

Study 4

THE RESURRECTION

In the resurrection of both the saved and the lost, the saved to everlasting life and the lost to the second death (Dan. 12:2; Jn. 11:25-26; Rev. 20:12-13).

There will come a final day for everyone. In that day, where our dimension of time merges with the *real* dimension of what we call *eternity*, we will all receive a new body appropriate to that dimension. For those who have been redeemed, their bodies will be magnificent, immortal, and glorified. For those who have rejected God's forgiveness of their sins, their body will be deprived of magnificence and glory, but not immortality. The Resurrection of the Dead is therefore a great hope for the believer but a great dread for the unregenerate (unsaved).

ABOUT BEING HUMAN

In the beginning, mankind was created with a body *and* a soul. Mormonism falsely teaches that people exist as dis-embodied souls before they are born. They claim that all people exist in a heavenly waiting room, awaiting their bodies to be formed through the normal conception/birth process. But this is not what the Bible teaches (there is nothing in Scripture which suggests we exist before we are conceived). The very first man, Adam, had his body formed from "the dust of the ground" then after God breathed life into him, he became "a living soul" (Genesis 2:7).

Because we are created to be a body *and* a spirit, when our body dies, we are not destined to be disembodied spirits for all eternity.

1. How does Christ's statement in Matthew 10:28 confirm that everyone will receive a resurrected body?

There is something intuitive to all people that life does not stop at the grave.

2. The Book of Job is considered the oldest book of the Bible. What two things did Job know about the end of time and life after death? (Refer to Job 19:25-26)

Many of the Biblical authors refer to death as *sleep*. They similarly refer to their coming resurrection as their *awaking* (refer to Psalm 17:15).

3. Based on John 11:11, why can we be confident that death can be like falling "asleep"?

4. God gave Daniel an amazing glimpse about the end. Read Daniel 12:2. What does this Old Testament revelation reveal about the coming resurrection?

The doctrine of the physical resurrection of believers is based on the resurrection of Christ.

5. According to First Peter 1:3, in what ways did we benefit from the resurrection of Christ?

Because Christ conquered death, rose again, ascended to heaven, and was then glorified, we too (who have given our lives to Christ) will also not cease to exist with our physical death, we will live with Christ forever in heaven, and will receive a glorified resurrected body (1Cor. 15:23).

6. During His ministry on earth, Christ raised several people from the dead. How then could Paul make his claim about Christ in Acts 26:23?
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This is why the New Testament refers to Christ as “the firstfruits” (1Cor. 15:20) since He was the *first* to rise (forever) from the dead.

7. Some people who claim to be Christians, deny that Christ rose physically rose again from the dead. Based on First Corinthians 15:1-4, why is it important to believe that Christ rose again physically?
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Christian belief is not merely wishful thinking or an exercise in vivid imagining. Christian belief is based on trustworthy facts. There are 8 good reasons for believing that Christ rose again from the dead.

1. **The empty grave** - all the original critics of Christianity had to do was produce the dead body of Christ. They couldn't. The grave was empty.
2. **The postmortem appearances of Christ** - The death of Christ was supervised by the Romans who were experts at killing. The dead body of Christ was laid in the tomb. There was no doubt that Christ had died. Yet three days later, Christ was seen risen from the dead for a period of nearly 40 days. On one occasion, the risen Christ was seen by a gathering of up to 500 people.
3. **The dramatic change in the remaining disciples** - the remaining disciples of Christ had all but given up hope after Christ was crucified. But after they encountered the risen Christ, they were dramatically transformed to the extent that most of them gave up their lives in defence of telling what they had seen about their resurrected Saviour.
4. **The day of Pentecost** - Christ had told His disciples that after He was raised from the dead, He would go to His Father and send the promised Holy Spirit to baptise them in witnessing-power. What took place on the Day of Pentecost captured the attention of all in Jerusalem and led to a massive 3,000 Jews being converted to Christianity. This was a supernatural miracle made possible by the resurrection of Christ.

5. **The establishment of the Church** - for all the reasons above, the Church was birthed. The existence of the Church today is a perpetual proof to the resurrection of Christ.
6. **The changing of the day of worship** - Sabbath keeping was so intrinsic to members of the Jewish community, yet tens of thousands of Jews immediately transferred their day of worship from Saturday to Sunday as a commemoration of Christ's resurrection taking place on *Sunday*, and the subsequent birth of the Church on the Day of Pentecost taking place on *Sunday*.
7. **The ongoing conversion of unbelievers to believers** - the miracle of the physical resurrection of Christ is the basis for the miracle of salvation which has since taken place in the lives of billions of people since Christ was resurrected.

“If Jesus was a charlatan, He would have claimed that He would rise from the dead ‘spiritually’ - which no one could have ever disproved - and He would never have claimed to rise from the dead physically!”

Dr. Ravi Zacharias

When the Apostle Paul arrived in Athens, he preached to the philosophers about Christ.

8. What was it in Paul's presentation that many of his audience could not accept? Why? (Acts 17:16-32)

This passage debunks the claim made by some atheists that resurrection stories were common-place in the first century. This account shows that this claim is utterly false! Even in the First Century, the idea of a physical resurrection of someone was entirely absurd. The crime that some Christians commit today is to think that the statement: “Christ rose from the dead”, is just a phrase and not the most profound, life-changing, history-altering, eternally-sou-gripping truth of all time. We truly worship a *risen* Saviour.

Amen.