

# HOW FUTURE RESURRECTION GIVES MEANING TO PRESENT SUFFERING?

## INTRODUCTION:

**Resurrection:** It is not just coming back to life from the dead. It is a risen life with glorified body.

Resurrection is both a historical fact and a future reality.

- i. **HISTORICAL FACT:** Jesus died for our sins and rose from the dead.
  - ❖ **I Corinthians 15:3-8,** <sup>3</sup> For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup> that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, <sup>5</sup> and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. <sup>6</sup> Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. <sup>7</sup> Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. <sup>8</sup> Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.
- ii. **FUTURE REALITY:** Believers of Christ would rise from the dead with glorified bodies and will live with him forever.
  - ❖ **I Corinthians 15:12-14,** <sup>12</sup> Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? <sup>13</sup> But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. <sup>14</sup> And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain.

**Note:** The resurrection of believers is a future reality just as the resurrection of Christ is a historical fact.

## HOW FUTURE RESURRECTION GIVES MEANING TO PRESENT SUFFERING?

**SCRIPTURE: 2 Corinthians 5:1-10**

### I. THE MORTAL BODY

**2 Corinthians 5:1,** For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed...

## ⇒ EARTHLY AND TEMPORAL

**For we:** Paul includes himself and all believers

**Know:** Absolute knowledge (without a doubt), firm conviction.

❖ **Jesus Himself said in John 11:25-26**, Jesus said to her (Martha), “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?”

**2 Corinthians 5:1**, For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed...

**Tent:** Figuratively referring to the human body as the residence of the soul.

**Earthly home:** The human body is the earthly home in which the soul lives.

**Destroyed:** At the time of death

**2 Corinthians 5:4**, “so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life”: “mortal” means “liable to die.”

## 2. THE RESURRECTED BODY

### ⇒ HEAVENLY AND ETERNAL

❖ **2 Corinthians 5:1**, For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

**Building from God:** “Building” is a solid structure in contrast to “tent”, which is delicate and made with cloth. Refers primarily to a believer's heavenly body.

**A house not made with hands:** Not earthly. Whereas our present bodies are suited to life on this earth, our future, glorified bodies will not be of this creation. They will be especially designed for life in heaven.

**Eternal in the heavens:** Immortal body, not liable to death

**2 Corinthians 5:2**, For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling...

⇒ Literally, our dwelling which is from heaven

**2 Corinthians 5:4**, For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed (no glorified body, which is the result of God’s condemnation), but that **we would be further clothed** (with resurrection, glorified body), **so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life** (i.e. resurrection, everlasting life)

- ❖ **1 Corinthians 15:42-44**, So is it with the resurrection of the dead. **What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.**



### **ASSURANCE GIVEN BY GOD:**

- ❖ **2 Corinthians 5:5**, He who has prepared us **for this very thing** (future resurrection, glorified body) is God, **who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee** (full assurance).
- ❖ **2 Corinthians 4:14**, “**knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence.**”
- ❖ **Ephesians 1:13-14**, In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, **were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it**, to the praise of his glory.

**Bible Commentator:** God prepares his people for the future by giving them a longing for it. And he does this by granting them his Spirit as a down payment of his

presence. Only those who have begun to experience the glory of God long for its consummation in the midst of their adversities.

### 3. LIFE PRESENTLY ON EARTH

- ❖ **2 Corinthians 5:2**, **For in this tent we groan, longing** to put on our heavenly dwelling...

#### ⇒ GROANING AND LONGING

**For in this tent:** In the earthly body

**Groan:** Describes an inward, unexpressed feeling of sorrow

**Longing:** To have a strong desire for something because you are in desperate need of it

Again,

- ❖ **2 Corinthians 5:4**, **For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened** (under great pressure)...
- ❖ **Romans 8:23**, “And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, **groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.**”

**Note:** **The salvation of God does not deliver us from all earthly suffering. Rather, God’s salvation gives us hope in our suffering, and that hope is our future resurrection with glorified bodies.**

**Comment:** **Just as deaf ears long to hear sound, blind eyes long to see light, mute tongue longs to speak,** so also we in our mortal body long to be clothed with heavenly body.

**C. S. Lewis:** “If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that **I was made for another world.**”

**This groaning results from the burden of earthly existence:**

**Bible commentator Richard Pratt:** The suffering and pain of life in this world causes those with hope of resurrection life to cry out for our heavenly dwelling (cf. Rom. 8:23).

## BURDENS OF EARTHLY BODY:

- ⇒ **Depravity** (struggle with sin),
- ⇒ **Disease** (experience physical pain),
- ⇒ **Decay** (becomes weak as we age),
- ⇒ **Drain** of energy (tiredness due to work)
- ⇒ **Death** (pain and separation—naked we came, naked we leave),
- ⇒ **Disconnection** (away from the Lord)

**2 Corinthians 5:6**, We know that **while we are at home in the body** **we are away from the Lord...**

- ⇒ Literally, we are in exile from the Lord

**2 Corinthians 5:8**, **we would rather be away from the body** (face death, to die is gain) and **at home with the Lord**.

**John Calvin**: “True faith begets not merely contempt for death but desire for it and thus **it is a sign of unbelief in us when the fear of death is stronger than the joy and comfort of hope.**”

**Question: Are we not the temple of the Holy Spirit (God dwelling in us)?  
Are we not in union with Christ (Christ in us and we in Christ)?**

**Note:** **Paul is speaking about being with the Lord in heaven, having a glorified body like His, and enjoying beholding the fullness of His glory. Union with Christ on earth is only the foretaste of future glory in heaven.**

## 4. WHAT SHALL WE DO NOW?

HOW FUTURE RESURRECTION GIVES MEANING TO PRESENT SUFFERING?

### A. BE COURAGEOUS AND WALK BY FAITH

- ❖ **2 Corinthians 5:6**, “So we are always of **good courage.**” (unshakable confidence)

- ❖ **2 Corinthians 4:16-17**, “So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison...”
- ❖ **2 Corinthians 5:8**, “So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight.”

### What kind of faith?

- ❖ **2 Corinthians 4:18**, “as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen (our eternal glorious inheritance). For the things that are seen are transient (the earth and the earthly body), but the things that are unseen (new heavens and new earth with glorified bodies) are eternal.”
  - In heaven, we don’t walk by faith but by sight. (God will be with us and we will be with God)

**John MacArthur:** Such faith is not a wishful fantasy or a vague superstition but a strong confidence grounded in the truth of Scripture. It is “the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen” (Heb. 11:1).

### WHAT MAKES YOU KEEP GOING?

- ⇒ Unless the goal is glorious, the present suffering appears miserable.
- ⇒ Any suffering is worth it if I can reach the ultimate goal which is incomparably glorious

### B. AIM TO PLEASE CHRIST IN EVERYTHING

**2 Corinthians 5:9**, “So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him.”

PLEASING GOD, NOT SELF OR PEOPLE, IS THE HIGHEST GOAL OF A CHRISTIAN.

Remember the words of the Father concerning His beloved Son, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.” (Matt. 3:17)

## HOW DO YOU PLEASE CHRIST?

- ⇒ By studying and obeying His Word (Remember Great Commission, Matt. 28:20)
- ⇒ See for example, **Ephesians 5:10**, “Discern what is pleasing to the Lord.”

## WHY MUST WE PLEASE CHRIST?

- ❖ **2 Corinthians 5:10**, For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.”
  - ⇒ No one escapes the judgment seat of Christ (all must appear)
  - ⇒ The judgment will be individual (each one may receive, each one is personally accountable to Christ)
  - ⇒ The judgment will be based on what we have done in the body (in this life) based on our works (whether good and bad)

**Bible commentator:** To fear God’s judgment is a sign that God is at work to save a person from it. Unbelievers do not fear that judgment in a way that causes them to repent.

## WHAT IS THIS JUDGMENT ABOUT?

- ⇒ Unbelievers will face eternal condemnation (So, repent and believe in the Gospel of Christ Jesus)
- ⇒ False believers will be exposed of their unconverted state and will face eternal condemnation (So, examine whether you are genuinely converted or a nominal Christian)
- ⇒ True believers will be rewarded based on their works (No one earns salvation because it is by grace alone, but everyone who receives salvation will bear fruit and their rewards are based on their works)

## **RECAP:**

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### **1. THE MORTAL BODY**

#### **a. EARTHLY AND TEMPORAL**

### **2. THE RESURRECTED BODY**

#### **a. HEAVENLY AND ETERNAL**

### **3. LIFE PRESENTLY ON EARTH**

#### **a. GROANING AND LONGING**

### **4. WHAT SHALL WE DO NOW?**

#### **a. BE COURAGEOUS AND WALK BY FAITH**

#### **b. AIM TO PLEASE GOD IN EVERYTHING**

**Note:** The resurrection of believers is a future reality just as the resurrection of Christ is a historical fact.

### **Illustration:**

Eric Barker, a missionary from Great Britain, spent over 50 years in Portugal preaching the Gospel, often under very difficult conditions. During World War II, the situation became so critical that he was advised to send his wife and eight children to England for safety. His sister and her three children were also evacuated on the same ship. Although his beloved relatives were forced to leave to Great Britain, he remained behind to carry on the work in Portugal. On the Lord's Day following their departure, Pastor Barker stood before his congregation and said, "I've just received word that all my family have arrived safely home!" He then proceeded with the service as usual. Later, the full meaning of his words became known to his people. He had been handed a wire just before the church service informing him that a submarine had bombed the ship, and everyone on board had drowned. He knew that because all were believers they had reached a more "desired home." Although overwhelmed with grief, he managed by the grace of God to live above his circumstances and to stay on the firing line for Jesus Christ. The knowledge that his family was enjoying the bliss of Heaven comforted his heart and helped him to keep one eye on eternity. Keeping one eye on eternity involves the promise of a new body.