

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESURRECTION:

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1. Introduction:

- a. Some contemporary “theologians” have argued that it doesn’t matter whether the resurrection of Jesus was literal and historical or not.
- b. They claim that a “spiritual” resurrection is all that is required.
- c. But the Bible makes it very clear that the resurrection of Jesus was a literal resurrection of the material body, and that the Resurrection took place in space and time as a true historical event.
- d. Romans 1:4 reminds us that by His resurrection Jesus was **(KJV)** “... declared *to be* the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead: “
- e. The Resurrection is the capstone miracle, which confirms once and forever Jesus’ claim to be God the Son and Son of God.

2. Body Point 1:

The apostle Paul provides a thorough discussion of the Resurrection in chapter 15 of his first letter to the Corinthians.

- a. ***Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection are all historical events prophesied in the Old Testament (1 Corinthians 15:3–4).***
 - i. This is significant, as prophecy which has been fulfilled has invariably been fulfilled literally.
- b. ***Christ was seen alive after His resurrection by many witnesses who knew Him, and who could not have been deceived (1 Corinthians 15:5–11).***
 - i. Paul not only mentions the Twelve, but also some 500 others, most of whom were alive when Paul wrote the Corinthian letter.¹
 - ii. Appearances of Jesus after resurrection
 1. In or around Jerusalem
 - a. To Mary Magdalene (John 20:11–18)
 - b. To the other women (Matt. 28:8–10)
 - c. To Peter (Luke 24:34)
 - d. To ten disciples (Luke 24:36–43; John 20:19–25)
 - e. To the Eleven, including Thomas (John 20:26–29)
 2. At His ascension (Luke 24:50–53; Acts 1:4–12)
 3. To the disciples on the Emmaus road (Luke 24:13–35)
 4. In Galilee (Matt. 28:16–20; John 21:1–24)
 5. To five hundred people (1 Cor. 15:6)
 6. To Paul on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1–6; 18:9, 10; 22:1–8; 23:11; 26:12–18; 1 Cor. 15:8)²
- c. ***Christ’s was raised as the first of many (1 Corinthians 15:12–20).***
 - i. Christian faith promises resurrection to all who believe in Jesus. If Christ was not raised, this critical promise is an empty one.
- d. ***The Resurrection is a critical element in God’s eternal plan to destroy death itself (1 Corinthians 15:21–28).***

¹ This section based upon: Richards, L. (1998). *Every miracle in the Bible* (242–243). Nashville: T. Nelson.

² This section based upon: Thomas Nelson Publishers. (1996). *Nelson’s complete book of Bible maps & charts: Old and New Testaments*. (Rev. and updated ed.). Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson.

- i. Adam's sin introduced death. Biblically "death" is not only the cessation of biological life; it is also that corruption of human moral nature which separates human beings from God and brings them under divine judgment.
- ii. In dying Jesus paid the penalty for our sins.
- iii. In His resurrection Jesus provided eternal life for those who believe in Him.
- iv. When God's plan reaches its culmination believers will be resurrected also.
- v. The dynamic power of Jesus' resurrection life will accomplish the resurrection transformation of believers. ³

3. **Body Point 2:** The resurrection of the saints is different than the resurrection of all.

- a. The Saints' Resurrection is seen in a remarkable statement of the Apostle Paul in **Philippians 3:10-11 (KJV)** ¹⁰That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; ¹¹If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.
 - i. A more literal translation reveals Paul's full meaning: "... If by any means I might advance to the EARLIER resurrection, which is FROM AMONG the dead" (Phil. 3:11, Rotherham).
 - ii. The Greek preposition *ek* means "out from."
 - iii. Paul desired to be in the group that would be resurrected at the time of the Rapture; those who would be taken selectively "out from among" the general mass of the dead; those who would be raised in the EARLIER resurrection (the first resurrection).
 - 1. **Revelation 20:6 (KJV)** Blessed and holy *is* he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.
- b. **1 Corinthians 15:23-24 (KJV)** ²³But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. ²⁴Then *cometh* the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.
- c. It will be a literal bodily resurrection. This is shown by the Resurrection of Jesus.
 - i. His resurrected body still bore the prints of the nails and the wound of the sword **John 20:26-28 (KJV)** ²⁶And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: *then* came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace *be* unto you. ²⁷Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust *it* into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. ²⁸And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.;
 - ii. After His Resurrection, Jesus had a body of "flesh and bones" and even took food **Luke 24:36-43 (KJV)** ³⁶And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you. ³⁷But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. ³⁸And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? ³⁹Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. ⁴⁰And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them *his* hands and *his* feet. ⁴¹And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? ⁴²And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. ⁴³And he took *it*, and did eat before them.

³ This section based upon: Richards, L. (1998). *Every miracle in the Bible* (242–243). Nashville: T. Nelson.

- iii. On the other hand, the body of Jesus was sufficiently glorified that His disciples did not always recognize Him at once.
 - iv. His appearances show that His body was not subject to normal physical limitations
John 20:19-26 (KJV) ¹⁹ 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. ²⁶ And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: *then* came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace *be* unto you.
 - v. Of this one may be certain, that God will recover from the dust a body with a definite relationship to one's earthly body, but transformed and fashioned to one's new environment.
Philippians 3:21 (KJV) Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.
- d. Paul speaks of death as a sowing of the body as a farmer sows seed.
- i. The seed dies, but it contains a life principle by which nature brings forth a new plant of the same genus, species and variety as the original seed.
 - ii. At the Resurrection out of the planted earthly bodies, the Lord will raise up resurrection bodies that are identified with the earthly body, but which are transformed with a likeness to Christ's resurrection body.
1 Corinthians 15:42-44 (KJV) ⁴² So also *is* the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: ⁴³ It is sown in dishonour; 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. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.
 - iii. The resurrection body will not be the earthly body merely resuscitated; but the likeness of the earthly body glorified.
 - iv. It appears from the identification of Moses and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration and of Jesus after His Resurrection that our resurrection bodies will retain their personal identity.
- e. The resurrection body will be God-given.
- 1 Corinthians 15:38 (KJV)** But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.
- i. How a dead body can be raised and glorified cannot be conceived by human intellect.
 - ii. Christ's Resurrection is the great miracle of our Gospel. We do not explain it. We accept it as Divine revelation.
 - iii. In the same manner we accept bodily resurrection as a miracle of Divine power and wisdom. If we accept Christ's Resurrection, we should have no problem with the acceptance of our final resurrection.
- f. The believer's resurrection body will be immortal and incorruptible.
- 1 Corinthians 15:42 (KJV)** So also *is* the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:
- i. The Scriptures never speak of the immortality of the soul.
 - ii. The believer now has eternal life, but he dwells in a mortal body.
 - iii. All men have eternal existence.

- iv. Only believers who shall experience “The First Resurrection” will receive immortal and incorruptible bodies
- g. The resurrection body will be a celestial body. **1 Corinthians 15:40 (KJV)** *There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.*
- i. Our earthly bodies are suited to this present earthly environment.
 - ii. The resurrection body will be suited to our new heavenly environment.
 - iii. It will be equally suited to both the new heavens and the new earth, as well as to the millennial earth.
 - iv. Like the body of Jesus, it will be able to come and go between Heaven and the earth.
- h. The resurrection body will be a powerful body. **1 Corinthians 15:43 (KJV)** *It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:*
- i. The contrast here expressed indicates that the new capacities of the resurrection body will be inconceivably and inexpressibly greater than those of any earthly human body.
 - ii. The events recorded of angels are a preview of the capacities of resurrected saints. **Matthew 22:29-30 (KJV)** ²⁹ Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. ³⁰ For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.
- i. The resurrection body will be a glorious body. **1 Corinthians 15:43 (KJV)** *It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:*
- i. The resurrected body will be glorious.
 - ii. Jesus promised, **Matthew 13:43a (KJV)** *Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.*
 - iii. The above words of Jesus suggest for the saints the glory that He manifested on the Mount of Transfiguration: **Matthew 17:2 (KJV)** *And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.*
 - iv. Jesus prayed for us, **John 17:22 (KJV)** *And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:*
 - v. After speaking of the Resurrection, Daniel said, **Daniel 12:3 (KJV)** *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.* ⁴

⁴ This section based upon: Duffield, G. P., & Van Cleave, N. M. (1983). *Foundations of Pentecostal theology* (540–542). Los Angeles, Calif.: L.I.F.E. Bible College.