

CrossRoads Baptist Church
August 27, 2006 10:00 AM
I Corinthians 15: 20-23, 35-58
Eternity: Heaven or Hell #6

“What About the Resurrection?”

Since the inception of the space program in the 1960's, we have seen it advance from walking on the moon to walking in space. Yet one item has never changed, NASA has never figured out how a body suited for earth can survive in an atmosphere designed for the stars. So, every time man gets out of his space shuttle, he has to have protected and special clothes so that he can walk in space.

This same principle is true as we talk about the eternity. Our bodies can survive in neither heaven nor hell. Thus, we will have to have new bodies.

“What type of body will we have?” We must have a body that is transformed that it will not be like the one we have here. It will have to go through a change called resurrection. What about this vital doctrine of the resurrection.

I. There will be a universal resurrection.

A. Everyone will be raised.

John 5: 25, 29 “And I assure you that the time is coming, in fact it is here, when the dead will hear my voice—the voice of the Son of God. And those who listen will live. ...and they will rise again. Those who have done good will rise to eternal life, and those who have continued in evil will rise to judgment.”

Acts 24: 15 “I have hope in God, just as these men do, that he will raise both the righteous and the ungodly.

This includes all the believers and unbelievers.

B. But not at the same time.

The resurrection will take place at different times.

C. There are three stages of the resurrection of believers.

1. Old Testament believers have already experienced their resurrection.

Matthew 27: 51, 52

This occurred when Jesus was resurrected. They are with God.

2. There will be a resurrection at the rapture.

I Thessalonians 4: 13-18

3. There will be a resurrection for Tribulation saints.
Revelation 20: 4-6 “...They came to life again, and they reigned with Christ for a thousand years. ⁵This is the first resurrection. (The rest of the dead did not come back to life until the thousand years had ended.)

- D. There is a separate resurrection of unbelievers.

Revelation 20: 11-14 “...The sea gave up the dead in it, and death and the grave gave up the dead in them.”

We don't know much about their body and who they will be. But they will be resurrected to receive a body that will endure all of eternity in the lake of fire.

II. There will be resurrection bodies.

A. We see the necessity of death.

I Corinthians 15: 35-38

For a believer to receive this body, he must first pass through death.

John 12: 24 “Most assuredly I say to you unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.”

B. We see the description of the body.

1. It is a spiritual body. – verse 44

This does not mean ghostly, but it means it will be subject to the spirit, not the flesh. It will have no physical limitations. Jesus' body did not – he was able to go through closed doors and ascended to Heaven without the pull of gravity.

2. It is a real body.

Again, its not a ghostly body or a phantom. The body we will have will be likened to the resurrection body of Jesus who said to Thomas to put his fingers in his hand, and to Mary he said, “Don't hold on to me.”

Jesus ate fish (John 21: 9-14)

3. It is a recognizable body

Again the body of Jesus was recognizable to everyone. Even though we will be changed, we will be recognizable. Someone may ask, "But my loved one was buried at sea, cremated, lost a limb or was disfigured, how will I recognize them?"

Illustration – a teacher may write a word on the chalkboard and then erase it. But what does not preclude him from writing that same word again?

The God who made all things out of nothing with nothing (Psalm 33:9), can have no problem making again with the same genetic and psychological information as he did before.

This is also seen in the usage of the seed falling into the ground. The fruit that comes from the seed does not look like the seed planted, but it has a similar organic connection.

How bodies in Heaven will have a similar organic connection to our bodies now. Thus, this will be a resurrection, not a new creation.

4. It is an incorruptible body. – verse 42

The new body will not be subject to decay or corruption. There has only been one body not subject to corruption – Psalm 16:10 and Acts 2: 27 – the body of Jesus.

No more death, disease, decay, disabilities. All will be left in the grave.

5. It is a glorious body. – verse 43

There is nothing glorious about a corpse. We dispose of it. But our bodies will be changed into a glorious body.

We will exhibit the very glory of God. We will regain what we lost in the fall. Adam and Eve did not wear clothes because they were clothed with the glory of God. In heaven, there will be no necessity of clothes because we will be clothed with the brightness and radiant glory of God.

This will also mean the achievement of the full purpose of man. Man was made to glorify God. To reveal his glory. In heaven, even our bodies will glorify God.

Philippians 3: 20-21 "He will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body."

What's going to happen is what we see with the repulsive caterpillar. It is confined to a tomb while the cocoon is apparently dead and formless. But after the warm Sun

of Spring comes on it, a beautiful butterfly emerges. It's the same creature, but in a different body.

6. It is a powerful body. – verse 43 Psalm 110:3

Death is a monument to the weakness of man. He cannot overcome this enemy and death humbles all men with his powerful sword. But in Heaven, our bodies will be powerful. No more need for sleep or rest.

Psalm 110:3 indicates that a young man is full of strength and power. We will all be in our prime in Heaven. Full of strength and power.

7. There are diversity of bodies. – verses 39-41

Even in Heaven, we will not all be the same. Can you believe how dull it would be if we all looked the very same and had no differently of personalities. There will be diversity.

While there is a lot we don't know, we do know this.

Psalm 17: 15 "As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in your likeness."