

WHAT WILL YOU BE LIKE IN THE RESURRECTION?

What kind of body will we have? It will be of a different TYPE and for a different PURPOSE than you have probably imagined!

by Dr. C. Paul Meredith

IF YOU could examine the kind of body you will have when you are resurrected to immortality, it would clear up a great many questions in your mind, would it not?

Someone has *already* acquired the same type of body that you will have, and that person is Jesus Christ!

What Is the Family of God?

God the Father has desired to form for Himself, and from His very being, a *Family of immortal* children who will be *partakers* of His own "*divine nature*" (II Peter 1:4 and Psalm 17:15), who can be trusted with great power and on whom He can lavish His love by sharing with them all that He has created.

This Family will compose the Kingdom of God. You must be *born* of God to enter it.

Being a God of order, He has established laws which we must obey in order to be admitted to this Family. We must show in advance, our willingness to be *obedient* to Him by having these laws written in our hearts and minds (II Cor. 3:3).

If we are not obedient, then we sin (I John 3:4), and the wages of sin is established as death (Romans 6:23) — eternal death! "*All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God*" (Romans 3:23) — *all* of mortal mankind that God ever made was doomed to die!

Most certainly there could be no Family of God formed from these mortal people if they were to be dead forever!

It was at this point that the Word,

who was soon to become the Son of God, sacrificed the glory of being God to become "flesh and blood" just as you and I (Heb. 2:14), so that He could die in place of us for our sins. No wonder we owe so much to Christ!

How It All Began

Now notice, very carefully, the *begetting* of the Father's very first son, who would later, after His physical death, be born into the Family of God!

The angel, speaking to Mary concerning Christ's future birth, said, "The Holy Ghost [Spirit] . . . of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35).

The angel said to Joseph, Mary's husband: ". . . Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is *conceived* [or *begotten*] in her is of the *Holy Spirit*" (Matt. 1:20).

Two things happened here: Christ was begotten as a mortal man and *physical birth* took place shortly thereafter; and, He was also *begotten by the Holy Spirit* at that time.

At the end of His physical life He died a physical death in the place of all mortal men, who would have died for their own sin; but — at His resurrection — He was born again, this time a *spiritual birth* because He had been begotten by the Holy Spirit. This time He was born into the *spirit Family of God* with a *spiritual body*! (I Cor. 15:44, 45).

"Except a man be *born again*, he cannot see [or enter] the kingdom [or family] of God" (John 3:3, 5). "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body" (I Cor. 15:44). "Flesh and

blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (I Cor. 15:50). "That which is born of the flesh *is flesh*; and that which is born of the Spirit *is spirit*" (John 3:6). Christ's physical body, which did not corrupt, was changed into spirit like that of the Father. God is spirit (John 4:24).

Christ Our Brother

It was by the Holy Spirit of God, put there by the Father at Christ's human begetting and dwelling in Christ, that the Father resurrected Him with an *immortal spiritual body*. He has promised to give you and me the same reward if we now let God beget us with the impregnating germ of eternal life, His Holy Spirit!

". . . If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies *by his Spirit* that dwelleth in you" (Romans 8:11). To "quicken" is to make eternally alive!

By repenting and being baptized, you and I, who are made of the same mortal flesh which Christ took on Himself by having Mary as His mother (Heb. 2:14), may also receive the gift, or, in other words, be begotten of the Holy Spirit!

What does this mean? It means that when you and I are resurrected, Christ becomes our eldest brother in the spirit Family of God, for all will have the same Father, all will be begotten of the same spirit — God's Spirit — and all will be born into the same Family! (Romans 8:29; Heb. 2:11, 12.)

It means that as Christ will be our elder brother then, you and I will have

the *same kind of body* that He has! "We shall be like him" (I John 3:2).

New Body for New Work

The outstanding difference between the body we now have and the one we will have is that, while this one is a *natural* or *mortal body*, the one we shall have will be a different, *spiritual body*: "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a *spiritual body*" (I Corinthians 15:44). If we are alive at the time of the resurrection, our mortal bodies will be changed just as an egg becomes, or is changed into, a chick. If we have died, our *character* comes forth out of the dust in a spiritual body which God gives through His Holy Spirit from heaven (II Cor. 5:2). This is a different kind of resurrection than to mortal life, as described in Ezekiel 37.

Also we read: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: *so is everyone* that is born of the Spirit" (John 3:8). Spirit is not subject to physical laws, because it is not *matter*.

Jesus Christ could *suddenly appear*: "And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified. . ." (Luke 24:36-37).

He also had the ability to *vanish* after He was resurrected: ". . . and he vanished out of their sight" (Luke 24:31).

We shall be able to pass through barriers or walls as Christ did: "Then the same day at evening . . . *when the doors were shut* where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst. . ." (John 20:19).

We will be able to *travel rapidly* through space. In John 20:17 Christ says: "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father. . ." Now note that *on the same day* Christ had been able to travel to the Father and return: "And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet. . ." (Matt. 28:9).

The eating of food will not be necessary, although we may eat for pleasure as did Jesus with his disciples (Luke

24:41-43); and, of course, no shelter will be necessary.

When desirable, we will be able to manifest ourselves as physical flesh and bone so mortal eyes can see us: ". . . Jesus himself stood in the midst of them [after the crucifixion] . . . but they were terrified and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said . . . Behold 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" (Luke 24:36-39).

Notice that Christ did not say that He was not spirit, because He definitely was (see I Cor. 14:42-45 and the description of His appearance in Rev. 1). The disciples were quite frightened when Christ suddenly appeared out of nowhere. He simply was allaying their fears by pointing out that He was not an apparition — not a wispy cloud hovering in the air — not a figment of their overactive imaginations.

So we shall be able to manifest ourselves as flesh and bone as Christ did, even though we — as Christ — will be composed of spirit with spirit bodies (John 4:24; II Cor. 3:17; John 6:63).

Now, what about the *work* we are to do in the 1000 years of Christ's and our rule *here on this earth* (Revelation 20:4 and Isaiah chapter 11), in relation to these new, powerful bodies which are like Jesus' and the Father's?

We know that we shall be *judges* (Revelation 20:1-4) and *priests* (verse 6) and *rulers* (verse 4) with God and Christ on this earth (Revelation 5:10). To govern all the great number of human beings, who at that time will need guidance (Isaiah 2:1-5; 9:6-7; Jeremiah 31:1-9) so that they can also be begotten and be born into the Family of God, we will certainly need the kind of body that Christ and the Father possess (Isaiah 40:28 and 31).

This certainly does not say that, at death, we go at once *to heaven*, and lie around in idleness and ease, does it? No! And the Bible does not teach it! (Zechariah, 14th chapter.) We will have work to do according to the plan revealed only in the Bible! We shall be teachers visibly manifested to human beings (Isaiah 30:20). With bodies that can do without food or shelter and

which can travel so rapidly, those called now can accomplish an immense amount in guiding large numbers of people and in governing the universe with God!

Glorified Bodies

We have now seen that our bodies are to be resurrected as *spiritual* bodies (I Corinthians 15:44), and that we will be able to change into physical flesh and bone (Luke 24:39) in different forms (Mark 16:12).

But there is *something else* that is going to happen to *our spiritual bodies* — something that Christ considered very important! Notice what Christ said to the Father in finishing His work here on this earth!

"I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, *glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was*" (John 17:4, 5).

Christ said, "I have glorified thee." But how? In raising people from the dead, healing, and performing miracles He had glorified God by showing to man only a part of God's great power! Soon Christ was going to be back with the Father again, and He looked forward to being restored to the great power He once had! To be glorified means to be given power and glory!

But what has that to do with us? God is going to glorify you and me also — going to give you and me great power! "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the *children of God*: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and *joint-heirs with Christ*; if so be that we suffer with him, that we [you and I] *may be also glorified together*" (Romans 8:16, 17 and II Cor. 3:18). This prospect leaves us breathless, yet there it is in your own Bible! Read it! God has promised it and He will do it! (I Cor. 15:43).

This *power* we shall have will be so great that it will make our spirit bodies shine as the sun and our raiment be white as the light. Jesus gave us a fleeting glimpse of this future condition when He was transfigured while Peter, James, and John looked on: ". . . till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom. And after six days Jesus

taketh Peter, James and John . . . up into an high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light" (Matthew 16:28 and 17:1-2).

But there are other places that give us a more complete picture of the glorified body we will have (Rev. 1:13-16).

Notice Daniel 12:2, 3: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life . . . 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."

Other Characteristics

Inasmuch as we will be *begotten* of the Father, we will be *better than the angels*: "Being made *so much better than the angels* . . . for unto which of the angels said he . . . Thou art my *son*, this day have I *begotten* thee?" (Hebrews 1:4-5.)

There will not be sex and marriage as we know them in the spirit form: "For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven" (Matthew 22:30). *Yet we shall recognize one another as Mary Magdalene did Jesus* (John 20:16).

Our work will be so pleasant after our resurrection when we have new bodies that Paul spoke of it as a rest: "Let us labour therefore to enter that *rest*, lest any man should fall after the same example of unbelief" (Hebrews 4:11). We will not have such physical handicaps as lameness, blindness or missing members.

Mind of God

Human beings are not born with the mind of God. Here is the kind of mind the Bible says that we *naturally* have: "For from within, out of the heart of men [all men], proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye . . ." (Mark 7:21-22).

"I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. 7:18). "The *carnal mind* is enmity against God: for it is *not subject to the law of God*" (Rom. 8:6-7).

Yet obedience to the Law of God is the only way that will bring happiness! But God has constructed us so that we would want to follow, not His laws but our own ways instead.

Why? So that we will try every other way of living and discover that, regardless of what we think, the only satisfactory way is to live and think by the Father's laws! This is how we develop the character of God — by coming to right knowledge and by acting upon it.

Some of us, becoming discouraged with the ways of living in this world, learn of the true way to live, repent, believe, are baptized and receive the Holy Spirit — we are *begotten* of the Father. By our mental efforts we cannot overcome this mind that we are born with.

But God has given us a *part of His own self* to aid us. If we will nourish this earnest (down payment) of the Spirit, which is the nature and mind of God by which we are begotten (II Corinthians 1:22), it will grow at the

expense of the carnal mind — and will restrain the carnal mind: "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things ye would." "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh" (Galatians 5:17, 16).

Thus we *acquire* the same mind functioning in our physical brain as was in Christ (Philippians 2:5). After this mortal body dies, we will be resurrected with a spiritual mind and body if we have grown enough to be born (Romans 8:6). At our birth we will indeed have the mind of God and Christ in full — we will have no mortal mind to bother us any more! It will have perished with the flesh.

All will have *one mind* then (Philippians 1:27), and God will have *completed* His New Testament covenant with us: "I will *put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts* . . . and they shall not teach every man his neighbour . . . for all shall know me" (Hebrews 8:8-11).

"I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, *thy law is within my heart*" (Psalm 40:8).

How wonderful eternity will be!

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