

Resurrection
Message 03 in the series, “What Happens When We Die?”

“And now, dear brothers and sisters, we want you to know what will happen to the believers who have died so you will not grieve like people who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and was raised to life again, we also believe that when Jesus returns, God will bring back with him the believers who have died. We tell you this directly from the Lord: We who are still living when the Lord returns will not meet him ahead of those who have died. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God. First, the believers who have died will rise from their graves. Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever. So encourage each other with these words.” 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 (NLT)

“But tell me this—since we preach that Christ rose from the dead, why are some of you saying there will be no resurrection of the dead? For if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised either. And if Christ has not been raised, then all our preaching is useless, and your faith is useless. And we apostles would all be lying about God—for we have said that God raised Christ from the grave. But that can’t be true if there is no resurrection of the dead. And if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless and you are still guilty of your sins. In that case, all who have died believing in Christ are lost! And if our hope in Christ is only for this life, we are more to be pitied than anyone in the world.” 1 Corinthians 15:12-19 (NLT)

1. It is crucial to believe not only in Jesus' sacrifice for our sins, but also in His resurrection, which assures us of our own bodily resurrection and the promise of eternal life.

“If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. As the Scriptures tell us, ‘Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced.’” Romans 10:9-11 (NLT)

“I am telling you the truth: those who hear my words and believe in him who sent me have eternal life. They will not be judged, but have already passed from death to life. I am telling you the truth: the time is coming—the time has already come—when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear it will come to life. Just as the Father is himself the source of life, in the same way he has made his Son to be the source of life.” John 5:24-26 (GNT)

“But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead. He is the first of a great harvest of all who have died. So you see, just as death came into the world through a man, now the resurrection from the dead has begun through another man. Just as everyone dies because we all belong to Adam, everyone who belongs to Christ will be given new life. But there is an order to this resurrection: Christ was raised as the first of the harvest; then all who belong to Christ will be raised when he comes back.” 1 Corinthians 15:20-23 (NLT)

2. Jesus was the first to rise from the dead, signifying that others will follow in His footsteps!

“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. He created all things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible. Whether they are kings or lords, rulers or powers—everything has been created through him and for him. He existed before everything and holds everything together. He is also the head of the church, which is his body. He is the beginning, the first to come back to life so that he would have first place in everything.” Colossians 1:15-18 (GWT)

“...I teach nothing except what the prophets and Moses said would happen—that the Messiah would suffer and be the first to rise from the dead, and in this way announce God’s light to Jews and Gentiles alike.” Acts 26:22-23 (NLT)

“...Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth.” Revelation 1:4-5 (ESV)

“...And if there is no resurrection, ‘Let’s feast and drink, for tomorrow we die!’ Don’t be fooled by those who say such things, for ‘bad company corrupts good character.’ Think carefully about what is right, and stop sinning. For to your shame I say that some of you don’t know God at all.”
1 Corinthians 15:32-34 (NLT)

“...Always work enthusiastically for the Lord, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless.” 1 Corinthians 15:58 (NLT)

3. If the resurrection of the dead is a reality—and it is—then we are called to live our lives with purpose and intentionality.

“For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.” Ephesians 2:10 (NLT)

“And now I am bound by the Spirit to go to Jerusalem. I don’t know what awaits me, except that the Holy Spirit tells me in city after city that jail and suffering lie ahead. But my life is worth nothing to me **unless I use it for finishing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus—the work of telling others the Good News about the wonderful grace of God.** And now I know that none of you to whom I have preached the Kingdom will ever see me again. I declare today that I have been faithful. If anyone suffers eternal death, it’s not my fault, for I didn’t shrink from declaring all that God wants you to know.”
Acts 20:22-27 (NLT)

“But someone may ask, ‘How will the dead be raised? What kind of bodies will they have?’ What a foolish question! When you put a seed into the ground, it doesn’t grow into a plant unless it dies first. And what you put in the ground is not the plant that will grow, but only a bare seed of wheat or whatever you are planting. Then God gives it the new body he wants it to have. A different plant grows from each kind of seed. Similarly there are different kinds of flesh—one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish. There are also bodies in the heavens and bodies on the earth. The glory of the heavenly bodies is different from the glory of the earthly bodies. The sun has one kind of glory, while the moon and stars each have another kind. And even the stars differ from each other in their glory. It is the same way with the resurrection of the dead. Our earthly bodies are planted in the ground when we die, but they will be raised to live forever. Our bodies are buried in brokenness, but they will be raised in glory. They are buried in weakness, but they will be raised in strength. They are buried as natural human bodies, but they will be raised as spiritual bodies. For just as there are natural bodies, there are also spiritual bodies. The Scriptures tell us, ‘The first man, Adam, became a living person.’ But the last Adam—that is, Christ—is a life-giving Spirit. What comes first is the natural body, then the spiritual body comes later. Adam, the first man, was made from the dust of the earth, while Christ, the second man, came from heaven. Earthly people are like the earthly man, and heavenly people are like the heavenly man. Just as we are now like the earthly man, we will someday be like the heavenly man. What I am saying, dear brothers and sisters, is that our physical bodies cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. These dying bodies cannot inherit what will last forever. But let me reveal to you a wonderful secret. We will not all die, but we will all be transformed! It will happen in a moment, in the blink of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, those who have died will be raised to live forever. And we who are living will also be transformed. For our dying bodies must be transformed into bodies that will never die; our mortal bodies must be transformed into immortal bodies. Then, when our dying bodies have been transformed into bodies that will never die, this Scripture will be fulfilled: ‘Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?’ For sin is the sting that results in death, and the law gives sin its power. But thank God! He gives us victory over sin and death through our Lord Jesus Christ. So, my dear brothers and sisters, be strong and immovable. Always work enthusiastically for the Lord, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless.” 1 Corinthians 15:35-58 (NLT)

4. At the resurrection, we will receive transformed and perfected bodies that are free from sin, suffering and decay.

“Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later. For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are. Against its will, all creation was subjected to God’s curse. But with eager hope, the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God’s children in glorious freedom from death and decay. For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering. We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us.”

Romans 8:18-23 (NLT)

Note: Our resurrected bodies will embody the same qualities as the glorified body of Jesus after His resurrection.

“We, however, are citizens of heaven, and we eagerly wait for our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, to come from heaven. He will change our weak mortal bodies and make them like his own glorious body, using that power by which he is able to bring all things under his rule.” Philippians 3:20-21 (GNT)

“He sat down to eat with them, took the bread, and said the blessing; then he broke the bread and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, but he disappeared from their sight. They said to each other, ‘Wasn’t it like a fire burning in us when he talked to us on the road and explained the Scriptures to us?’ They got up at once and went back to Jerusalem, where they found the eleven disciples gathered together with the others and saying, ‘The Lord is risen indeed! He has appeared to Simon!’ The two then explained to them what had happened on the road, and how they had recognized the Lord when he broke the bread. While the two were telling them this, suddenly the Lord himself stood among them and said to them, ‘Peace be with you.’ They were terrified, thinking that they were seeing a ghost. But he said to them, ‘Why are you alarmed? Why are these doubts coming up in your minds? Look at my hands and my feet, and see that it is I myself. Feel me, and you will know, for a ghost doesn’t have flesh and bones, as you can see I have.’ He said this and showed them his hands and his feet. They still could not believe, they were so full of joy and wonder; so he asked them, ‘Do you have anything here to eat?’ They gave him a piece of cooked fish, which he took and ate in their presence.” Luke 24:30-43 (GNT)

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