was that Christ did not have a real physical body but only a phantom type of spirit. But the Bible dogmatically and emphatically teaches that Jesus Christ came physically in His incarnation, He died physically, and He rose again physically to set us free from sin's penalty, power, and some day from the very presence of sin through a glorified body. Christ as a mere immaterial spirit could not become a saving sacrifice for mankind. He had to become like man to deliver mankind from Hell and judgment.

Hebrews 2:14-15

“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death (*Christ's physical death on the cross*) he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

Christ had to become man and possess a body like man to rescue mankind from his sinful plight. In a similar way, Christ rising from the grave as only an immaterial spirit could never give the promise of a bodily and physical resurrection. Jesus had a real body in both His life and resurrection to complete God's total redemptive plan for mankind.

Norman L. Geisler, a well-known apologist, stated:

"The logic is clear: If Jesus rose bodily from the dead in the same body in which He died, and if this body (*the original body of Jesus*) was a physical, material body, then it follows that the resurrection body was a physical, material body."

It's amazing how many today still disbelieve in the physical, bodily resurrection of Christ and His followers.

I once heard a story about Robert Ingersoll, the famous atheist of some decades ago. It is told that at one time he sought to show how the miracle of Lazarus being raised from the dead by Jesus was just a trick to bolster His waning fortunes. To clinch his point, Ingersoll said to the audience, "Can anyone tell me now why Jesus said: 'Lazarus, come forth!'" (John 11:43)? An old Christian in the back got up and said: "Yes! Because if He had not said 'Lazarus,' He would have had the whole graveyard of Bethany coming out to Him."

Of course, Christ's body that was raised from the dead had been transformed but it was still a physical body. The post-resurrection body of Jesus was like His pre-resurrection body and therefore it was a material body.

I have emphasized the physical nature of the resurrection body to prove that a "spiritual body" (1 Cor. 15:44) does not mean we will only be a spiritual, nonmaterial being throughout eternity. This has never been God's plan for the human race. Our redemption not only focuses on the human spirit but also the human body.

The central idea behind the spiritual nature of our resurrection body is that we will be totally controlled and dominated by our spiritual nature since the Adamic nature (old nature) will be forever gone. Sin will no longer be part of our resurrection and transformed existence. We will be spiritual beings whose bodies will be completely controlled by the spiritual part of our human existence. We will never sin again, never have an evil thought again, never be tempted again, and never be angry again. We will think no evil and do no evil forever and forever. Verse 44 says it is "sown a natural body." The "natural" body refers to literally our "soulish" body which is controlled by the soul which is the place where the old nature resides and manifests itself. Paul knows that when we die, we die with the effects of the old nature and curse upon our lives.

But someday our bodies will be "raised a spiritual body" which means that in the resurrection the spiritual nature will be completely dominate and take over our bodies. There will be no more old nature or soulish existence in our future resurrection and transformed existence. When we get a new body through resurrection or Rapture all the old sinful inclinations will vanish away.

“In the resurrection morning,
When the trump of God shall sound,
We shall rise, Hallelujah! we shall rise!
Then the saints will come rejoicing
And no tears will e’er be found,
We shall rise, Hallelujah! we shall rise.”

Paul now begins to explain the difference between the soulish and spiritual body.

The exchange from the soulish to the spiritual body is now explained.

- a. It involves distinct men (45) = From Adam to Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:45

“And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul (Adam was created with a physical body with the propensity to sin and be dominated by the soulish part of his existence, therefore passing the sin gene down to all of us - Gen. 2:7); the last Adam (Jesus Christ) was made a quickening (life-giving) spirit” (Christ will one day give us a new body that is morally perfect that is only dominated by the spiritual part of man’s existence or the life-principle within).

Adam gave us a type of body which would eventually become dominated by the soul and sin nature. The last Adam (Jesus Christ) will one day give us another kind of body that is dominated by perfect spiritual life. It will be a body free from all moral corruption and contamination. This seems to be what Paul is teaching. We will receive a glorified body from the Lord that possesses eternal life but also a perfect life from a moral and spiritual perspective.

Frank Gaebelin makes this helpful comment:

“By ‘spiritual body’ the apostle means that an imperishable body that has received eternal life from Christ, the life-giving Spirit (cf. John 5:26), including a metamorphosis of the physical body to adapt it spiritually (without either corruption or mortality) for living with God (Philippians 3:21), just as Christ in his resurrected and glorified human body (Luke 24:36–43) went to heaven to be with the Father (cf. Acts 1:11, 2:33).”

Two headships of humanity are established in this verse. One is Adam's headship which relates to our present imperfect body and the other is Christ's headship which relates to our perfect resurrection body (when we will be like Him).



The Last Adam (Jesus Christ) gives us the promise of transformed body someday that is totally dominated by our spiritual life within. We have this blessed hope through our spiritual Head (Jesus Christ).

Voddie Baucham Jr. wrote:

"The last time I checked, the death rate was one per person. I didn't check today, but I'm sure it didn't change. It is appointed to man to die once, then face the judgment (Heb. 9:27). So everyone everywhere is asking or will ask the same question: How can I avoid being defeated by that last enemy? You can't beat him. You can't buy him off. You can't appease him.

"You can't outrun him. You can't exercise enough or eat well enough. There is nothing you can do to avoid being overtaken by this enemy. But the resurrection says you can overcome this enemy: "O death, where is your sting?" You see, when you stand over a believer, it's not the same as standing over an unbeliever, because when you stand over a believer, you know that because of his union with Christ, his federal head, he will rise just as Christ rose from the dead. There is a resurrection coming. So this sting is gone; death's victory is gone."

Thank God that Jesus Christ as the last Adam has died and risen from, the dead to give us a new body totally dominated by the new life principle.

Let's reflect on these two men.

- ✓ There is the first Adam

The natural body we have today which is "sown a natural body" (vs. 44) is linked to first Adam whose body suffered the effects of sin and became tainted by the transgression. His body was influenced by sin and suffered the ultimate effects of

sin. In other words, Paul is teaching that we are descendants of Adam and receive our natural body from him which means we experience the same sinful effects upon our bodies such as disease and death.

Adam's body was dominated by the soul after he sinned, the soul being the place where the old nature operates and resides. Today we reside in a body that is characterized as "natural" or "soulish" (a soulish body – 1 Cor. 2:14). The natural or soulish body eventually dies and goes back to the dust. So, do we have any hope? Yes! There is another Adam (the last Adam) who came to provide us with the hope of receiving a new body without sin and which is only dominated by the spiritual life principle from within.

✓ The last Adam

In contrast to the Adamic body (the body influenced by sin), the resurrection body that we will receive someday is spiritual and it comes from Jesus Christ who is termed here as the last Adam (not the second Adam), who will one day give us this perfect spiritual body that is dominated by a "quickening spirit" (a life-giving spiritual life from Jesus Christ). Our future resurrection bodies will be totally dominated by the spiritual life that Jesus Christ, the life-giving Adam, provides for us. This spiritual life is related to the human body. Of course, the wonderful future blessing of a redeemed body totally set free from sin and dominated by our spiritual life within will be the direct result of God's amazing grace! I am so thankful that Jesus Christ is the life-giver through His physical death on the cross and physical resurrection from the dead.

As Vice President, George Bush represented the U.S. at the funeral of former Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev, he was deeply moved by a silent protest carried out by Brezhnev's widow. She stood motionless by the coffin until seconds before it was closed. Then, just as the soldiers touched the lid, Brezhnev's wife performed an act of great courage and hope. She reached down and made the sign of the cross on her husband's chest. There in the center of secular, atheistic power, the wife of the man who had run it hoped that her husband was wrong. She hoped that there was another life, and that life was best represented by Jesus who died on the cross, and that the same Jesus might yet have mercy on her husband.

Well, if we find God's mercy and grace in this life, we will be sure to receive more of it in the next life when we receive our transformed bodies. We have discovered that only Christ can give us a resurrection body which will one day be totally dominated by our spiritual life within. This brings us to our next point.

The exchange from the soulish to the spiritual body involves distinct men (vs, 45) from Adam to Christ. But Paul goes on in his resurrection teaching.

b. It involves a divine order (46) = From old to new.

1 Corinthians 15:46 presents the proper order:

"Howbeit that *was* not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual."

The order is significant. We start with our earthly bodies inherited from Adam which possess a sinful nature but end up with our spiritual bodies inherited from Christ which will be morally perfect. Paul now calls our resurrection bodies spiritual because they are completely and forever only dominated by the new life principle within them which was given to us by Christ. Our resurrected bodies will be completely and forever spiritual. Never again will we sin or even think about sinning.

Here is the right order. Our bodies today follow in the likeness of Adam's "natural" body (a soulish body experiencing the effects of the sin nature). This means we sin with our human bodies, suffer disease, and eventually die in our natural or soulish bodies. It's because our bodies are a reflection and likeness to Adam's body. They are bodies tainted with the effects sin and therefore must go to the grave. However, "afterward that which is spiritual" looks ahead to the resurrection body which is a spiritual body (a body of moral purity) that reflects the spiritual perfections related to the resurrection body of Jesus Christ, the second Adam.

Jesus Christ will someday give us a new body that will be totally spiritual or dominated by spiritual living. Someday we will no longer reflect the old Adamic body with its sinful effects. We will be given a brand-new body that will never suffer any effects of sin. It will be a body of moral perfection and glory.

Afterward! I am glad there is an afterward! A better day is coming. We are going to receive a transformed body that will be suitable to live in the Eternal State.

“God said it and I believe it
And that settles it for me!
God said it and I believe it
And that settles it for me!
Though some may doubt that His word is true
I've chosen to believe it, now how about you?
God said it and I believe it
And that settles it for me!

c. It involves a designed body – 47-50 = From earthly to heavenly.

1 Corinthians 15:47-50 finishes this section on our transformed bodies: “**The first man is of the earth, earthy** (*Adam and his earthly body dominated by sin*): **the second man is the Lord from heaven** (*Jesus Christ who is exalted in Heaven with a sinless and spiritual body of perfection who will one day return to give us a glorified body – 1 Cor. 15:23*).

“**As is the earthy** (*referring to Adam*), **such are they also that are earthy** (*referring to our present state in earthly bodies that reflect Adam’s body of sinful depravity*): **and as is the heavenly** (*referring to the exalted Christ in Heaven who possesses a glorified body*), **such are they also that are heavenly** (*in view of our union with Christ, believers can look forward to possessing the same kind of transformed body that the heavenly and glorified Christ possesses today in Heaven*). **And as we have borne the image of the earthy** (*Adam’s image*), **we shall also bear** (*at Christ’s Coming – the Rapture*) **the image of the heavenly** (*Christ’s image, a perfect likeness to Christ’s moral glory and perfections – 1 John 3:2*).

“**Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood** (*our natural bodies with sinful inclinations and imperfections*) **cannot inherit the kingdom of God** (*we cannot enter the earthly and Eternal Kingdom, our Eternal State, in our present sinful bodies*); **neither doth corruption inherit incorruption**” (*that which is corrupted by sin and death cannot inherit that which is pure and eternal – we cannot live in the Eternal State in our present bodies – we need a spiritual one that functions in a perfect and sinless realm or environment*).

Let’s reflect on these verses for a few moments. “The first man is of the earth, earthly” Adam was created out of the earth and his body was termed “earthly” to

describe the human body that has been wracked with the human frailties of sin and marred with the scars of sin. Earthly bodies represent bodies which have been used for sinful purposes and therefore they cannot enter Heaven. We need a new body that is perfectly spiritually and untainted by the effects of sin. Someday we are going to receive a body that is perfectly spiritual, sinless, and one that will no longer possess the propensity for sin. It will be a perfect body from a moral and spiritual perspective.

The Bible goes on to say that “the second man is the Lord from heaven” (vs. 47). Some suggest this refers to Christ’s incarnation and that Christ came to take on a human body that could eventually be glorified. But it seems better to view this with eschatological implications. In other words, the glorified and exalted Christ is going to return from Heaven to provide us with a new spiritual body that is suited for the Eternal State. The context of this statement (“the Lord from heaven”) suggests that it’s a reference to Christ’s return in the Rapture. Christ is the “firstfruits” as it relates to resurrection, and we will follow at the time of His return (1 Cor. 15:23).

The phrase “as is the earthy” (vs. 48) refers to our present bodies which follow after Adam’s body (the progenitor and head of the human race), a body that has been sin cursed and can only exist on earth. However, “as is the heavenly” (referring to Christ’s resurrected body in Heaven as the exalted Lord) is now linked to “they also that are heavenly.” In other words, because of our union with Christ (Eph. 1:3) we too will one day receive a future, resurrected, and transformed body as God’s saints which will be like the one Christ possesses now in Heaven. Yes, this will be a body that reflects the moral glory of Jesus Christ who will one day return from Heaven to give us a glorified body. Our bodies will someday perfectly reflect our heavenly Lord! Our body will be a perfect spiritual body that will never sin and one that will shine forth pristine holiness.

The final thought of “the image of the earthly” (vs. 49) refers to our present bodily state and the effects of Adam’s fallen image which are still seen in our mortal lives. It is quite staggering to think that from Adam there have descended millions of people like him, possessing the same body and the same nature. However, the countering statement “we shall also bear the image of the heavenly” looks ahead to the resurrection and transformed state when we will receive a new body, a body that perfectly and forever reflects the moral and spiritual image of Jesus Christ, the One who is now Heaven. You see, we have all borne the image of the first Adam

but those who put their trust in the last Adam will bear Christ perfect image in the resurrection and transformation day of the Rapture.

Erdman explains 1 Corinthians 15:49 in this way:

“As the descendants of Adam, we are made like him, living souls inhabiting mortal bodies, and bearing the image of an earthly parent. But as the followers of Christ, we are yet to be clothed with immortal bodies and to bear the image of our heavenly Lord.”

The point Paul was making was simply this. The resurrection body completes the work of redemption and gives to us the image of the Savior. We shall then be conformed to the image of His Son in the great coming day (Rom 8:29). So, in the resurrection world we shall have bodies like Christ’s body, who lives in moral perfection, and we will enjoy life in the fullest sense; yet each one of us will be recognizable and possess a distinct personality.

Beloved, the best is yet to come! We are someday moving out of the earthly body into a spiritual body (a perfectly, holy, body, untainted by sin, and incapable of sinning) that is fit to dwell in the Eternal State. It’s a body that reflects the Lord Jesus who came from Heaven to save us and give us a glorified body.

Tom Constable summarizes:

“God’s intent to make man in His own image (Gen. 1:26) will finally reach fulfillment when believers eventually receive bodies that enable us to live in the spiritual sphere as He does. God’s forming man out of the dust of the ground and breathing into his nostrils the breath of life was only the first step toward God’s realization of His goal. His creation of resurrection bodies for us will be the second and final step.”

1 Corinthians 15:50 concludes the section:

“Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.”

The issue is clear. Bodies suited to this world can never pass over to the resurrection world of eternity. There must be a change. The expression “flesh and blood” refers to our natural bodies or our present human existence in our earthly bodies which are tainted by sin and the effects of sin. It is a figure of speech that relates to our present humanness and life as we know it today, with our frailties, struggles,

hardships, sin, disease, and death that are direct effects of the Genesis curse. Today we are “flesh and blood” (we possess a body that is tainted with the effects of sin) but in the future we will possess a spiritual and perfect body that reflects Christ’s spiritual nature in a new resurrection or transformed body.

The Bible says that we cannot “inherit the kingdom of God” in these corruptible, sin-stained bodies (a body that has experienced the effects of sin). Paul already mentioned this in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 as it relates to unbelievers. But it’s also true in another sense that God’s saints cannot enter the resurrection world of the Eternal State without receiving a newly redeemed body. This obviously means the Church Age saints cannot enter the future Millennial Kingdom which merges into the Eternal Kingdom while possessing a sinful body (1 Cor. 15:24-29). They will be transformed and live in a perfect body for the Eternal State.

A corrupt body is not suitable for our eternal existence. It cannot enter the “incorruption” and perfection of the Eternal Kingdom without a transformation. In other words, we need to get a new body that is spiritual in nature, totally pure and unblemished, so we can enter the earthly Millennial Kingdom and dwell with Christ in the Eternal Kingdom.

Gromacki again comments:

“The ‘flesh and blood’ body, or man’s present human nature (Gal. 1:16; Heb. 2:14) has been designed for life on this planet. It can breathe the surrounding air and eat its food. This body, however, has not been fabricated for heavenly life in the eternal presence of God. Corruption cannot inherit what is designed for incorruption. This is why God must change the human body from a natural state to a spiritual state.”

As God’s New Testament saints there must be a change or transformation in our bodies before we enter the earthly theocracy and our Eternal State. And there will be a change – a tremendous and momentous change!

1 Corinthians 15:52-53 once again triumphantly declares:

“In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.”

“We shall be changed! We shall be changed!
Changed from the mortal to immortality,
In the twinkling of an eye.
And we shall all be changed,
Like the lightning in the sky
In the twinkling of an eye,
We will be changed.
Yes we shall all be changed!”

We shall be changed! All of God’s saints. There is no such thing as a partial Rapture theory, that only the spiritual and victorious Christians in fellowship with God will be raptured. No, we shall all be changed! At the Rapture we will get a new, transformed, spiritual body that will be like Christ’s resurrection body, the Last Adam, the second man who came from heaven. It will be a body fully controlled by the spiritual nature instead of a soulish, old, Adamic nature and we will be completely and forever dominated by the new-life principle.

Psalm 17:15

“As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.”

Someday at the event of the Rapture it will happen! We will either be raised or instantaneously experience a perfect moral likeness to Jesus Christ. And we have this promise and hope all because Jesus rose from the dead!

Jesus said in John 14:19, “Because I live, ye shall live also.”

Pastor John Ortberg tells the story of a friend of his (also a pastor named Skip Viau) who was attempting to tell the resurrection story in a children’s sermon. He asked the question, “What were Jesus’ first words to the disciples after he was raised from the dead?” Before he was able to give the answer, a little girl raised her hand high in the sky, so Skip let her answer. “I know,” she said, “Ta da!”. As Ortberg would argue, it was “as good a translation as any.”

Did you know that there is no other religion or cult whose leader makes the claim to have risen from the dead? Only Christianity has a leader and Savior who has risen from the dead. Buddha is dead. Confucius is dead. Mohammed is dead. Joseph

Smith and Brigham Young are dead. Charles Russell is dead. Harry Krishna is dead. Gandhi is dead. Jim Jones is dead. Pope John Paul is dead. They are all dead except Jesus!

Some bones from one of Buddha's fingers were sent as a gift to the emperor of China during the Tang dynasty. They were later forgotten about and then found in 1981. The finding was a sensation to Buddhists everywhere, and the bones are now visited by many Buddhists. But if someone claimed to find a finger that belonged to Christ no true Christians would believe him because our faith is founded on the fact that there is no finger to find—Christ rose from the dead!

Since Christ is alive He will do what He has promised. He not only has given us eternal life today when we believe in Him, but He will one day in the future give us an eternal body. As God's people we have the blessed hope of receiving a new body someday that will never experience the effects of sin. It will be sinless, painless, and deathless. Do you have this hope today? You can! The Lord from Heaven has promised this!

These passages that deal with the transformation of our bodies via resurrection or Rapture give us enough information to satisfy our curiosity and provide us with enough truth to inspire comfort and stimulate hope in our hearts. Beloved, a better day is coming! We are coming back to life someday with a new and eternal body! We are getting a transformed body for eternity.

A woman looked out the window of her home and was horrified to see her German Shepherd shaking the life out of the neighbor's pet rabbit. Her family had been quarreling with these neighbors; this was certainly going to make matters worse. She grabbed a broom and ran outside, hit the pooch until he dropped the rabbit now covered with dog-spit—and extremely dead.

What was she going to do? The woman lifted the rabbit with the end of the broom and brought it into the house. She dumped its lifeless body into the bathtub and turned on the shower. When the water running off the rabbit was clean, she rolled him over and rinsed the other side.

Now she had a plan. She found her hairdryer and blew the rabbit dry. Using an old comb, she groomed the rabbit until he looked pretty good. Then, when the

neighbor wasn't looking, she hopped over the fence, sneaked across the back yard, and propped him up in his cage. No way was she taking the blame for this thing!

About an hour later, she heard screams coming from the neighbor's yard. She ran outside, pretending she didn't know what was going on. Her neighbor came running to the fence and was horrified. "Our rabbit, our rabbit!" she yelled. "He died two weeks ago, we buried him, and now he's back!"

Folks, we are coming back someday! We are coming back with a new body, a body that is perfect from a physical and spiritual perspective. And it's all because of God's amazing grace!

