

The Significance of Resurrection - Part 2

by Derek Prince

The resurrection of Jesus is a key element of Christian doctrine and the basis for our justification, forgiveness of sins, and ultimate redemption.

Duration: 28:26

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:42

Topics: "Resurrection Theology", "Salvation Doctrine"

Description

This sermon delves into the significance of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, emphasizing the continuity of the body in resurrection, the transformation from a soulish to a spiritual body, and the five specific changes that occur in our resurrection bodies as outlined by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15. It highlights the importance of believing in the physical resurrection of Jesus for salvation and the attestation of the resurrection through Old Testament prophecies. The sermon also underscores the resurrection as the completion of our redemption, the consummation of our union with Christ, and the three phases of the resurrection process.

Transcript

Now when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Why did he do that? To show them it was the same body that they'd seen crucified. Well you remember Thomas wasn't there.

And Thomas said, well I will not believe unless I can see his hands and his side and put my hand into his side. So a week later Jesus appeared again and in verse 27 he said to Thomas, reach your finger here and look at my hands and reach your hand here and put it into my side. In other words, the wound was still such that Thomas could put his hand in.

So this is very important because when you get resurrected you're not going to have a new body. You're going to have a different body, but it will be the same body changed. Now Paul tells us of five specific changes that will take place in our resurrection body.

And he speaks of this in 1 Corinthians 15 verses 42 to 44 and verse 52 and 53. So we read those verses, 42 through 44 and 52 and 53. So 42, Paul says, so also is the resurrection of the dead.

The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. You know what corruption is, it's decay. Anything that decays is corrupt.

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.

There is a natural body, there is a spiritual body. Now that's hard to understand. Unfortunately the translation doesn't help very much.

This is one of the problems of the English translation. And every translation seems to have the same problem. The Greek word is psychikos, which is directly derived from the Greek word for a soul, which is psyche.

There's only one reasonable translation, which is soulish. It is sown a soulish body, it is raised a spiritual body. And you see there's a distinction between spirit and soul.

Now some languages, for instance Swedish, has a word for soulish. So does Danish. And really English has got to have that word rightly to represent what the Bible teaches.

For instance in 1 Corinthians chapter 2, Paul says the soulish man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God. But the translations all say the natural man, the carnal man, etc. It all obscures this tremendously important distinction between the soulish and the spiritual.

So it's sown, it's buried a soulish body, it's raised a spiritual body. Now ask me to explain that and I'm not sure I can. I know what it says.

But I suggest to you that in our present body the soul makes the decisions. If I want to go through the door, my soul says we'll go through the door on my feet, obey. And so in a sense our spirit is dependent upon our soul.

You remember what David said to his soul, soul praise the Lord. Come on, get moving. The spirit you see, wanted to praise the Lord, but the soul was sluggish in response.

That's apparently the way it was. We have to stir up our souls from our spirits to do the right thing. We know we should be praising the Lord, but our souls are sluggish and so we have to stir them up.

Now this may not satisfy you, but it's the best I can do. When it's raised it'll be a spiritual body. In other words, the spirit will control the body direct.

How? I don't know. Now let's look on also in chapter 15 of 1 Corinthians verse 52 and 53. It says, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet, for the trumpet will sound, 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. Corruptible is that which is subject to decay, mortal is that which is subject to death. So if you take those two passages together, there are five specific changes that take place in our bodies.

From corruptible to incorruptible, subject to decay, no longer subject to decay. From mortal to immortal, subject to death, no longer subject to death. From dishonor to glory, where any body that's being buried, in a sense, is a rather pitiable thing.

That's how we go down. When we come up, we come up with glory. It's in weakness that it's sown, but it's in power that it's raised.

And it's sown, as we've already said, a soulish body comes forth a spiritual body. Let me just give you those five changes again. From corruptible to incorruptible, from mortal to immortal, from dishonor to glory, from weakness to power, and from soulish to spiritual.

Now the resurrection of Jesus is an absolutely key element of Christian doctrine. We cannot set it aside and call ourselves Christians. In 1 Corinthians 15 verse 14, Paul says, if Christ is not risen from the dead, then our preaching is vain and your faith is also vain.

And in verse 17, if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile, you are still in your sins. In other words, the forgiveness of our sins is absolutely linked to the resurrection of Jesus. If Jesus has not been raised, the gospel is false, our faith is futile, and we are still in our sins.

And you see there are many eminent theologians and other people like that, who have denied the reality of the resurrection of the body of Jesus. They are still in their sins. They are not saved.

You cannot be saved, unless you believe in the physical resurrection of Jesus. Now let's go on to the attestation of the resurrection of Jesus. What evidence is given us in the Bible, the resurrection of Jesus.

And it's an interesting fact, the primary evidence is not the evidence of eyewitnesses. The primary evidence is the evidence of Scripture. That takes priority over human witnesses.

So let's look at some of the passages in the Old Testament that predict the resurrection of Jesus. This is a very, very interesting subject and I wish I had more time to deal with it. But let's look at one statement in 1 Peter chapter 1, verses 10 through 12.

Of this salvation, which Peter is talking about, the prophets have inquired and searched diligently who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ, who was in them, was indicating when he testified before him the sufferings of Christ and the glory that would follow. To them it was revealed that not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which have now been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you. So the Old Testament prophets had a real dilemma.

I wonder if you can understand it, because it's an amazing dilemma. Peter says the Spirit of Christ was in them, the Spirit of the Messiah. So under that inspiration they spoke in the first person of things that would happen to Jesus that never happened to them.

And that must have been difficult. I don't know whether you've ever put yourself in the place of those Old Testament prophets. They said the most extraordinary things about themselves which never happened.

Let me give you just two examples. In Psalm 22 and verse 16. This is what they call a messianic psalm, in other words it's an unfolding of the revelation of the Messiah.

Psalm 22 verse 16, David is speaking in the first person and he says dogs have surrounded me, the assembly of the wicked has enclosed me, they pierced my hands and my feet. Never happened to David. How do you think he felt when he said those words? I have no idea.

That he was inspired by the Spirit of Christ that was in him. So he spoke in the first person of things that would happen to the Messiah that never happened to him. And then we can look in Isaiah chapter 50.

There are countless other examples. I'm just giving you two very clear examples. Isaiah 50 verse 6, I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who plucked out the beard.

I did not hide my face from shame and spitting. Never happened in the life of Isaiah. Happened in the ministry of Jesus, but it's written in the first person.

Can you understand what I'm saying? It was the Spirit of Messiah in them, through the Holy Spirit. That predicted what would happen to the Messiah, to Jesus. But never happened to them.

And so no wonder they searched what manner of time they were speaking about. I marvel at the faith of those men that they had the faith to receive that. I thank God for them.

Because this is the first confirmation of the resurrection of Christ. That is predicted in the scriptures. In Psalm 16, which is quoted by the Apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost.

We have a very amazing outline of the death and resurrection of Jesus. Psalm 16 beginning at verse 8, I've set the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand I shall not be moved.

Now that could have been true of David. But it was also true of the Messiah. So what happens is, they say certain things which are true in their experience.

Then they move beyond their experience. Into something that never actually happened to them. Now he goes on, therefore, sorry.

Therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoices. And if you want to turn to Acts chapter 2 verse 26. You'll find out what your glory is.

Because Peter says my tongue rejoices. Understand? I've told you that before. Your tongue is your glory.

Because it's the one member that was put in your mouth. To enable you to glorify God. So he says, therefore my heart is glad, my glory rejoices.

My flesh also will rest in hope. In other words, though I will be buried. I will have the hope of resurrection.

For you will not leave my soul in Sheol. So that indicates that his soul went down to Sheol. Nor will you allow your Holy One to see corruption.

His body never suffered corruption. Although it was a considerable period of time in the grave. Because he had never committed sin.

And sin is the sting that admits corruption to the body. And then it says, the final verse. You will show me the path of life.

In your presence is fullness of joy. At your right hand are pleasures forevermore. That was fulfilled when Jesus was resurrected.

He returned to the Father's presence. And there was fullness of joy. So that's one example.

Another is in Psalm 71. Psalm 71 verses 20 and 21. This is an amazing psalm.

It doesn't tell us who the psalmist was. You can look into the background if you want to. But he's addressing God and he says.

You have shown me great and severe troubles. Shall revive me again, bring me back to life. And bring me up again from the depths of the earth.

That never happened to any psalmist. You shall increase my greatness. And comfort me on every side.

So that only applies to Jesus. He was buried. He was brought back to life.

He was raised up. And his greatness was increased. He became the owner of the name that's exalted above every name.

See it never happened to the psalmist. It happened to Jesus. That's the spirit of Messiah in them.

Testifying beforehand the things that would follow. When you begin to absorb this truth. It is the most powerful attestation of the reality of the resurrection of Jesus.

And then there's one more interesting passage. Paul said in 1st Corinthians. He said the gospel consists of three facts.

We looked at that the other day. Jesus died according to the Scriptures. He was buried and he was raised again the third day according to the Scriptures.

Have you ever asked yourself what Scripture says? He would be raised on the third day. I've only been able to find one and it's extremely interesting. Because it goes far beyond the context.

In Hosea chapter 6 verses 1 and 2. Come and let us return to the Lord. For he has torn but he will heal us. He has stricken but he will bind us up.

After two days he will revive us, bring us back to life. On the third day he will raise us up that we may live in his sight. So that's a very clear prediction of resurrection on the third day.

The interesting thing is that it doesn't speak about him in the singular. It speaks about us in the plural. Now this is a revelation.

If you turn to Ephesians chapter 2. You find how Paul applies this revelation. And you see prophecy does not merely predict future events. But it predicts them in such a way as to show their real significance.

It interprets them as well as predicts them. This is a perfect example. Now Ephesians chapter 2, beginning at verse 4. And this is written about all true believers.

Ephesians 2 beginning at verse 4. But God who is rich in mercy. Because of his great love with which he loved us. Even when we were dead in trespasses.

That's wonderful. He loved us even when we were dead. How many people can love a corpse? Now what did he do? Three things.

He made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. Raised us up together.

And made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ. All that is in the past tense. So because of our identification with Jesus.

We're made alive. We're resurrected. And don't stop there.

We are enthroned. That's our destiny. And Paul doesn't put it in the future.

In essence he says if you can receive it. You're sharing the throne with Jesus right now. But this is the outworking of Hosea chapter 6 verses 1 and 2. See how marvelously the scripture interprets itself.

Then Paul gives a list of human witnesses. That is not irrelevant. But is secondary.

We just look at that briefly. First Corinthians 15 verses 5 through 8. Verse 4 says he was buried. He rose again the third day according to the scriptures.

Verse 5. And he was seen by Cephas. That's by Peter. Then by the twelve apostles.

After that he was seen by over 500 brethren at once. Of whom the greater part remain to this present. But some have fallen asleep.

Most of them are still alive. Which indicates they were probably pretty young. When they saw him.

After that he was seen by James. Then by all the apostles. Then last of all he was seen by me also.

As one born out of due time. That's a list of the people that were eyewitnesses. Of the resurrection of Jesus.

Now according to Jewish law. The testimony of any two reliable men. Was sufficient to establish something at law.

But God has given far more than two testimonies. To the resurrection of Jesus. Now I want to speak about the importance of the resurrection.

We cannot overestimate the importance of the resurrection of Jesus. It is the decisive fact of the history of the universe. The whole history of the universe.

Not just the human race. Revolves around the fact of the resurrection of Jesus. First of all this God's vindication of Jesus.

Remember two courts had condemned him to death. A secular Roman court. A religious Jewish court.

And when he was buried he was under that condemnation. But when he rose God vindicated his son. This is expressed in Romans chapter 1 verses 3 and 4. Concerning his son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Who came of the seed of David according to the flesh. And was declared to be the son of God with power. According to the spirit of holiness.

And that's a Jewish phrase of saying the Holy Spirit. Because actually the Hebrew for the Holy Spirit. Is the spirit of holiness.

Some translators don't realize that Paul was writing in Greek. And thinking in Hebrew. Declared to be the son of God with power by the Holy Spirit.

By the resurrection of the dead. So when Jesus came forth out of the tomb. God said I've reversed those unjust decisions.

I've vindicated my son. He never sinned. There's no cause for death in him.

And by my Holy Spirit I've raised him up. All right now then. The resurrection of Jesus is the basis for our justification.

If he wasn't raised we'd still be in our sins. Paul says in Romans 4 verse 25, 26. Jesus was delivered up to death for our offenses.

And was raised for our justification. If he hadn't been raised we could not be justified. We'd still be in our sins.

And then he says about salvation. In Romans chapter 10 verses 9 and 10. Romans 10, 9 and 10.

If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord. And believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead. You will be saved.

For with the heart one believes to righteousness. And with the mouth confession is made to salvation. You understand if you do not believe that God raised Jesus from the dead.

You cannot be saved. It is essential for salvation. Unfortunately there are multitudes of professing Christians.

Who don't believe in the physical resurrection. None of them can know the peace and joy of sins forgiven. No matter what position they may occupy in the church.

Then the resurrection is the guarantee of Christ's power to save us. In Hebrews chapter 7 and verse 25 it says this. Therefore he is also able to save to the uttermost.

Those who come to God through him, Jesus. Since he ever lives to make intercession for us. If Jesus was still in the tomb how could he save us? But because he's at the right hand of God.

Because he's atoned for our sins. Because all authority in heaven and earth has been given to him. He's able to save us to the uttermost.

I love that phrase. Somebody said from the gutter most to the uttermost. There's no limit to the power of Jesus to save.

He has all power. Then and this again is very important. The resurrection is the completion of our redemption.

Listen our destination ultimately is not heaven. It's wonderful that we'll be able to go to heaven. But that's just a stopping off place.

Because while our spirits are in heaven. Our bodies will still be moldering in the grave. That's not a complete salvation.

Jesus died for the whole person. His salvation includes spirit, soul and body. And that salvation is not complete until the resurrection.

And Paul was very clear of this. He says in Philippians chapter 3 verses 10 and following. He says the aim and purpose of his whole life.

Is that I may know him and the power of his resurrection. And the fellowship of his sufferings. Being conformed to his death.

If by any means I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. He wasn't concerned about getting to heaven. His ambition was to attain to the resurrection from the dead.

Thank God when we die our spirits will go to heaven. But that's not the completion of redemption. Because our bodies are still unredeemed.

Paul set his sights on the resurrection. He said again in the next verse. Not that I'm already attained or am already perfected.

But I press on. That I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren I do not count myself to have apprehended.

But one thing I do. Forgetting those things which are behind. And reaching forward to those things which are ahead.

I press toward the goal. For the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Paul was single-minded.

He said I haven't arrived. I haven't attained at the time that he was speaking. But he said there's one thing I do.

I press toward the goal. Romans 8 23 also says this. In other words salvation isn't complete until the resurrection.

Romans 8 verse 23. It says in verse 22. The whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.

And then it says. Not only they but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit. Even we ourselves groan within ourselves.

Eagerly waiting for the adoption. The redemption of our body. Now let me ask you.

Is that true of you? You have the firstfruits of the Spirit. Are you groaning within yourself? Are you eagerly waiting? What right do you or I have to suppose. That God deals with us on a lesser level? The baptism of the Holy Spirit is not given just to have a good time.

It's given to prepare us for what lies ahead. I feel such a sense of solemnity right now. The next thing I want to say about the resurrection is.

It's the consummation of our union with Jesus. First Thessalonians 4 17 says this. Then we who are alive and remain.

Shall be caught up together with them the dead who have been raised. In clouds to meet the Lord in the air. That's very interesting because there are two Greek words for air.

One describes the higher rarefied air. The other the air nearer the earth's surface. The word that's used here is the lower air.

So we won't go very far above the earth to meet the Lord. All right. Then we who are alive and remain.

Shall be caught up together with them in clouds. To meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

After that no more partings. We shall always be with the Lord. And we shall always be with one another.

Finally and I have to say this rapidly. The resurrection will be in three phases. 1 Corinthians 15 verse 22.

For as in Adam all died. Even so in Christ all shall be made alive. But each one of us in his own order.

Here's the order. Three separate phases. First Christ the firstfruits.

Then those who are Christ at his coming. And finally the end. The final resurrection of all the remaining dead.

Whom is Jesus coming back? Those that are Christ's. He's not coming back, he's not a thief. He's not going to take anything or anybody that doesn't belong to him.

Do you really belong to him? Important question. Those are the ones he's coming back for.

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