

Elementary Doctrines
Resurrection of the Dead Part 2

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The resurrection of the dead, Paul asserts, is the foundation of the Christian faith. (Inserted – actual verse—**“Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. – Hebrews 6:1,2)** Jesus’ resurrection sets Him apart as the Living God—there is no other like Jesus—He is the Living God. He was dead and is alive forevermore. This is how He greeted John on the island of Patmos in **Revelation the 1st chapter**. He says, “I am he who was dead and is alive forevermore.”

He asserts that His resurrection is the foundation of His claim to have defeated the spirits of death and hell. Here it is in **Revelation, chapter 1**, early in the chapter, John turns to see the voice that was speaking to him and this is what he heard in **Revelation 1:17** he says, “I fell to His feet as if I were dead and then He placed his right hand on me and He said, ‘Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One and behold I am alive forever and I hold the keys of death and Hell.’” (Inserted – actual verse—**“When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: ‘Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.’” – Revelation 1:17,18)**

On the basis of His resurrection He claims to excuse us from the control of the spirits of death and hell so that

when the believer dies, death has no authority over him and in fact that's how **I Corinthians 15** sums up the entire presentation of the resurrection of the dead. (Inserted – actual verse—“**Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: ‘Death has been swallowed up in victory.’ ‘Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?’ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.**” – **I Corinthians 15:51-57**). Because of Jesus' own triumph over death—through the resurrection—He has stripped the spirit of death and the spirit of hell from their right to imprison those who die in Christ. Those who lived believing in Jesus and died having confidence in that inasmuch as God raised Him from the dead, so too He will raise us from the dead.

Now that brings us to two very important considerations and these considerations will be the subject of this particular program. The first is: our own resurrection while we are alive and the second is: “inasmuch as it is appointed unto man once to die”, what happens to us when we die? (Inserted – actual verse—“**Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.**” – **Hebrews 9:27,28**) If we go to heaven when we die why is there a need for us to be raised from the dead and why is there resurrection of the dead? So let's move into that.

In the first of these readings—we've actually looked before on this subject—but let's look again to first **Romans, chapter 6** and then we will look at **Romans, chapter 8** because these speak of the personal resurrection of everyone who believes in Jesus Christ. In **Romans 6:5**, it says, “**If we have been united with him like this in his death,**” (that is we who believe in Jesus have been united with Jesus in death) “**we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know**”—and this is the confidence with which Paul declares these things under the leading of the Spirit—“**For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.**” (Inserted – **Romans 6:6,7**)

Then he goes on to say, in **verse 11**, “**In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but *alive to God***” (*alive to God*, that means you were dead, you are alive—that's the subject of resurrection—alive to God in Christ). Just

prior to that he said, **“For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him.”** (Inserted – **Romans 6:9**) And then he goes on to say, “We who are in Him now have also been granted mastery over death.” (Inserted – actual verse—**“Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.”** – **Romans 6:8**)

There are two elements to this, two components to this. The first is that you who believe in Jesus have become a partaker of both His death and His resurrection. He died for you on the cross and therefore you do not have to die for yourself. So you are found placed in Him in the cross. He was raised from the dead and you have been raised with Him. Now what does that mean and how, exactly, does that happen? Here is how it happens—this is **Romans 8—Romans 8:11** says this, **“And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you,”**

(so if the Holy Spirit—the Holy Spirit raised Jesus from the dead—if the Holy Spirit is living in you then He who gave Christ life from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who lives within you.) (Inserted – actual verse—**“And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.”** – **Romans 8:11**)

That’s how *your* resurrection is accomplished. While you are still alive—once you have decided to follow Jesus, to give your life to him—He brings you to death. That death is the recognition that you no longer rule your own life. It’s not that you are physically executed, it is that your right to govern your life the way *you* want to, you present *that right* to Him and because that is the very energy of your life, He considers that as if you died. In that state of being dead, the Holy Spirit comes into you and resurrects you and when you are resurrected you are now a new creation.

Well how do you even know that this is so? I mean, isn’t this just “religious talk”? Why should anybody be concerned about the resurrection of the dead? These seem to be very “intellectual” studies... very ponderous things, and in today’s fast paced religious environment where men speak at the pace of a machine gun and emotions are the high point of religious experience today, why would anybody want to be bothered with these mundane subjects like the resurrection of the dead? Whatever that stuff is, should it not stand upon its own—whether or not you know about it? What difference does it make if you know about it or even if you believe it?

The answer is that it makes all the difference in the world because when you cede or give up your right to govern your life that means that you no longer have the right to control the decisions you make *every day*. The problem is, you see, we have confused the “church experience” on Sunday morning—where the actors are up on the stage, the show is set, and you go and you have a great time, you have an emotional catharsis and you “get into it”—we’ve confused *that* with *life*, we’ve confused *that* with *reality*. Increasingly, *that’s* a joke, increasingly, that whole charade is far less than useful to you and terribly irrelevant—unrelated to reality.

When you give up the right to govern yourself, to make the decisions about how you are going to live—every day—then you are dead. The Spirit of God comes into you and resurrects you from the dead. When He does, He begins to direct your life every day... day by day, moment by moment, and you genuinely come to experience a new life. Do you know what is true? You could go to these “hype meetings”—that they commonly are—year after year after year and one day when you take stock of where you actually are as a Christian, you’ll find that you are no further down the road than where you started. And the frightening thing is that this may not be just the condition that attends *you*—it is the condition that attends the vast number of people who claim to be believers in Christ.

Why are the people not going on? Why are they not maturing? Simple... nobody has ever schooled them in these elementary belief structures. This is what is different about your life from before and your life now. It is both what you believe and the truth that lives in you and lives through you on the basis of what you believe. If the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you then what is true is: He who gave Jesus life from the dead also occupies your human body and gives life to you and resurrects you and so real is this fact that when you are born again of the Spirit—just like when a natural child is born, the first thing that natural child does is he or she cries out with a loud voice and at that point you know that it is a live birth.

When you are a believer in Jesus and have been resurrected by the Holy Spirit, you also cry out and that’s how it is known—throughout the heavens and in the earth—that you are a live birth, you are a new creation in Christ. Do you know what your first cry is? Your first cry is, “Abba, Father.” It is your spiritual cry. It means that you begin to recognize instantly upon being born again that now God and not Adam is your father. Therefore you are a partaker of a divine nature. Just like when you were a natural man in Adam, you were a partaker of Adam and his sinful nature, when you are born again and resurrected—this is how you were born again: you were born again by being brought to death and resurrected by the Spirit of God and when that happens there is a material change in your idea of life and that is that you are born from above and not from beneath. You are a child of God

and not a child of Adam. You are born from above and not from below.

That brings us to the third aspect that I wanted to talk about in this subject of resurrection and that is that you are born from above. How do you know that that is true? I mean, other than the fact that it is written in the Bible, is there any reality to this? What hope do you have that this is so? It brings us to the understanding of “why are the dead raised?” When you die, the Scriptures say in **James**, that the body without the spirit is dead, so what happens is that there is a separation between the body and the spirit. (Inserted – actual verse—**“As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.” – James 2:26**)

The body is put into the dust of the earth because it was dust—came out of the dust—and it returns to the dust. But the spirit goes back to God who gave it, **Ecclesiastes, chapter 12, verse 7**. (Inserted – **“and the dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.”**) Now when a person is saved his spirit is saved, his soul is *being* saved and his body is meant to be *renewed*... meant to be renewed. Yet the Scriptures say that outwardly we are wasting away yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. That’s **II Corinthians, chapter 4**, the very end of the chapter. (Inserted – **“Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.” – II Corinthians 4:16**) Now the earth does not know the truth of this, people of the earth do not know the truth of this so when you are born again they cannot see any difference, at least not immediately and sometimes not for a long time.

So the truth that you are born again from above, you are born of the Spirit of God, the Spirit who dwells in you gives your spirit life and issues you forth as a child of God. Although that is true, at the *moment* that it is true it’s not obvious. But there will come a day when it *is* obvious and it is at the heart of why the dead are raised—those who die in Christ are raised first. This is what the Scriptures say, in fact the Scriptures that say it are **I Corinthians**, where we have based most of our principle teaching of the resurrection, we’ve based it in **I Corinthians 15**. So I’d like for us to first look at the vast sweep of the resurrection of the body and then we’ll understand why.

In verse 35 of **I Corinthians 15**, Paul says, **“But someone may ask, ‘How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?’ How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but just a seed, perhaps of wheat or of something else. But God gives it a body as he has determined, and to each kind of seed he gives its own body. All flesh is not the same: Men have one kind of flesh, animals have another, birds another and fish another. There are also**

heavenly bodies and there are earthly bodies...” – I Corinthians 15:35-40a)

Now the point of it all is this: when you are living on the earth you live in a fleshly body, a body that is subject to decay—*that* body you got from Adam, it’s a human body. But it is said that you are born *again*, you are born from above; God is your father. What *proof* is there that this is so? How do you know? Well he first explains that when you are born again that you are born from God and you’ve been given also a spiritual existence. When you die, James says that the body and the spirit are separated. At that point it is still a natural body and you have a spirit from above. The spirit goes to God, the body goes back to the dust but God does not intend to leave the matter there. He intends to resurrect, from the dust, a body—your body—but it is not the body that you died with that will be raised; it is a different body.

The body that you died with is subject to decay because it was taken out of the earth—that’s called a natural body and it has a certain glory to it, it functions well within time and space. That’s what you have, that’s what dies, that’s what is separated from the spirit, that’s what’s buried. But when the day of the resurrection comes you will be raised but not in the body in which you were sown, and you will be raised and taken to heaven. Now your spirit is already in heaven.

Before we go any further let me point out to you that this is absolutely what happened to Jesus. Was the body in which Jesus was resurrected the same body as the one in which He died? My question again: was the body in which Jesus was resurrected the same body as the one in which He died? He looked the same, but was it the same body? The answer is: absolutely no, it was a different body. Why? How do you know that? Well here is the obvious difference: when He was in His first body—the natural body—He could be crucified. He *was* crucified, He was killed; He actually died. In the resurrected body could He have been killed? The answer is: no, He had already overcome death.

So although He looked the same, the body that He had upon being resurrected was totally different from the body He had before He died. The difference was that you could kill the body that He had before He died—and that’s what they did—but you could not kill the body in which He was upon His resurrection. Now what happened to the old body? It was transformed... it was transformed and that’s what will happen to you. You will be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. (Inserted – actual verse—“**Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.**” – I Corinthians 15:51,52)

The body that *was* is this one we have now and it is subject to disease, to decay, to age and so on. But the body that you will be raised with will not be subject, in any fashion, to the elements. You noted that after Jesus was raised from the dead, “While they beheld, He was taken up and a cloud received Him out of their sight.” (Inserted – actual verse—**“After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.” – Acts 1:9**) Without strings, pulleys or anything like that, He was simply raised from the dead and taken up into heaven. So *that* body was capable—the body in which Jesus was resurrected from the dead—was capable of living on the earth and living in heaven. That’s why He was taken up and He is in that form in heaven today.

Now that body, you see, may also be suddenly moved or suddenly brilliant or suddenly glorified so that when Jesus came and visited John on the Island of Patmos this body was a glorious body and yet it was the same body in which He was raised. Why are you raised and why are you given a different body? The answer is that first you are raised and you are taken to heaven. Your spirit, your soul and your body become one and then you come back from heaven in the view of all men and in the company of Jesus Christ. Why? *Because God intends to demonstrate the truth that you were born from above, you were born from heaven.* So He will bring you from heaven and at the beginning of the millennium you will come from heaven so that all may see that your origins are from heaven—you are born from above.

Those who did not die and yet believed in Jesus, the Scriptures say that they will be “changed in an instant, in the twinkling of an eye”—just like Jesus, when He was raised from the dead if you looked into the tomb as others did, there was no body in the tomb. Why? Because the thing raised was simply transformed from one level of glory to another level of glory. Those who did not die will go through that transformation just as rapidly—“in a twinkling of an eye”—and they too will be caught up. Because *all who believe in Christ have this destiny:* that they will be either resurrected from the dead—physically—or transformed—instantly—and will take on a new body, and this is the clarity with which the truth will appear to all: *that if you are born of God, you will come again from heaven and God will see to it that that is so.*

So in looking at the whole picture, Jesus was raised from the dead and that establishes the vast truth that He is the Living God. We are baptized into Christ, we put on Christ in that process, change our beings from being born of Adam to being born of Christ and that process is the resurrection of the dead also. And finally, these two things are the foundations of the hope that when we die we will also be resurrected and nothing of us will remain in the dust of the earth because we truly are a new creation and God will establish the truth that those who believe in

Him are born from above by bringing us—quite literally—out of heaven, with the Lord, back to the earth. For the Lord himself will proceed us in this event. (Inserted – actual verse—**“Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. 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. According to the Lord’s own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. 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.”** – I Thessalonians 4:13-18) I’m Sam Soleyn and we’ll discuss this matter further. God bless you and I’ll see you again.

Scripture References:

Hebrews 6:1,2
 Revelation 1:17,18
 I Corinthians 15:51-57
 Hebrews 9:27,28
 Romans 6:5-7
 Romans 6:11
 Romans 6:9
 Romans 6:8
 Romans 8:11
 James 2:26
 Ecclesiastes 12:7
 II Corinthians 4:16
 I Corinthians 15:35-40a
 I Corinthians 15:51,52
 Acts 1:9
 I Thessalonians 4:13-18