

# How To Have A Heavenly Body

Long Beach Alliance Church • March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2010 • Pastor Chris Lankford

*As is the earthy, so also are those who are earthy; and as is the heavenly, so also are those who are heavenly. Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the image of the heavenly.*

*~1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:48-49 (NASB)*

## 1) There Is Living Power From The Resurrection!

- A) As Jesus Christ was the “first fruits” (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:23) of the bodily resurrection of the dead to eternal life, the expectation for all faithful followers of Christ is to experience the same bodily resurrection of the dead.
- B) Further, the reality of Christ’s resurrection and our own eventual resurrection is not simply a future event to anticipate, it also has immediate effects in how we live!
- C) The power which raised Jesus Christ from the dead and the anticipation of our own eventual resurrection is the same power and anticipation which is provided by God for transformed living NOW (15:33-34)!

## 2) Q1... What If The Body Is Destroyed? How Does It Come Back?

- A) Paul asks two rhetorical questions (15:35) which reveal antagonistic backgrounds in Corinth. This was not a new line of questioning for those defending the resurrection. Because the Corinthian church could not fathom how the bodily resurrection of the dead could happen, they abandoned trust that it was genuinely possible.

- B) Paul’s abrupt response (common in the rhetoric of his day, 15:36) leads into an explanation out of the farming culture of Paul’s listeners (15:36-38).
- C) When you hold a seed in your hand it is a dead and lifeless thing, but when planted it is transformed into something which cannot be imagined from its seed form (15:36-38).
- D) In the same way that a lifeless seed is planted in the ground, so it is with our own bodies. What is planted appears to be lifeless, but God dramatically transforms it!

## 3) Q2... What Kind Of Body Do You Have In Heaven?

- A) The Corinthians wonder how a human body (which decays upon death) can possibly be sufficient for inhabiting heaven (15:35). Once again, because they cannot imagine how the resurrection happens, they assumed it won’t happen.
- B) Paul makes the point that God provides different earthly bodies (flesh) for different creatures (15:39), and different celestial bodies for the sun, moon, and stars (15:41). Simply, God makes different bodies for different creatures/objects.
- C) The kind of body in heaven is different than the kind of body on earth (15:40). Paul asserts that it is the same with our resurrected bodies (15:42).
- D) In the same way that we cannot perceive a flower from its seed form, our bodies (currently perishable/vulnerable) will be transformed by God into spectacular heavenly bodies (imperishable/eternal) (15:42-44).

## 4) Flesh 2.0 or Glory 1.0?

- A) Paul’s point is that we do not get “souped-up” versions of our old bodies, but brand new bodies which are fit for heaven and eternity (15:45-49).
- B) Our new bodies are not “earthy” but “heavenly,” and we will be image bearers of the heavenly (Jesus Christ), in whom we are part of a whole new order for eternity.