

## **Yielded Bodies**

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### **CHAPTER TEN**

#### **THE RESURRECTION BODY**

**"But some man will say, How are the dead raised up?  
and with what body do they come?" (I Corinthians 15:35)**

As we began, so we end, this series of messages from Romans 12:1

**"I beseech you therefore, brethren,  
by the mercies of God,  
that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice,  
holy, acceptable unto God,  
which is your reasonable service"**

- (Romans 12:1)

JESUS was the "firstfruits" of the resurrection, the first sheaf of the resurrection harvest. Does this mean He was the first person who had been raised to life from the dead? Of course not. JESUS had Himself raised Lazarus. JESUS had also given the pallbearers in a funeral procession a holiday by calling to life the dead son of the widow of Nain as he was being carried to the grave. He also "**astonished with a great astonishment**" the folks in the home of Jairus when He caused to bloom with life and strength and beauty the little flower cut down by Death's keen scythe (Mark 5:42). And many years before this Elisha had raised to life the dead son of the Shunammite woman. But these risings from the dead were not resurrections as was the resurrection of JESUS -- and will be that of every follower of JESUS in the time of resurrection. JESUS' natural body had been changed to a spiritual body. His mortal body had put on immortality. That which was sown in humiliation had been raised in glory. So shall all the redeemed be changed in the resurrection.

**"There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; 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, and there is a spiritual body" (I Corinthians 15:40-44).**

Thus we see something of the nature of the resurrection body. Being different from the body that

now is in that it will be freed from the limitations to which our earthly bodies are subject, yet the resurrection body will have a real identify to the earthly body. Thus do we have assurance of the permanence of personality and individuality. And this new body will be a wonderfully habitable instrument for the soul under the new conditions of the eternal world. And in the eternal world, I shall remain I and you will remain you. Thus GOD guarantees to us the comfort of recognition and assures us that Heaven is not the abiding place of viewless and disembodied spirits, but a place where everyone has his body.

By the truth and love of GOD, we can rest assured that the resurrection body will be a body -- not something vague, misty, intangible. Though the resurrection body will be a spiritual body -- a body designed for the life of the SPIRIT, a body subject to spiritual rather than to natural laws -- it will be a real body, no ghostlike body, but a body, as real as that of the LORD JESUS who could be seen, could be handled, could share food with others. And the resurrection body will be a body that can occupy space, and yet pass through natural obstacles such as doors or walls or space without the slightest difficulty. And the resurrection body of every Christian will be immortal -- never subject to the touch of death. Forever will it be free from any possibility of sin, of disease, of death, being a replica of the glorified body of the LORD JESUS.

**"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is"** (I John 3:2).

There will be none of the taint of Adam's fall in the resurrection body. The eradication of the carnal nature, so fondly claimed by some today, will then be a reality for every child of GOD.

In the resurrection body there will be no sickness, no growing old, no infirmity.

**"Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God"** (Romans 8:21).

In the Bible, we find these words:

**"And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body"** (Romans 8:23).

So the resurrection body is a redeemed body -- redeemed from sin itself, from the results of sin, from the death of sin, as well as the tendency and bent to sin. Nor will weariness ever beset the glorious and incorruptible resurrection body.

Dr. Wilbur Smith writes: *"The characteristics of our resurrection life and our resurrection bodies are in strongest contrast to what we see around us. With the dissolutions of governments and cities, and laws, and the death of so many, we can thank GOD for the day when we shall live in incorruptible bodies. In contrast to the shame and injustice of today is the glory of the life that is yet to come. In contrast to the comparative weakness of the righteous followers of CHRIST today against the monstrous forces of evil and Antichrist is the assurance finally of superior and permanent power. Against the naturalism, humanism and materialism of the world we have the*

*spirituality of that life presented to us, and in contrast with the earthliness of so much that we here experience is the assurance of the heavenliness of the life that we have in CHRIST."*

**"And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly"** (I Corinthians 15:49).

The **"image of the heavenly"** is JESUS. He is **"the first begotten of the dead"** (Revelation 1:5). He is the "firstfruit," of which believers are the after fruit. He is our pattern. GOD assures us that if and when our **"earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens"** (II Corinthians 5:1).

Dr. John W. Bradbury writes: *"The resurrection of the believer's body is involved in the deepest expectations of the enlightened heart. The whole creation travails for this eventful hour. With the final breaking of the bondage of death there will be the smash-up of the 'bondage of corruption' which enmeshes the world. "Creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." Because the light of GOD has shined in our hearts, we also 'groan' under the burden of this world's need. But we also know that the time for the release of creation's bonds coincides with "the redemption of our body" (Romans 8:19-24).*

**"For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself"** (Philippians 3:20-21).

Do we not, then, think Scripturally when we say that the resurrection body will be like the resurrection body of JESUS? Will not the resurrection body be a literal and physical body with flesh and bones like the disciples felt when they put their hands upon the resurrection JESUS?

**"Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have . . . And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them"** (Luke 24:39-43).

One noted preacher wrote: "At the last supper, JESUS ate and drank with the disciples and said, **'But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom'** (Matthew 26:29). So in the heavenly kingdom Christians will eat and drink with JESUS CHRIST. And no doubt the fruit of the tree of life is literal fruit, and these resurrected and glorified bodies will be, like the perfect bodies of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, sustained by food and drink, in perfect health. And that indicates, I think, that there will be fluids in the bodies, and so blood as well as flesh and bones."

Dr. W.E. Denham, great and good Bible teacher for years, writes: *"The resurrection body will be like that of the LORD JESUS. That body had several characteristics.*

First, it was in appearance like His earthly body, since the disciples recognized Him.

Second, it differed from His earthly body, since Mary, and the two on the Emmaus Road did not at first recognize Him. Perhaps the resurrection body will be similar to that which we possess

now but will have the power to change its appearance whenever desired.

Third, it will be a physical body. Our LORD was able to eat with His disciples. He challenged them to handle Him. Such things could not have been possible had He not possessed a physical body.

Fourth, this physical body will be animated by spiritual and not by mortal life.

Fifth, it will have certain glorious qualities not possessed by us now. It will be deathless and, so far as we can see, not subject to any form of sickness or weakness or weariness. It will be free from limitations of time and space. Our LORD could appear in a closed room. It will possess unlimited possibilities.

Sixth, it will be perfect. By this I do not mean that twisted limbs will be made straight. I do not know about that. I have sometimes thought that Heaven's standards of beauty may be so different from earth's that what we call deformity here may be beauty there. Certain I am that the spiritual beauties will be the important ones."

**Dr. Walter L. Wilson** says: "*Just as the little grain of popcorn is planted in the soil and produces a stalk on which are many grains of little popcorn; just as the acorn is planted and from that tiny grave there emerges that which produces similar acorns: so will the body that is planted be raised in its own likeness for like produces like. The 'it' that is buried as described in I Corinthians 15:43: "It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power" is the same 'it' that is raised from that grave.*

"A story is told concerning Michael Faraday, the great chemist. It is said that a lady sent him a gold cup to be tested for its gold content. The cup was accidentally dropped into a cask of chemically pure acid and was soon dissolved. Not a trace of the cup could be seen, there was only the clear, amber colored liquid in the vessel. Mr. Faraday called for a proper reagent which he stirred into the acid and soon a gold precipitate began falling to the bottom of the cask. After he thought all the gold had settled, he poured off the acid, washed the powder and sent it to the goldsmith who had originally made the cup. He told him of his predicament. The goldsmith found the original pattern of the cup, melted the gold powder, poured it into the mold and soon reproduced the cup. He returned it to Mr. Faraday who made the necessary tests and then sent the cup back to the owner with his report.

"Mr. Faraday made a cup from the grave of the cup where there was no cup. The cup had been dissolved and the particles were scattered throughout the acid. The cup was a new one although made of the old materials and was exactly like the original.

"So our wonderful LORD, the CREATOR, will, in the resurrection, make a duplicate body exactly like the one that was buried. The body that has been used for the glory of GOD, the service of CHRIST, and the blessing of men, will be raised to be rewarded. The body that has been used to serve Satan and to promote his cause will be raised to be punished. With the body, we do well or do evil; therefore, the body will be blessed or punished after the resurrection."

Dr. E. Schuyler English writes: "*Our present bodies are terrestrial and are subject to natural laws. Our resurrection bodies will be celestial, subject to a different set of laws. The*

resurrection body will be like the body that our LORD JESUS CHRIST had upon His resurrection, for He is **'the firstfruits'** of all those who die in faith. His body was a body of flesh and bones: " **Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have**" (Luke 24:39). The celestial body will be a spiritual body, a body of glory, a glory which He will share with His own: "**And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them: that they may be one, even as we are one**" (John 17:22), was not limited by space or matter: "**Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you**" (John 20:19), and so we assume that our resurrection bodies will enjoy like freedom from the laws that we know today."

Dr. Gaines S. Dobbins of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, writes: "*This quality of everlastingness belongs to every soul, whether saved or unsaved. The spiritual body given to the Christian's soul will be like unto that which CHRIST possessed when He was raised from the dead. It will be real, recognizable, identifiable, but incorruptible. We who are given this redeemed and imperishable body will be like CHRIST, for we shall see Him as He is. That we should have a spiritual and immortal body is no more incredible than that we should now have a marvelous, although mortal, body, one the soul's temporal dwelling-place, the other its eternal abode. Truly the mystery is great, but not contrary to experience and reason.*"

Dr. Luke K. McCall, now president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, writes: "*No matter what the resurrection body is like, it will be better. It will be a spiritual body and not a natural body. It will be an incorruptible body and not a corruptible one. There will, however, be a continuity. It will be my body. It seemed that I could hear friends in glory gasp in astonishment at the moment of recognition and then exclaim, 'What a marvelous improvement; I hardly knew you!' But of course, they will know me because it will be my body sown in mortality but raised in immortality. I thought how wonderful it would be to have a body freed from the limitations of time and space, from sin and suffering, from sickness and death. The problem of explaining such a body occurred to me, but I find it no more difficult to accept the idea than it is to accept the new space-time conception of higher mathematics. Einstein's new unified field theory is much more of a puzzle than how this resurrected body may be provided. Why? The answer is because the LORD of "life abundant and eternal will provide it out of the matchless glory of His love."*

Dr. Fred W. Kendall, pastor of the First Baptist Church, Jackson, Tennessee, writes: "*GOD's creative power will reach a climax beyond the present knowledge or imagination of man in the glorified lives of resurrected men. The complete goal of creation and spiritual redemption will be realized. The heavenly bodies will be in supreme contrast to the earthly ones. Earthly bodies were victims of the curse of sin. They were mortal, doomed to wither and die, subject to disease, suffering and pain. Resurrection bodies will be free from the curse of sin, and therefore will be free from all pain and death. Earthly bodies were instruments of sin and temptation, and the flesh was an enemy of spiritual perfection and growth. The resurrected bodies will be agents of spiritual growth, freed from sin's attacks, aiding spiritual growth and attainments. Earthly bodies were physical, adapted to a physical environment, serving as a medium between man and the physical world. The resurrection body will be spiritual and will serve as a medium of man's fellowship with GOD in a heavenly environment. The earthly body was like that of the first Adam and was of the animal order. The resurrected body will be like CHRIST, the second Adam, freed from all animal appetites and passions. There will be marks of identity between the earthly and*

*resurrection bodies. We shall know each other, and we shall know as we are known."*

Dr. J. Wash Watts wrote: "*His resurrected body bore evidence of earthly experiences, and He used that evidence to show that the 'I' of the Cross was the same 'I' revealed by the nail-scarred hands. **Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord**' (John 20:20). The identity of the resurrected JESUS with the human JESUS changed the evidence of death to evidence of life, the evidence of shame to evidence of glory, the evidence of weakness to evidence of power."*

**"This corruptible must put on incorruption"** (I Corinthians 15:53).

I recall a beautiful passage from the pen of Dr. W.B. Riley: "*It is the one not of joy for the bereaved. Nothing that has ever come into the world has so scarred its face, and so sorrowed human hearts as the spade of the cemetery sexton. The author often drives through beautiful Lakewood. In springtime, all nature breaks into beauty there. The blooming flowers are as fresh and fragrant as the season; the green sward is a landscape of GOD indeed; the monuments and obelisks are expressions of classic beauty, marking the resting places of the beloved dead. But he hates the cemetery, none the less! It has started too many tears, broken too many hearts, destroyed too many homes, dissipated too much happiness, given rise to too great sorrow and grief; it has shown too little pity for bereaved mothers; too little concern for broken-hearted fathers; too slight a sorrow for suffering brothers and sisters. The only way that one can be happy, and yet wander in the realm where the last enemy was conquered, is to keep in mind the promise of resurrection, and anticipate the day when the provisions of this text shall be perfected and the graves of the believers shall be broken up; the day when the beauty of the trees, the fragrance of the flowers and the music of the birds shall be exceeded a hundredfold, yea, a thousand, by the hosts of GOD's redeemed, standing in triumph over the last Enemy, clad 'in white,' having conquered corruption."*

Therein is the promise of redemption from the grave. Our bodies that shall be - all corruption gone, all mortality gone, all weakness gone, all dishonor removed, all carnal appetites destroyed. A woeful sense of inadequacy oppresses when one attempts to imagine the glory and beauty of such a body. But take heed to these words:

**"The Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ . . . shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself"** (Philippians 3:20-21).

GOD answers all questions about the new bodies of the redeemed by showing that the future body of the believer will be like the body that the LORD JESUS had when He was raised from the dead.

Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse, in a beautiful passage in his book "*Guaranteed Deposits*," says: "*JESUS CHRIST had a body that was subject to the frailties of our race. He became hungry, tired, sleepy. He was arrested, tried and nailed to a cross. From the wounds there flowed His blood. He died. His body was put into a tomb. A great stone was rolled in front of the tomb. Three days later there came angels from Heaven who rolled away the stone from the door. He was not there. It is evident that His resurrection body was subject to natural laws that are, as yet, undiscovered. He had come through the material stone and was not in the tomb. A few days later, when the disciples were in an upper room with the doors shut, He appeared in the midst of*

*them. Again it was seen that the laws which govern these bodies of ours did not govern the body in which He was raised from the dead. Yet it was a material, tangible body. He told the doubting Thomas not to be faithless but to believe. 'Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself,'* He said; **'handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have'** (Luke 24:39).

"Once more He demonstrated that His resurrection body was not subject to the ordinary physical limitations, for while they gazed upon Him, He was taken up from them into Heaven, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

"When we are told that we are to have bodies like unto His glorified body, we know that we are to have bodies like this one that He had at His resurrection. It was the same body -- make no mistake about it -- it was the same body in which He died; but it was changed, transformed body -- a body of glory. Ours shall be like His. Take courage, you who are blind, and you who lie on invalid couches. Take courage, you who go down into old age. Take courage, you who have lost a dear one to death. We shall be like CHRIST."

**"How are the dead raised up?"** By the power of GOD. This is the promise of the Almighty. Did not GOD create man out of dust in His own image? Did GOD not breathe into man the breath of life? Did not man then become a living soul? Then cannot GOD raise the dead body and give it back to the soul which has never died?

**"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you"** (Romans 8:11).

**"And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power"** (I Corinthians 6:14).

In this *actual* resurrection, what was buried shall rise again. What went into the tomb shall come out of the tomb. Personal identity shall be perfectly preserved in the resurrection process. The Bible asserts the sureness of the resurrection body.

Paul likens the resurrection to the sowing and sprouting of a grain of wheat. A grain of wheat always produces itself whenever it sprouts. Dr. J.L. White says, speaking of this: *"There are imitations -- the tare, but a tare is never wheat. We cannot tell just how a spear of golden grain will look next June, but we do know it will be the same individual wheat plant. So we do know from the perfections of the analogy, when we bury the body, that the same identical man shall rise on the resurrection morn. Identity shall be absolutely preserved. And we know that translation of Enoch is divine testimony that the body itself is capable of eternal life."*

In the resurrection of believers their bodies shall be transformed and fashioned like "the body of his glory." We catch a glimpse of that glory in the transfiguration of JESUS where and when the spiritual incandescence of His deity burst out from the prison house of His flesh and made His face to shine like the sun and His garments to be whiter than luminous snow: **"And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light"** (Matthew 17:2). Concerning this resurrection change in the body Dr. Gordon

strikingly says: "*The charcoal and the diamond are the same substance -- only the one is carbon in its humiliation and the other carbon in its glory. So is the tabernacle in which we dwell, in comparison with our house which is from Heaven. The one is mortal flesh shadowed by the curse and doomed to be sown in dishonor; the other is that flesh made immortal and marvelously transformed.*"

Grand will be the scene and sweet the joy of the first resurrection -- when the trumpet shall sound and the graves shall open and the sea shall give up the bodies of all believers. Weeping mother, sad father, broken-hearted wife, thy dead believing one shall rise again. You who live in the house where the little chair is empty and the prattling voice of the lovely baby has been hushed in death, your dead you shall have again. You broken-hearted, think upon the promises of CHRIST -- and wipe away your tears; for you shall meet your believing dead again. Walk, all you Christians, out into the cemetery where the gloom of death has settled -- and drive away your darkness with the light of this glorious truth and hope.

Let us, faithful unto CHRIST in all things and in all places, rejoice in that some blessed day, with all our fightings done, our bodies shall be conformed to the body of His spiritual existence into which entrance is gained by the resurrection. Let us rejoice in that GOD has supremely honored the human body by the incarnation of His holy SON -- and GOD has greatly honored His servants to be like Him and with Him in glory forever and forever.

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