

What Will Our Bodies Be Like in Heaven? I Corinthians 15:35-52

*“But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? And with what body they come?”
... And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly”* (vv. 35, 49)

In his first letter to the church in Corinth, Paul discusses the great differences between our earthly bodies and our resurrected bodies. Contrasting our earthly bodies with the splendor of our heavenly (resurrected) bodies, Paul says:

Sown in corruption	Raised in incorruption
Sown in dishonour	Raised in glory
Sown in weakness	Raised in power
Sown a natural body	Raised a spiritual body

But we wonder what exactly that means.

► Will our bodies actually look like? Revelation 5:9; 7:9

God will decide what our perfect bodies look like, but we shouldn't assume we will all look alike. Just as He made all things with variety (I Cor. 15:37-42), different heights and weights seem likely as do different skin colors. This indicates a **genetic** carryover from this life to the next.

We can probably expect that our bodies will have a natural beauty. Short people will probably be short, and tall people will probably be tall. The naturally thin will be thin, and the naturally thick will be thick—but all sizes will be healthy and appealing and perfect.

Will calories affect us the same way they do now? We don't know, but we do know we will have healthy bodies—no more sickness or disease or dying.

No matter what our bodies look like, they will be pleasing to us, to the Lord, and to others. We won't gaze into the mirror wishing for a different nose or hair or teeth. We will feel neither insecure nor arrogant. In Heaven, we will know that our Creator fashioned us just as it pleased Him.

► Will our appearance be bright?

Matthew 13:43 says, *“Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father”* Daniel 12:3 says, *“And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.”*

On the one hand, Jesus didn’t have a halo after His resurrection, and there’s no reason to believe we will either. Christ’s body appeared so earthly and normal that the disciples on the road to Emmaus didn’t notice that He was the resurrected Lord (Luke 24:13-24). However, at this point He was not yet glorified.

Can you think of instances in the Bible when people’s faces were brightened?

What caused it?

- During Christ’s transfiguration, *“the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistering”* (Luke 9:29). Since this portrays His Kingship, it makes sense that he will literally shine in His kingdom. John says of the city of God that *“the Lamb is the light thereof”* (Rev. 21:23). Revelation 1:12-18 presents Christ as a powerful shining being.
- Moses and Elijah *“appeared in glory”* on the mount with Jesus (Luke 9:31).
- After Moses met with God and received the Ten Commandments, his face shone so much that Aaron and the people of Israel were afraid and he had to put a veil on his face (Exo. 34:29-30).

Since God is perpetual brightness, it shouldn’t surprise us to think that in his presence we too will partake of His brightness. Some people even now seem to have a glow about them. If we are His **image**-bearers, we likely will reflect that light. Our glory as lesser kings and priests (Rev. 1:6) will serve to magnify His great glory and brightness as King of kings.

► Will we be male and female (will we maintain our own identity)?

Many people think we will be like the angels and be genderless; however, angels are spoken of in the male gender throughout the Bible. You will be you in Heaven. Who else would you be? The resurrected Jesus did not become someone else. *“It is I myself”* (Luke 24:39).

Some people try to prove there will be no gender in Heaven by citing Paul’s statement that in Christ *“there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus”* (Galatians 3:28). But Paul is referencing something that is already true on Earth: the equality of men and women in Christ. The issue isn’t the obliteration of sexuality (you don’t lose your gender at conversion).

Jesus was not genderless after His resurrection. No one mistook Him as not being a man. Gender is a God-created aspect of humanity. Your gender is an essential part of who you are.

And so, what about our names? Do we get to keep those?

Indeed we do. Our names are written down in the Lamb’s Book of Life if we are saved.

► Will we wear clothes? And if so, what will we wear?

Because Adam and Eve were naked and not ashamed, some argue that in Heaven we won't need to wear clothes. (God *did* clothe Adam and Eve, and there are reasons). Even in the present Heaven, before the final Resurrection, people are depicted as wearing clothes (Rev. 3:4; 6:11). It appears we will wear clothes—not because there will be shame or temptation, but perhaps because they will enhance our appearance and comfort.

Wearing robes might strike us as foreign or formal. But to 1st-century readers, anything but robes would have seemed strange. Robes weren't reserved for formal events; they were part of everyday wear. There's no indication that we'll have only one set of clothes to choose from. I am reminded, however, that when the children of Israel wandered 40 years, their clothes and shoes didn't wear out.

What prepares us to participate in God's glory? Our **suffering**. (Romans 8:17-18; I Peter 5:1-4).

"This earthly body is slow and heavy in all its motions, listless, and soon tired with action. But our heavenly bodies shall be as fire; as active and as nimble as our thoughts are." - Benjamin Calamy

Will white be the only clothing color? White robes do indicate the righteousness of the saved, whether literal or otherwise; but there are other colors in play. Angels are girded with "golden girdles" (Rev. 15:6) Jesus' vesture is dipped in blood (Rev. 19:13). Something to consider: Because resurrected people will retain their individuality and nationality as we've seen, many groups wear colorful clothing that indicates their culture. Maybe we should expect some differences on the New Earth. Also consider, priestly garments that have royal colors. Something to think about.

► Will we all appear the same age?

Will a child who dies at age six appear that age in Heaven? Will the man who dies at 80 appear to be 80 as he walks the New Earth? "This issue caused the spilling of much theological ink," especially during the Middle Ages. Theories abound, but many Christians and theologians before us have concluded that we will be about the age of Christ when He began His earthly ministry (age 30) or died (age 33).

Hank Hanegraaff suggests, "Our DNA is programmed in such a way that, at a particular point, we reach optimal development from a functional perspective. For the most part, it appears that we reach this stage somewhere in our twenties and thirties If the blueprints for our glorified bodies are in the DNA, then it would stand to reason that our bodies will be resurrected at the optimal stage of development determined by our DNA."

Does this mean that children who go to Heaven won't be children once they get there? Or that there will be no children on the New Earth? Isaiah 11:6-9 speaks of children. Since the larger part of Isaiah is concerned with the eternal Kingdom of God on Earth, it seems inconsistent to restrict this passage to the 1,000-year reign.

While we don't have clarity in the Scriptures regarding age for any humanity, we do know that babies who die before the age of accountability go to Heaven (e.g., King David and the child born to him and Bathsheba who passed away), as do children who die by miscarriage, abortion, or some other death. Another thing to consider is that the Bible says we shall know even as also we are known (1 Corinthians 13:12).

When my dad was passing away and seeing glimpses of the other side, we were able to ask him questions, which he answered. It was eye opening. He described seeing friends he had known when he was a child, and he saw them at the age they were back then. It could be that our eyes will know people as we knew them on Earth. Something to think about.