

HEAVEN

Lesson 4 w/Answers

Anticipating Resurrection

In this lesson, we continue our study of Heaven. If you are following along with us in Randy Alcorn's book, "Heaven", we are currently studying the material found in Section 4 (Chapters 11 - 13). We will be examining what "resurrection" means for us, referring to both Christ's physical resurrection as well as our own. In other words, what can we learn about our own resurrection by looking at what the Bible tells us about being resurrected, and by looking at the model that Christ set for us through his resurrection?

Destined for an eternity living, walking, talking, and worshipping with God, Jesus the Messiah, and His Holy Spirit; we will do so in real, physical, resurrected bodies living in a real and physical new heaven and earth, in the new city of Jerusalem.

So let's take a look at what having a resurrected body means, and what it will be like to be resurrected as Christ was.

1. Why is Christ's resurrection so important to us as Christians? (see 1 Corinthians 15:17-19)
 - a. ANSWER: *"And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men."* Without the resurrection, without being resurrected, there is no salvation. Salvation implies victory over death and a resurrected body.
2. Is the hope of a physical resurrection solely a New Testament hope, or is it evident in the Old Testament as well? Did the Old Testament view envision a bodily and physical resurrection., or something else? (see Job 19:26-27)
 - a. ANSWER: *"And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes – I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!"* Clearly, even in the Old Testament, people looked forward to a physical, bodily, resurrection where they would "see God in (their) flesh".
3. When the world is reborn and made new, will it follow the patterns of the current world or be something completely new, something that we have no experience with? (see Matthew 19:28)
 - a. ANSWER: *"Jesus said to them, 'I tell you the truth, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.'" Jesus is describing the "renewal of all things" in terms and patterns we can understand even today. It will be physical; there will be order and rule, "thrones", and we and Jesus will be "sitting" in judgment while ruling. These are all concepts that we can understand today, and this will also be true in the new earth. We will be physical, and the things that we do will be physical. We will be living in a world inhabited by both the physical and the spiritual, just as it was during the days of Adam and Eve during the time that they lived in the Garden of Eden.*
4. What indication do we have that our resurrection will be a physical one? (see 1 Thessalonians 4:17)
 - a. ANSWER: *"For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words."* Notice that we are "alive", whether living or dead at the time, we are "alive" when we meet the Lord in the air. The verse goes on to say "so we will be with the Lord forever" - physically alive with the Lord forever. How exciting! What a blessing!

5. Christ explains to us one key and important aspect of God that gives us great hope at the time of our physical death? What does he say about God that gives us this great hope if we have put our faith in Christ? (see Matthew 22:32)
- a. ANSWER: *"I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob"? He is not the God of the dead but of the living.*" Christ tells us that even though our physical bodies may decay and eventually die, we as beings do not cease to exist -- because He promises to be with us forever, not just while we are in this physical body. If we have placed our faith in Christ, He is with us always, even when this physical body dies. We continue living and He is with us, interceding with God - the "God of the living" and not the dead.
6. What can we learn about our resurrected bodies from the following verses:
- a. 1 John 3:2
- i. ANSWER: We learn that we will be like Christ. *"Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."*
- b. Luke 24:39
- i. ANSWER: We learn that we will not be a ghost. *"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."*
- c. 1 Thessalonians 4:14 and Revelation 21:1-3
- i. ANSWER: We learn that resurrected bodies will live on a physical earth. *"We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him."* and *"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. 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.'"*
- d. Luke 24:13-35
- i. ANSWER: We learn that Christ walked, talked, and looked like a regular human being. *"Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; but they were kept from recognizing him. He asked them, 'What are you discussing together as you walk along?' They stood still, their faces downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, asked him 'Are you only a visitor to Jerusalem and do not know the things that have happened there in these days?' 'What things?' he asked. 'About Jesus of Nazareth' they replied. 'He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see.' He said to them, 'How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?' And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself. As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus acted as if he were going farther. But they urged him strongly, 'Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over.' So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. They asked each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?' They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together and saying, 'It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon.' Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread."*
- e. John 20:15-16
- i. ANSWER: We learn that He was seen in his resurrected body and seen as a man, the woman called him "sir", but did not recognize him, and then they heard his voice. *"'Woman,' he said, 'why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?' Thinking he was the gardener, she said, 'Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him.' Jesus said to her, 'Mary,' She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, 'Rabboni' (which means Teacher)."*

f. John 20:24-29

- i. ANSWER: Christ's conversation with Thomas demonstrates to us that He is physical and that he retained his memory. *"Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, 'We have seen the Lord!' But he said to them, 'Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it.'" A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you!' Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.' Thomas said to him, 'My Lord and my God!' Then Jesus told him, 'Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.'"*

g. John 21:12

- i. ANSWER: We see that Jesus did physical things in his resurrected body; He cooked, ate, etc. *"Jesus said to them, 'Come and have breakfast.' None of the disciples dared ask him, 'Who are you?' They knew it was the Lord."*

We see from our study that we can look forward to one day having real and physical resurrected bodies. In those bodies, we will still look like human beings. We will have the ability to recognize one another and we will possess other characteristics of a physical body, including the need to eat.

We will be able to walk and talk as we do today, and we will live in the new city of Jerusalem on a new earth in a new heaven, where we will fellowship and worship each day with God, his son Jesus and the Holy Spirit. "What a day of rejoicing that will be, when we all see Jesus!", as the words of an old hymn proclaim. What a day of rejoicing indeed!

Have a great week everyone, and thanks for studying with us.

Yours in Christ,

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