

With What Kind of Body Do They Come?  
1 Corinthians 15:34-49

**I. Challenge Questions**

**A. The Function of Questions**

1. Curiosity: Child's "why?"
2. Necessity: Directions
3. Conflict:
  - a. Challenge
  - b. To undermine the credibility of a person or argument

**B. Examples of Challenge Questions in the Bible**

1. Scribes and Pharisees challenged Jesus
2. Kings challenged the prophets
3. People challenged Moses
4. Cain challenged God

**C. Paul anticipates the Corinthian challenge**

1. **1 Corinthians 15:35 (ESV) *But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?"***
2. **Challenge questions deserve true responses.**

**II. Paul Answers the Question**

**A. "How Foolish."**

1. Not a dumb question, but an uninformed, invalid objection
2. "You really ought to know better, especially since you know Jesus was raised from the dead and interacted with people, as we've already told you."
  - a. The basis of such a question is a stubborn refusal to believe what we've been told.
  - b. It is grasping at straws in a flood because you don't like the color of the life preserver.
3. **Trust the revelation of Truth God makes in Jesus Christ and offers through His word, the Bible.**

**B. All outcomes conform to God's intent. vv. 36-42**

1. Examples from the natural world
  - a. Seeds
  - b. Life
  - c. Celestial bodies
2. **God gives it a body as he has determined.**
  - a. **The resurrection body, like everything else in creation, will be the handiwork of God himself and will conform to God's creative will and purpose for His glory and our good.**
  - b. God who spoke the world as it is into existence will just as reliably and sovereignly implement His will for us in eternity.
  - c. Right now, these bodies are what they are, but they are not yet what they will be.

**C. The resurrection body will be all this body is not.**

1. Four Characteristics of the Resurrection Body

a. Perishable/imperishable:

(1) Perishable

- (a) subject to forces of decay and corruption inherent in a fallen world
- (b) It denotes decreasing capacities, increasing weakness, ready exhaustion, and that which finally closes in upon itself as stagnation
- (c) **Matthew 6:19-20 (ESV)** <sup>19</sup> *“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal,* <sup>20</sup> *but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.*

(2) Imperishable: no longer subject to the forces and conditions that render it useless for the one who inhabits it!

- (a) **Isaiah 40:29-31 (ESV)** <sup>29</sup> *He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength.* <sup>30</sup> *Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted;* <sup>31</sup> *but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.*
- (b) Imperishable denotes the reversal of the processes that lead to death of the body. = Revitalization!

b. Dishonor/glory

(1) **Philippians 3:20-21 (ESV)** <sup>20</sup> *But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,* <sup>21</sup> *who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.*

- (a) The body in which we sin and rebel against God and fail to use for the glory of the One who created it.
- (b) The body which must suffer death and decay as the just punishment for sin.

(2) The resurrection body will be the body in which we dwell in eternal relation to the One who loves and saves us, basking in His glory without fear and honoring Him without hesitation or selfish denial.

c. Weakness/power

(1) **Romans 6:5 (ESV)** *For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.*

(2) **Philippians 3:20-21 (ESV)** <sup>20</sup> *But our citizenship is in*

*heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,<sup>21</sup> who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.*

(3) Power = the ability to understand and carry out the entirety of God's will without exhaustion or fail.

d. Natural/spiritual

(1) Not physical vs non-physical

(2) Spiritual reflects or instances the presence, power, and transforming activity of the Holy Spirit.

(a) The raised body is characterized by the uninterrupted, transforming power of the Holy Spirit of God.

(b) It stands in contrast with the ordinary human body that has been open to the influence of the Holy Spirit, but in partial ways, still marred by human failure, fallibility, and self-interest.

(3) The resurrection spiritual body is a body filled with and entirely submitted to the Spirit and not subject to the overruling and self-destructive tendencies of the unredeemed human will.

(4) "designed for the realm or sphere of the presence and resurrection action of the Holy Spirit, not merely for the realm of nonmaterial "spirit."

2. The same person, the same identity, but an utterly different existence, just as the plant that comes from the seed shares the same identity in an utterly different form ordained by God so the body designed to function in the physical realm alone is transformed to function in the realm of the Holy Spirit according to the sovereign will and plan of God.

**D. "Earth stuff" cannot inherit, participate as owners, in "heaven stuff."  
vv. 45-50**

1. Adam, son of dust, cannot possess the realm of Jesus, son of heaven.

a. We have borne the image of dust.

b. We must gain the image/likeness of heaven.

2. **We must be transformed to thrive in the new environment.**

a. The new environment is the eternal, infinite glory of the Creator.

b. **If you are not prepared to dwell in His realm, you will not dwell in His realm!**

(1) Psalmist: **Psalm 24:3-4 (ESV)** *3 Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD? And who shall stand in his holy place? 4 He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully.*

(2) Requires a change of heart that comes from faith in Jesus Christ which results in our being born again, a new

creation.

3. **1 Corinthians 15:50 (ESV) *I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.***
  - a. No human being, no human political system or philosophy, no nation, no ideal, no human king or leader, will ever inaugurate the kingdom of God on earth.
  - b. No Republican, no Democrat, no Independent, regardless of sincerity of intent or expression of power will ever turn the United States of America into the kingdom of God.
    - (1) A perfect nation and a perfect world lie beyond the scope of human ability and will only come to this world by the transforming power of Almighty God.
    - (2) **If you really want to see the kingdom of God come to earth, follow Jesus with your whole heart and prepare for eternity while you still have time.**

### III. Conclusion

#### A. The natural man has two choices

1. Remain as dust and follow the course set for this world
  - a. Proverbs: There is a way that seems right to a man but the end thereof is destruction
  - b. Jesus: **Matthew 7:13-14 (ESV) 13 “Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. 14 For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.**
2. Be born again and follow the course set for heaven