

## **Eternity — Heaven — We will have a new body**

God has done much to prepare for us to be with Him in heaven and throughout eternity. When that glorious day comes, we will have a new body. Much has happened to each of us in this old body. We have been wounded and bruised. Our present body grows weary and groans and sighs. We have cried many tears over the things that have happened in these earthly bodies. 2 Corinthians addresses some of the change that is going to take place when we will be given a new body. The Lord Jesus has not gone on ahead of us to prepare a place in His Father's mansion, He has made it possible for us to experience this glorious change.

**2 Corinthians 5:1-10 NLT** For we know that when this earthly tent we live in is taken down (that is, when we die and leave this earthly body), we will have a house in heaven, an eternal body made for us by God himself and not by human hands. We grow weary in our present bodies, and we long to put on our heavenly bodies like new clothing. For we will put on heavenly bodies; we will not be spirits without bodies. While we live in these earthly bodies, we groan and sigh, but it's not that we want to die and get rid of these bodies that clothe us. Rather, we want to put on our new bodies so that these dying bodies will be swallowed up by life. God himself has prepared us for this, and as a guarantee he has given us his Holy Spirit. So we are always confident, even though we know that as long as we live in these bodies we are not at home with the Lord. For we live by believing and not by seeing. Yes, we are fully confident, and we would rather be away from these earthly bodies, for then we will be at home with the Lord. So whether we are here in this body or away from this body, our goal is to please him. For we must all stand before Christ to be judged. We will each receive whatever we deserve for the good or evil we have done in this earthly body.

Eternity and heaven hold some wonderful and glorious changes for the redeemed. We are not only going to have a new home in glory, we are going to have a new body. The idea of this is difficult for us to understand. Many questions arise about this new body and what is going to happen. 2 Corinthians has given us some clues that will help us understand what God is prepared to do.

**When this earthly body is taken down (when we die and leave this earthly body), God has an eternal body made for us. (2 Corinthians 5:1)**

There is much speculation about the heavenly or eternal body. Jesus' resurrection gives a clear example of what we shall be. After His death, Jesus came out of the grave. Mortality was swallowed up by life, death had been conquered. The change was dramatic. His body was rather glorious. The disciples were gathered together after His resurrection and were discussing how the Lord had appeared to Simon and to the two on the road to Emmaus. Suddenly, Jesus stood in the midst of them, and said, "Peace to you." They were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit.

**Luke 24:38-43 NLT** "Why are you frightened?" He asked. "Why are your hearts filled with doubt? Look at my hands. Look at my feet. You can see that it's really Me. Touch Me and make sure that I am not a ghost, because ghosts don't have bodies, as you see that I do." As he spoke, he showed them His hands and His feet. Still they stood there in disbelief, filled with joy and wonder. Then He asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" They gave Him a piece of broiled fish, and He ate it as they watched.

**Jesus' resurrected body gives us some amazing answers.**

- Death could not hold Him.
- Jesus had a literal, tangible body of flesh and bones.
- His body was the same but it had been changed.
- He could enter a room even though the doors were closed.
- He was able to communicate with them in the same manner He had before His death.
- He showed them His hands and feet.
- He ate some broiled fish and honeycomb.

**Jesus was the same, but He was different.**

They were not having hallucinations, Jesus appeared to over 500 brethren at one time. His body was not an earthly body, but a heavenly body. That heavenly body was no less real. Jesus asked them to, “Handle Me, and see that it is I Myself.” What He was showing them was not the same body that had been laid in the tomb. He was raised in glory. The significance of His resurrection is of utmost importance to our Christian faith. If Christ has not been raised, then all your faith is vain or useless, and you are still guilty of your sins, (1 Corinthians 15:14, 17). Our justification, regeneration and ultimate resurrection rests on Christ’s resurrection.

**1 Corinthians 15:35-38 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.

Jesus’ resurrection body is a demonstration of the victory and life that we shall have. We will have a new body.

**1 Corinthians 15:42-44 NLT** 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.

**1 Corinthians 15:49 NKJV** And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man.

Each of us have experienced various degrees of brokenness and weakness in these bodies. We have experienced sickness, pain, sorrow, sighing, crying and ultimately we will experience death. This earthly or natural body is subject to all manner of things. These perishable bodies are going to be changed. We will have a new body.

**There is another great mystery that must be addressed.**

**1 Corinthians 15:51-54 NKJV** Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed — in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.”

**We shall all be changed.** The truth of the matter is you don’t have to die to experience this change.

## **Corinthians presents two mysteries for us to consider.**

**2 Corinthians 5:8 NLT** Yes, we are fully confident, and we would rather be away from these earthly bodies, for then we will be at home with the Lord.

Rather than groaning, bearing struggles and difficulties, when we are absent from these bodies we will be present with the Lord.

**Philippians 1:21** For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

Our final hope is the bodily resurrection. We rejoice that our dearly departed are NOW in God's presence without their bodies. Their spirit is in God's presence being kept until the day when their body will be resurrected and will be changed. There is coming a wonderful day when that change will occur.

**1 Thessalonians 4:14-15 NKJV** For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.

Pay attention to verse 14. "Those who sleep in Jesus" are the host of the saints who have died and are in God's presence. When Jesus steps out on the clouds of glory, He will bring the spirit of the dead with Him and they will be reunited with their resurrected body.

**1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 NKJV** For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

I cannot even imagine the triumphal joy that will sound when we shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. We will have a new body and we will have a new life.

**Pay attention to the words "WITH THE LORD."**

That is our blessed hope that we will be risen with Christ with a body like His glorious body.

**Philippians 3:20-21 NKJV** For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.