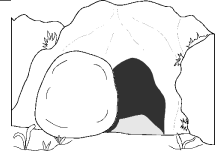


The Resurrection of Jesus

Evidence of Life After Death (11 of 12)



Without solid proof of the resurrection of Jesus, any projection of life beyond the grave is merely a wish. Yet, with the resurrection of Jesus we find real hope. The term “hope” is defined as “favorable and confident expectation” (Vine’s). Paul begins his first letter to Timothy calling “the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope.” As the Apostle writes to Colosse he writes of Jesus “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27).

What is it about Jesus that gives us favorable and confident expectation of some future reward? For starters, the resurrection of Jesus guarantees the ability of God to raise anyone from the dead. Colossians 1:18 says, “And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.” In this passage, Jesus is referred to as “the firstborn from the dead.” Jesus was never spiritually dead. Thus, being “born” after death must refer to His resurrection.

The term “firstborn” implies others will follow Jesus in being raised from the dead. Jesus states such in John 5, “Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation” (5:28-29). All will be resurrected, but only those in Christ will be resurrected to life.

The disciples of Jesus preached the resurrection of the dead with incredible consistency. The supporting evidence was always found in the undeniable resurrection of Jesus Christ. A few more points about our resurrection from the dead are also found in Scripture.

Our resurrection will occur at Christ’s coming. 1 Corinthians 15 is the most in-depth theological discourse on the resurrection found within the Scriptures. Verse 23 speaks to the timing of our resurrection saying, “...each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ’s at His coming. Then comes the end...” (15:23-24; see also 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

Our resurrection will include a physical body. Jesus made special efforts to prove His body was not a mere hologram or hallucination. He let Thomas touch the nail-scarred hands and inspect His sword-torn side (John 20:25-29). Jesus ate food proving he was not some ghostly presence, but still possessed a physical body (Luke 24:39-43).

Though Jesus possessed a body capable of being seen, touched and handled our resurrection bodies will be different than our earthly bodies. As Paul writes, “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” (1 Corinthians

15:52-53). It should not be hard to fathom the idea of our bodies being physical, yet immortal and incorruptible. Adam’s body was physical and immortal so long as he had access to “the tree of life” (Genesis 2:9). After his sin, Adam was cursed with physical death and the “tree of life” was removed from his presence (Genesis 3:19, 24). In both instances, Adam has a physical body. By God’s power and decree, our bodies can be made mortal or immortal.

Though we may not know all of the particulars of our resurrection body, we will be like Jesus. Philippians 3:20-21 says, “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.” John adds, “...it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is” (1 John 3:2).

One of the saddest days was the day Jesus, an innocent man, was put to death for our sins. Yet, three days later, sorrow was replaced by joy as Jesus was raised from the dead. With our hope of resurrection, death does not need to be a sorrowful event. It is merely the first step into our new, resurrected bodies.

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