

Grieving and the Follower of Jesus

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1

2

Grief

- **deep sorrow**, especially that caused by someone's death
- Grief is a **natural response to loss**. It's the emotional suffering you feel when something or someone you love is taken away. Often, the pain of loss can feel overwhelming. You may experience all kinds of difficult and unexpected emotions, from shock or anger to disbelief, guilt, and profound sadness.

3

Death

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4

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 - This world is all there is and there is nothing beyond the grave.

5

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- Philosophy provides two options for life beyond the grave:
 - This world is meaningless and evil and life will be found only after leaving this world.
 - This world is all there is and there is nothing beyond the grave.
- God/Biblical View: Death is our enemy
“The last enemy to be destroyed is death.” (1 Corinthians 15:26)

6

What happens at the time of death for those who believe in Jesus?

- The body and soul are separated—this is an unnatural state and is not permanent.
- The believer’s soul is with Jesus—*“For I am convinced that neither death nor life . . . will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* (Romans 8:38-39)
- The body is put “on hold” until its resurrection.

7

The Resurrection of the Body— The Historic Christian Church

- Apostles’ Creed:
I believe in . . . the resurrection of the body.”
- Nicene Creed:
“I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.”

8

The Resurrection of the Body

Statistics from 2018:

- Barely a quarter of Americans believe that they will have a body at some point after death.
- Nearly a quarter of self-identified Christians subscribe to the Hindu doctrine of reincarnation. *"Just as people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him."* (Hebrews 9:27)

9

Bodily Resurrection: 1 Corinthians 15

Secular influences were raising doubts about the church's teaching on the resurrection of the dead (1 Cor. 15:12):

- Gnostic teaching: the body is evil
- Platonic teaching: the body is the prison of the soul
- Others acknowledged Christ's resurrection as core to the faith, but claimed that the resurrection—a spiritual one—had already taken place

10

Bodily Resurrection: 1 Corinthians 15

Why does Paul insist on a bodily resurrection?

- If one's natural body, created by God the Father (Genesis 1:27) is not restored, death gets the last word. Not so! (1 Cor. 15:26)
- Bodily resurrection is part of God's overall plan of redemption
- In the same way our sentence of death came through Adam's sin, our guarantee of bodily restoration comes through Jesus' resurrection (1 Cor. 15:21-22)
- Since Christ has been raised as the firstfruit, those who belong to him must also be raised when he comes again as he was raised (1 Cor. 15:20-23)

11

Bodily Resurrection: 1 Corinthians 15

- St. Paul emphasizes that it is a *dead person* being resurrected, not just the body of a dead person
- Being resurrected: *deceased embodied persons*, not just bodies separated from their souls
- Our bodies will not merely be resuscitated—like Lazarus
- Our bodies will be resurrected and glorified—like Jesus, the Firstfruit from the dead

*"But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, **will transform our *lowly* bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.**" (Philippians 3:20-21)*

12

Bodily Resurrection: 1 Corinthians 15

Jesus' resurrection "is both the *cause* and the *model*" of humankind's resurrection, and so we examine Jesus' resurrection to imagine our own:

- Jesus' body was transformed and glorified, not just resuscitated
- There was continuity: eating, walking, talking
- There was discontinuity: no time & space constraints

13

Bodily Resurrection



Trying to imagine the difference between our perishable and our imperishable body is like looking at a chrysalis and trying to imagine the end result...

14



15

A Bodily Resurrection, Not just a Spiritual Resurrection

A popular teaching over the last century has been this:
Life after death for a Christian is lived out for all eternity in a spiritual state in heaven.

However, the Christian Church has always taught that, after Jesus returns, our bodies will be resurrected and we will live in the presence of God in a New Heaven and New Earth—that is, a restored creation.

16

A Bodily Resurrection, Not just a Spiritual Resurrection

⁴² "So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; ⁴³ it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; ⁴⁴ **it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.** If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body." (1 Corinthians 15:42-44)

17

A Bodily Resurrection, Not just a Spiritual Resurrection

"It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body."---

Paul's reference to believers being raised as a spiritual body **does not indicate a spiritual resurrection** as opposed to a bodily resurrection; it refers to the empowering, enlivening, and infusing of the Holy Spirit within a believer's body.

18

A Bodily Resurrection, Not just a Spiritual Resurrection

"It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body."---

The Holy Spirit imparts, increases, and strengthens the faith of God's people—a spiritual resurrection has begun!—but it will not be fully realized until Jesus returns and all sin is forgiven for all time.

The Holy Spirit will raise our bodies from the dead and will fully infuse the bodies of believers, giving believers a spiritual body.

A "spiritual body"—the empowering, enlivening, infusing of the Holy Spirit

19

Not just the body, but all of creation

The restoration at Jesus' Second Coming will include all of creation.

When Jesus returns, he will restore all that humankind has destroyed:

- Humanity itself
- The world in which humanity lives
- Our relationships with God, with others, and with the created order

20

A New Heaven and a New Earth

“Then I saw a new (*kainos*) heaven and a new (*kainos*) earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away.” (Revelation 21:1)

Kainos – new in quality, not new in substance

21

A New Heaven and a New Earth

Resurrected Bodies = New Creation

- Maintain identity
- Identifiable counterpart
- A renewal

22

A New Heaven and a New Earth

“Behold! I am making every new!” (Rev 21:5)

What makes the new creation new is the pervading presence of God. (Rev 21:3)

23

Things We DO Know About Heaven from God’s Word

The three persons of the Triune God are in heaven:

- Father – Matthew 5:44-45, Matthew 6:9
- Son – Luke 9:51; 1 Corinthians 15:47; John 6:38
- Spirit – 1 Peter 1:12

24

Things We DO Know About Heaven from God's Word

Jesus is in heaven, in the physical body of a human, sitting at the right hand of God. (Acts 1:1-2; Acts 7:55-56; Hebrews 1:3)

At the end of time, the Lord will return from heaven. (Acts 1:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 4:16)

25

Things We DO Know About Heaven from God's Word

God is storing up our inheritance for us in heaven.
(1 Peter 1:4-5)

We should do likewise. (Matthew 6:20)

26

Things We DO Know About Heaven from God's Word

Our names are written in heaven. (Luke 10:20)

We will go to heaven when we die. (2 Timothy 4:18)

We will immediately, at the time of death, be in heaven in the presence of God. (Luke 23:43)

27

Things We DO Know About Heaven from God's Word

When we are in heaven, our bodies will not yet be resurrected. (John 3:13)

Heaven, as we know it, is not our final destiny. (Acts 3:21; Revelation 21:1)

Heaven, as it is today, will pass away. (Mark 13:31; Luke 21:33)

28

Things We DON'T Know About Heaven from God's Word

Will we see our loved ones in heaven? Or will that not occur until the new heavens and the new earth?

Will we be able to see what is taking place on earth while in heaven?

Is time and space in heaven the same or different from time and space as we know it?

Will our soul sleep while in heaven waiting for the resurrection?