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The Doctrine of the Resurrection according to the New Testament.

A thesis
presented to the faculty of
Concordia Seminary
St. Louis, Mo.
by

Gustav F. Gehlhar

in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree
of

Bachelor of Divinity.

J. H. Engelder
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The Doctrine of the Resurrection according to the New Testament.
Outline.

I. It is a fundamental doctrine of the Christian Faith.

A. Definition

1. False views—a denial
2. Scriptural view.
 - a) Reproduction of the body acc. to form and substance.
 - b) Reunion of body and soul.
 - c) Scripture knows of only one bodily resurrection—work of a moment.

B. Found in the Old Testament.--All Gospel promises presuppose eternal life.

C. Very prominent in the New Testament.

1. Taught by Christ.

- a) He is the author. Rom. 4, 24-25; 14, 9; 1 Pet. 1, 3.
- b) He demonstrated its possibility.
 - aa) On himself. (The firstfruit) Lk. 24, 46; 1 Cor. 15, 20-23.
 - bb) On others. (Nain, Lazarus, Jairus' daughter)

2. Taught by the apostles.

- a) The Gospels. 17, 32.
- b) The Book of Acts. Peter's and Paul's sermons: 4, 33; 10, 40; 13, 30 & 33; 17, 32. 23, 6; 24, 15. Resurrections of the apostles: 9, 39; 20, 12.
- c) The Epistles. Corinthians and Thessalonians.

D. It belongs to the basis of Christianity. 1 Cor. 15, 14-19. If not true:

1. Our faith is vain. Christ is not risen. Apostles false witnesses.
2. No difference between man and beast, believer and unbeliever.
3. No judgment--man may live as he pleases--death ends all.

E. Believed and accepted by the Christians of all generations

- 1) Martha. Jn. 11, 24.
- 2) The general opinion. (Sadducees erred) Mt. 22, 29.
- 3) Even Herod thought that John had risen. Mt. 14, 2.
- 4) Old Testament believers.
- 5) New Testament Christians

II. The Author of the Resurrection.

A. The Trinity.

1. The Father. 1 Cor. 6, 14. 2 Cor. 4, 14; 2 Cor. 1, 9.
2. The Son as God-man. Jn. 6, 40 & 54; 1 Cor. 15, 21; Rev. 1, 17-18. Col. 1, 18.
 - a) Especially the word of Christ. Jn. 5, 25-28. Lk. 8, 54.
 - b) The voice and trumpet of the archangel. Mt. 24, 31; 1 Thes. 4, 16.

III. The Objects of the Resurrection.

A. All mankind—universal. Jn. 5, 28-29. Mt. 24, 31. 24, 15.

- a) Useless for the wicked to try to escape. Mt. 24, 30; 2 Tim. 4, 1; Acts 24, 15.
- b) The Christians long for it. Tit. 2, 13; Rom. 7, 24; Hebr. 11, 16; Phil. 3, 21.
- c) Those then living will be changed in a moment. 1 Cor. 15, 51-52. 1 Ths. 4, 1

B. Not the animals. 14, 17.

IV. The Time of the Resurrection.

A. Determined by God—certain. Mt. 24, 36c; Acts 17, 31.

B. When the last elect has been saved. Mt. 24, 14.

C. Suddenly and when least expected. Mk. 13, 36; Mt. 24, 27. 42; 25, 13; 1 Ths. 5, 2. 15, 2.

D. Visible signs of the approaching event. Mt. 24, 29; Mk. 13, 25. Rev. 1, 7.

E. First the dead rise—then all shall be changed and taken. 1 Ths. 4, 15ff. 14, 15ff.

F. Chiliasm is not taught in Scripture.

V. The Purpose of the Resurrection.

A. For the Trinity.

1. Judgment. Jn. 12, 48. Mt. 11, 22; 2 Cor. 5, 10.
 2. Manifestation of God's omnipotence. Mt. 10, 28.
 3. Manifestation of God's righteousness. Lk. 14, 14; Mt. 16, 27; 2 Cor. 5, 10. ^{15, 10.}
 4. Manifestation of God's wisdom. Paradise regained forever.
- B. For the Unbeliever. (To receive eternal punishment) Mt. 25, 46
- C. For the believer. (To enter eternal life) Mt. 25, 46.
- D. Only a resurrected body may partake of future bliss and punishment. ^{- meant.}

VI. The Nature of the Resurrection Body.

A. Identical with the earthly body. 1 Cor. 15, 53.

1. Acc. to form. Personality is not to be changed.
2. Acc. to substance. Phil. 3, 21.
 - a) Jesus wounds after resurrection-signs of glory.
 - b) Mary recognized his voice.
 - c) Elijah and Moses recognized on the Mt. of Transfiguration. ^{form}
3. They will have the power to assume an invisible and a visible form.
 - a) Christ-Resurrection Story.
 - b) Those who rose on Good Friday and appeared to many. Mt. 27; 52-53.
4. The resurrected bodies will have human qualities and characteristics. ^{41ff.}
They will hear, speak, move; rejoice, wish, mourn etc. Mt. 25, 44; 12, 41ff.

B. A spiritual Body.

1. Bodies of unbelievers not glorified-retain weakness.
 - a) Immortal and incorruptible.
 - b) Provided with body fit to suffer forever. 2 Pet. 2, 9; Mt. 24, 51.
 - c) More condemned than saved. Mt. 7, 13.
2. The believers receive a glorified body. 2 Cor. 5, 1ff.
 - a) Immortal and incorruptible. 1 Jn. 5, 13.
 - b) Natural bodily functions discontinued. 1 Cor. 15, 50. Phil. 3, 21.
 - c) No sexual life. Mk. 12, 25-27; Lk. 20, 38.
 - d) Free from sin and its consequences. 1 Cor. 15, 42ff.
 - aa) No pain-impassible forever. Rev. 21, 4.
 - bb) No fatigue or weakness. 1 Cor. 15, 42 & 43.
 - cc) No deformity, but perfection. 1 Cor. 15, 42.
 - dd) Not limited to space or time (a real spirit) 1 Thes. 4, 17.
 - e) Contrasts and comparisons.
 - aa) Glories of the planets. 1 Cor. 15, 40.
 - bb) Distinction in flesh of animals. 1 Cor. 15, 39.
 - cc) Wheat producing a glorious plant. 1 Cor. 15, 36.
 - f) Like Christ's body. Phil. 3, 21; 1 Cor. 15, 48-49.
 - aa) Not in degree. (because he is God)
 - bb) But in kind. 1 Jn. 5, 2.
 - g) Like the angels. Mt. 22, 30.
 - aa) Partake of the same glory. Unmarried.
 - bb) But retain a true body.
 - h) Further details about the glorified body.
 - aa) The size and stature. Rev. 19, 5: Great and small.
 - bb) Race distinction. Doubtful.
 - cc) Language. Means of communication. Doubtful.
 - dd) The joy of heaven. Eternal home.
3. Our certainty of receiving a glorious body. Jn. 3, 16; Rom. 8, 11; 1 Cor. 15, 55. 57.

The Doctrine of the Resurrection according to the New Testamant.

I. It is a fundamental doctrine.

The doctrine of the resurrection of the body is a teaching peculiar to the Christian religion. We need only to investigate the world's religious history in order to be convinced that all other religions know nothing about such a resurrection.

We know that the old Greeks and Romans had their remarkable ideas about a future existence. They supposed that the souls of the departed were ferried across "the great stream" to the land of shadows where they would meet with the most horrible phantoms and monsters. Even the most religious-minded heathen was terrified at the thought of such a future. The heathen writers give evidence of this dread when they speak of the shadowy dream-life of even the best heathen as far less desirable than the condition of the most abject and miserable creature in this life.

Some of the most enlightened ancient heathen hardly ventured to suppose a future life probable. At the time of his death Socrates is recorded to have said: "Death is either an eternal sleep or the transition to a new life, but in either case it is an evil." Plato conjectured that the soul existed before life, and therefore expressed the hope that it might continue to exist after death. (See Weber and Perry: History of Philosophy. p 72.)

The Stoics for a great part denied any future existence, and as a result justified and advised suicide whenever life might become unbearable. Pliny goes so far as to consider the very thought of a future life vain and selfish. Celsus, the heathen philosopher, ridiculed the idea as useless, absurd, and even impossible.

These same ancient heathen opinions we find today clothed in the garb of religious liberalism and modernism. Modern pantheistic theology ignores the doctrine of the resurrection. It even refuses to admit the existence of the soul after the dissolution of the body. Its exponents consider the race, as such, immortal, but not the individual. According to Prof. James of Harvard University modern science considers the soul a mere stream of thought. The modern rationalist rejects the thought of a future immortality, because to him it is beyond experimental proof.

Some leaders of modern thought assume the existence of a future life for the sake of convenience. Thus Elbert Russel of Duke University makes the statement: "The needs of this life require the expectation of another after death. Since there is no convincing reason that the belief is false, I find myself better and happier to hold it among my working hypotheses!"*

W.E.B. Du Bois, Editor of the Crisis, writes thus: "My thought on personal immortality is easily explained: I do not know---- I have no knowledge of the possibilities of the universe, and I know of no one who has!"*

H.E. Fosdick seems to strive for ambiguity in the statement: "I cannot myself submit to the mental confusion, the triumphant irrationality of existence where death finally is the victor over all!"*

*-----
Three above quotations from S. Strong: We believe in Immortality.

Thus we find that modern science, modern philosophy, and modern theology are entirely ignorant of a bodily resurrection.

While the foregoing quotations give evidence of denial and uncertainty in regard to immortality, to say nothing of a bodily resurrection, there are fortunately some worldly-minded men

who have a higher conception of immortality. Thus James Crowther of University Temple, Seattle, makes the noble statement: "If immortality is a delusion, it is the most inspiring delusion that has ever possessed the human breast. It has wiped away more tears, inspired more courage, radiated more sunshine, and kindled more hope in dreary lives than any other expectation whatsoever.

I believe in everlasting life, because it is more credible than any alternative whatsoever!"*

*-----
From S. Strong: We believe in immortality.

Another noble sentiment appears in Robert L. Taylor's: Oration on Immortality: "If the germs of inanimate life buried beneath the sod so surely respond to the silent command of summer, who can doubt that man shall rise up out of the unconscious dust into eternal life when God shall call? Can it be that the grass and the flowers of the field are to be resurrected from the sod of the earth, while man, for whom they were made, must sleep on forever?"*

*-----
From Albert Harris: Selected Orations. p72-73.

It is well to note that the above mentioned quotations are all based on human reason. However, in considering such a question as the bodily resurrection, we cannot depend on reason for reliable information. We learn from Acts 17, 32; 26, 24. that such a doctrine is contrary to reason. Even the disciples of Christ at first doubted the reasonableness of their Lord's resurrection.

And yet the man who concedes the existence of an omnipotent Creator must also concede the possibility of a bodily resurrection. God's omnipotence has been revealed to all men. (Rom. 1, 19) It is,

therefore, only a question as to whether God would be willing to raise the dead. That question has been answered in Scripture.

The New Testament uses several expressions for the thought of a resurrection. They are: ἀνίσταμαι (Jn. 6, 39; Acts 2, 24); ἐγείρω (Mt. 3, 9; Acts 3, 15) ἡ ἐγείρω (1 Cor. 6, 14) ἀνίστασθαι (Hebr. 11, 35); ἐγέρω (Mt. 27, 53). These words are not always used in the same sense. Resurrection may be spoken of in a metaphorical way when referring to a spiritual resurrection, the conversion, as in Col. 2, 12: *κατανήψθητε ἐν τῆς πίστεως*. We also find that the word is used in a metonymical way (causa pro effectu) as in Jn. 11, 25: *εἰ περὶ οὗ τῶντος ἐγὼ εἶμι καὶ ἀνίστασθαι*. Usually, however, the words refer to a bodily resurrection. Upon careful study of the word "resurrection" we arrive at the following definition: It is the divine act of restoring to life the human body after it has been forsaken by its soul and of reuniting the soul with the same body which it occupied during the lifetime on that individual being. In particular, it means the raising of the dead on the last day.

It is of the utmost importance to have a correct conception of this doctrine. Any false notions in regard to this teaching, be they ever so insignificant, are a denial of the inspired Word of God. St. Paul writes 2 Tim. 2, 18 that certain men have erred concerning the truth and have overthrown the faith of some, because they had said that the resurrection of the dead was already past. Thus we see that a change in this doctrine may mean the loss of the final salvation.

The rationalists of Christ's time, the Sadducees, ridiculed the idea of a bodily resurrection. Christ reproved them most severely by telling them: "Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God!" (Mt. 22, 29)

To this very day the great majority of mankind denies the possibility of a bodily resurrection. Even many of those who support it have a very perverted notion as to its real nature.

It is selfevident that in the study of this doctrine all human speculation must be excluded, because this teaching is a part of divine revelation.

It is the purpose of this treatise to show the scriptural doctrine. It is the bodily resurrection which will take place on the last day with which we are concerned, and about which Scripture gives us such detailed information. Quite naturally questions will arise which Scripture has not answered, and which we must leave unanswered. We must be satisfied with that which God has revealed and wait until the future life for further revelation.

In this work we shall confine ourselves principally to the New Testament passages, but for the sake of completeness, we shall also refer briefly to the Old Testament. It is an entirely false conception to think that the resurrection is a doctrine found only in the New Testament. It is equally as erroneous to believe that this teaching was unknown in the earliest writings of the Hebrews, and that it gradually assumed a definite shape together with the development of the Hebrew religion. (See Pieper, Dogmatics III. p. 602.) This idea is based on the false principle of the evolution of religion. However, such foolish views require no serious consideration. Christ and his apostles repeatedly refer to the Old Testament as a sufficient revelation of God which man must believe in order to be saved.

The rich man who wanted to save his five brethren from eternal destruction is told: "They have Moses and the Prophets, let them hear them!"

While there is a difference in degree of clarity between the Old and New Testament doctrines, yet the same doctrines were taught and believed as are taught in the Christian Church to the present day. We also find some very plain passages in the Old Testament which speak of a bodily resurrection. The Hebrew verbs that are used to express this thought are: *וָיָחַי* and *וָיָקָם*.

It has been pointed out by theologians that every Old Testament Gospel promise includes the promise of an eternal life which presupposes a resurrection. If that is true, we must admit that Adam and Eve knew of a resurrection. (Gen. 3, 15).

A few of such passages which teach a resurrection of the body are the following: Isa. 27, 19: "The dead men shall live, together with my dead body they shall arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs; and the earth shall cast out her dead!"

Job 19, 25: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another!" Another such a passage we find in Dan. 12. Thus we find that the Old Testament believers were well acquainted with this doctrine and used it to strengthen their faith in a future life. In the New Testament the doctrine of the resurrection is very prominent. It is a fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith. Without it Christianity cannot exist. A denial of this teaching means a denial of Christianity. (See Pieper III, p. 603.)

It does not require a deep philosophical mind to understand the statements of the New Testament which deal with the resurrection. ^{-Lis} The greatest teacher of all times, our blessed Savior, has explained and illustrated this doctrine to such an extent that a child can learn to know this fundamental truth. The most learned among men who claim to be Christians must uphold these same simple truths, although in this life they will never be able to grasp their full significance. This truth is beyond human discovery and remains a mystery to mortal man.

Scripture tells us that Christ is the author of the resurrection. According to Rom. 4, 25: "Jesus was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification!" Rom. 14, 9: "Christ died, rose, and revived that he might be Lord both of the dead and living!" 1 Pet. 1, 3b: "God hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead!"

This truth is substantiated by Christ himself when he declares Jn. 6, 40: "I will raise him up on the last day!" And again Jn. 14, 19: "Because I live ye shall live also!" We could wish for no more evident proof than that of Jn. 11, 23: "I am the Resurrection and the Life!"

In order to establish these statements beyond any human doubt, Christ has also demonstrated the possibility of a bodily resurrection. He came from heaven as the Redeemer of mankind to suffer, and die, and be resurrected. Four different Gospels, written from different points of view give us a careful and convincing testimony of Christ's bodily resurrection. "He is not here, He is risen" is a historical fact which no man can disprove. "The empty tomb of Jesus baffles every theory of the resurrection save the true one!"*

*-----

From E.Y. Mullins: Why is Christianity True? p. 201.

Christianity is so intimately connected with the resurrection of Christ that the two must stand together and fall together. The proof we find in 1 Cor.15,14: "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain!" But it is a fact (V.20): "Now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first-fruit of them that slept!"

By his own resurrection Christ has shown us that the bodily resurrection is a fact depending only on God's omnipotence.

Christ has also demonstrated a bodily resurrection through several of his miracles. The holy Evangelists have recorded three such bodily resurrections which were performed by Christ. In Lk.8,54ff: we are told that Jesus simply took the hand of the maiden, the daughter of Jairus, called: "Talitha Cumi," and immediately her spirit returned, and once more she became a living soul. An essential part of the resurrection is the act of uniting the soul and body. That is what Jesus did here, and that is what he will do on the last day.

According to Lk.7,14, Christ performed another similar miracle. A young man's corpse is being carried out to its final resting place when the Prince of Life approaches, touches the coffin, speaks the words: "Young man, I say unto thee, arise!" Again death must yield its prey, and life returns.

Humanly speaking, the most remarkable of these miracles was the raising of Lazarus. His corpse had been in the ground for four days and was well nigh decomposed when Jesus arrived. Martha, in a moment of weakness, refuses to permit Jesus to show his omnipotence. To her amazement, it requires only three words: "Lazarus, come forth!" The decayed body is again restored, the spirit reenters, and Lazarus lives as before.

In view of these miracles, it is indeed a part of folly for any man to doubt that Christ can and will some day raise all the dead with just as little effort as it required to raise Lazarus. The simple and convincing manner in which these miracles have been recorded is sufficient evidence for their truthfulness.

It is indeed most remarkable to note that the former timid and fainthearted disciples soon stepped forth to proclaim with undaunted courage Christ and him Crucified, confessing his resurrection before friend and foe. The Apostle Peter who had thrice denied his Lord now boldly proclaims on the birthday of the New Testament Christian Church: "You inhabitants of Jerusalem have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain Jesus whom God hath raised up!" (Acts, 2, 23b-24a.) And again with divine defiance Peter answers the leaders of the Jews: "Be it known unto you and to all the men of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth whom ye have crucified and whom God hath raised from the dead, even by him doeth this man stand before you!" (Acts 4, 10). Peter had healed a man in the name of the resurrected Savior. He performed another great miracle when he restored the believing widow, Tabitha, by raising her from the dead. (Acts 9, 39).

This courage to confess was not confined to Peter, but according to Acts 4, 33: "All with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; and great grace was upon them all!"

The greatest theologian of the New Testament, the Apostle Paul, has written more about the doctrine of the resurrection than any other writer of the Holy Scriptures.

Soon after his conversion Paul gave expression to his new convictions. At Antioch he declared (Acts 13, 33): "The promise which God has made unto our fathers, the same he has fulfilled unto us their children in that he raised up Jesus again." In order to show that he is convinced of the truthfulness of this statement, he supports it with the Old Testament prophecy from Psalm 16 where God had promised to raise Jesus from the dead.

In preaching about the resurrection Paul met with the same difficulties which we must contend with today. At Athens the Greek philosophers openly ridiculed the resurrection from the dead (Acts 17, 32.). Even his countrymen attacked Paul, because of his firm position on this doctrine. (Acts 23, 6). However, Paul did not lose courage, but according to Acts 24, 15, he confessed before his bitter opponents the resurrection of all the dead, both just and unjust. Also Paul was permitted to put his firm conviction into practise when he raised the young man, Eutychus. (Acts 20, 12).

It is true that almost every book of the New Testament mentions the doctrine of the resurrection as a part of the basis of Christianity. Paul, however, has made a special effort in his famous resurrection chapter to the Corinthians to show the importance of clinging most firmly to this truth. The situation at Corinth was such that certain men who claimed to be Christians had deliberately denied the resurrection of the body. The great champion of the truth used a most remarkable argument in his defence of this doctrine. Paul is convinced of the truth of this teaching, and therefore he feels dutybound to defend it.

have been quite generally known among the Jews of Christ's time. At the grave of her brother Martha reveals the triumphant conviction, in spite of her temporary affliction: "I know he shall rise on the last day" (Mk. 11, 31.)

Upon first consideration of the passage, Paul seems to be begging the question, but we must remember that he presupposes that his readers accept Christ's resurrection as an established fact. IN V.20 he argues: Since Christ the firstfruit has risen from the dead, who can yet possibly doubt a universal resurrection? and much less, who would dare to deny it? If man's resurrection is denied, Christ's resurrection must also be denied. Since Christ's resurrection is an established fact, the universal resurrection must also be an established fact.

In order to develop his argument, Paul mentions a chain of truths which are closely linked together. (V.14ff). He uses the "argumentum a particulari ad universale." He reasons: If there is no resurrection of the body, we must admit the following conclusions: 1) Christ remained in the grave. 2) Paul's preaching is vain and false. 3) Faith is useless. 4) The apostles are false witnesses. 5) God is no longer trustworthy. 6) God is not God. Furthermore it follows: Since the dead will not rise, death ends all; there will be no judgment; there is no difference between believer and unbeliever, between man and beast; man is responsible to no one; man can do and live as he pleases. Thus Paul's argument compells the opponents to admit that as surely as God is God, so surely the resurrection of the dead is a fact and must remain a part of the Christian faith. God would cease being God if he would not resurrect the dead.

This doctrine of the resurrection has been accepted and believed by the Christians of all generations. It seems to have been quite generally known among the Jews of Christ's time. At the grave of her brother Martha reveals the triumphant conviction, in spite of her temporary affliction: "I know, he shall rise on the last day!" (Jn. 11, 24.)

The question of the resurrection was a lively issue among the leaders of the Jews. The Pharisees believed in it, while the Sadducees considered it unreasonable and ridiculed any belief in the supernatural (Acts 23,8). At one occasion Christ used a very convincing argument to reveal the inconsistency of these rationalists of his time. He referred them to the Old Testament passage: "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Then he explained it by adding: "God is not a God of the dead, but of the living!" If that is true, the Sadducees must admit that the patriarchs are not dead, but living. While their body is decayed, their soul continues to exist and will some day unite again with the body.

Another interesting proof which seems to show that this doctrine was quite universally accepted among the Jews is pointed out by the Evangelist St. Matthew (14,2) where Herod gives expression to the fear that John the Baptist whom he had beheaded has risen from the dead.

We can rest assured that the faithful of the Old Testament believed in a future resurrection and a future life. The fact that we find such passages as Job 19 and other similar expressions proves this beyond any reasonable doubt. Christ directed the attention of the unbelievers of his time to "Moses and the Prophets" which they must believe in order to be saved.

Also in the Christian Church of the New Testament this doctrine has been taught and believed. The custom of baptizing the Christians over the graves of the dead has been explained as a testimony to the heathen of that time that those who were buried there would rise again with the same body which they had had in life. (1 Cor. 15,29).

There can be no doubt that the doctrine of immortality and of the bodily resurrection have played a most important part in the history of the early Christian Church. Historians have noted its prominence. Among the five causes to which Edward Gibbon traces the rapid progress of the Christian religion, he places the doctrine of immortality as the second in importance. (Gibbon: Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. Vol. 15).

In later times individuals and sects arose which denied or taught their own perverted views in regard to the resurrection, but the Christian Church has always considered such men heretics and has carefully avoided them. Among those who denied the doctrine in the early Christian centuries were the Gnostics and the Socinians. However, they were opposed by the advocates of the truth, and thus the pure doctrine has at all times been taught and believed, even to the present time.

To be sure, Christ's own resurrection gives this doctrine its true meaning and importance. We know that Christ has not only suffered and died for us, but that he was also resurrected for us as St. Paul teaches Rom. 4, 25: "Christ was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification!" The resurrection of Christ has proved beyond a doubt that God the Father has accepted the sacrifice of his Son and is now fully reconciled with the world. If we are reconciled unto God, we are also heirs of eternal life. Indeed, Christ was raised as our substitute, as the firstfruit of the resurrection. As such he assures all Christians: "Because I live, ye shall live also!" (Jn. 14, 19).

This glorious truth finds a very practical application. Today the Angel of Death may enter the Christian family circle; in a moment he may shatter the Christian's fondest hopes and expectations, but all that dread and fear, pain and anguish, which

follows in the wake of death must vanish before our great Prince of Life who has overcome the power of death and triumphantly proclaims Jn.11,25-26:"I am the Resurrection and the Life;he that believeth in me,though he were dead,yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die!"

Christ's resurrection gives to the Christian religion the glorious power and cheering comfort which overcomes even the terrors of death.Christ's resurrection explains the fact that the Christian religion,and in particular this doctrine, has had such a marvelous influence upon the life of individuals from all the generations of man,regardless of race or sex or social standing.

"Indeed,the world would not have been converted to a dead Jewish Christ,however his intimate disciples might have continued to love his memory.But they preached everywhere,first and foremost,the resurrection from the dead!"*

"A dead Christ may have been a teacher and a wonderworker and remembered and loved as such,but only a risen and living Christ could be the Savior,the Life,the Lifegiver,and as such preached to all men.This is the foundation of the church,the inscription on the banners of her armies,the strength and comfort of every Christian heart,and the grand hope of humanity:
The Lord is risen indeed!"*

*-----
From Edersheim:The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah.p.625&629.

II.The Author of the Resurrection.

The efficient cause of the resurrection is none other than God. Indeed,we shall in this life never be able to understand how the Triune God will bring about the resurrection,just as little

as we are able to fathom the mystery of the 'creatio ex nihilo'. However, we may be confident that that same God who was able to create all things and still upholds all things by the Word of his power will not fail to restore the bodies of all men at the appointed time.

Scripture has ascribed various works to the different persons of the Godhead. Thus God the Father is called the Creator; God the Son the Redeemer, and God the Holy Ghost the Sanctifier. Now we know from the account of the creation that the Triune God was active. Likewise we know that the Redemption, while primarily the work of the God-man, was the work of the Trinity. Thus also the Trinity will take part in the Resurrection. Jesus gives evidence to this intimate relation existing between the different persons of the Trinity when he says: "The son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do---- these things also doeth the Son!" (Jn. 5, 19)

In order to prove that God the Father is the author of the resurrection, St. Paul writes to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 6, 14): "God hath both raised up the Lord and will also raise up us by his own power!" The same thought he expresses in 2 Cor. 3, 14: He that raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus--". See also 2 Cor. 1, 9: "God which raiseth the dead!"

However, just as in the book of Isaiah, Jehovah is frequently called the Savior and Redeemer, while in fact the God-man, Christ, is the Redeemer, thus also God the Father is sometimes called the author of the resurrection, while in fact, there are many evident passages referring this work directly to Christ. In speaking of himself, Jesus says Jn. 6, 40: "He that believeth in me hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day!" In 1 Cor. 15, 21 Paul ascribes this task to the man, Christ:

"Since by man came death, by Man came also the resurrection of the dead! Together with the work of raising the dead Christ will take charge of the judgment. According to 2 Tim. 4, 1, "The Lord Jesus Christ shall judge the quick and the dead!" The same thought we find in Jn. 5, 22: "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son (v. 27) and hath given him authority to execute judgment, also because he is the son of man!" See also Rev. 1, 18 where we are told that Christ also has power over the keys of hell and death. Thus we see that Christ will have charge of all the events on the last day. (cf. Pieper III, 603.)

Scripture is even more specific when it tells us that the word of Christ will rouse the dead from their temporary slumber. As the words "Talitha cumi" gave evidence of such miraculous power, so also on the last day Christ's word will accomplish a marvelous universal resurrection.

In speaking of the last times Jesus declares: (Jn. 5, 28): "The hour is coming in the which all that are in the grave shall hear his (Christ's) voice and shall come forth!" Just as impossible as it was for the body of Lazarus to remain in the grave, just so impossible it will be for any human body to fail to come forth out of the dust of the earth. Christ's voice will be heard by all the dead. Christ will speak with divine majesty; mortal man will obey in trembling submission.

The voice of Christ has been described in another way. St. Paul calls it the last trump, stating that "The trumpet shall be blown and that at the same time, in the twinkling of an eye the dead shall be raised" (1 Cor. 15, 52). St. Matthew, in referring to the last events writes (Chap. 24, 31): "Christ shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet!"

Finally Paul gives us a summary of all these passages in 1 Thes. 4, 16: "The Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God! What this trump is and of what nature that sound will be, we do not know, but we do know that it will be sufficient to call all men back to life, regardless of whether they have just passed away or whether their dust be scattered over the ends of the earth.

We may summarize this great truth with the words of Quenstedt: "Causa efficiens prima resurrectionis est solus

Deus Unitrinus, singulari tamen ratione Redemptor, Theanthropos!"*

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From Quenstedt: "Theol. did. pol., pars IV. Cap. XVIII. Sec. I. Thes. VI. P. 580." ^{580.}

As Christ is the "causa efficiens" of the resurrection in general, so he is in a special sense the "causa meritoria" (Hoenecke Dogmatic, IV, P. 241) of the same. Proof in 1 Cor. 15, 21: "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead, for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive!" This passage does not prove that Christ's merits are the cause of the resurrection of the wicked. The context shows that Paul speaks here only of Christians. Likewise Christ's promise in Jn. 11, 25: "I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live etc.," is to be applied only to the Christians. Their resurrection to life depends on Christ's meritorious work.

On the other hand, we have no such information about the resurrection of the wicked. They are merely raised by the power of Christ's word, in order to appear before the judgment seat of Christ to hear his fatal verdict. Balduin fittingly remarks: "Impios non virtute resurrectionis Christi resurrecturos, sed propter immutabile decretum quo statutum

est homini semel mori et postea iudicium. (Hebr. 9, 27)!*

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From Hoenecke L.c.P. 242.

It is antisciptural to teach as the Swedenborgians that man has two bodies, the external and the internal, the material and the psychical, and that when the former dies, the latter, joined to the soul, passes into another state of existence.*

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From Guenther: Symbolics, P. 410.

Accordingly, the only resurrection possible would be that which occurs at the time of death. This is evidently a denial of the resurrection that will take place through Christ on the last day.

Some rationalistic theologians maintain that a pure soul cannot be individualized and localized, and therefore cannot be acted upon without some form of corporeity. Thus they conclude that the soul must receive some kind of resurrection body at the time of death.* The Word of God knows nothing of

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From Hoenecke L.c.P. 230f.

such a "Zwischenleib!" Others hold that this spiritual body which is being formed during life is hurried together with the material body, and on resurrection day it will grow to a resurrection body. (So Kahnis, Nitzsch, Spittgerber)* These false

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From Hoenecke L.c.P. 245.

teachers even attempt to find scriptural support by stating that in Jn. 6, 54. Christ took for granted such a resurrection germ which would grow and be strengthened by partaking of his body and blood. (So Neander). However, this is a notion entirely foreign to Scripture. Also the passage 1 Cor. 15, 35-38, where the seed is referred to, does not justify the assumption of a resurrection germ. In such statements we must not proceed beyond the "tertium comparationis". Paul merely says in this parable that Christ will resurrect the same body which has

been buried and which has decayed, in a similar manner as he causes the same seed to grow that has been planted. There is not the least support in Scripture for rationalistic theories which ascribe to helpless man any power to aid in bringing about a bodily resurrection.

III. The Objects of the Resurrection.

The silent dust of mortal man would remain forever in the grave were it not for the omnipotent Christ who will some day call forth all generations that have ever lived upon the face of the earth. In this connection Dannhauer writes: "Objectum ^{-tum} sive materia resurrectionis sunt omnes homines mortui, tam pii quam impii!"* This statement is based on the words of Christ:
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 From Hoenecke L.c.P.242.

 "All that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth, they that have done good----they that have done evil---!" (Jn. 5, 28-29) Also Paul declares (2 Tim. 4, 1): "Christ will judge the quick and the dead!" That presupposes a resurrection of all the dead. The elements of nature must obey the voice of the Judge as the book of Revelation (Chap. 20, 13) so vividly pictures it: "The sea shall give up the dead which are in it, and death and hell (the grave) shall deliver up the dead which are in them!" It will make no difference whether the mortal remains have been buried in a stately mausoleum or whether the handful of ashes has been stored in an insignificant urn, whether man has found his final restingplace in the bottom of the sea, or whether he has been devoured by the beasts of the field. The undeniable fact remains! There will be a resurrection of the dead both of the just and of the unjust!" (Act. 24, 15)
 In this connection Quenstedt remarks: "Subjectum quod resurrectionis est totus homo antea mortuus et cunctus; subjectum quo est

idem numero ac substantia corpus quod in hac vita gessimus! *

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Quenstedt:L.c.Thes.X,P.582.

Quite naturally this teaching of the resurrection of the wicked would meet with bitter and violent opposition. It is no

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See Guenther,Symbolics,P.422-423.

pleasant thought for the wicked to know that they must once appear before the judgment seat of the righteous God.In order to avoid this awful truth unbelievers have attempted to substitute the theory of the annihilation of the enemies of Christ.Among them we find the Socinians,Jews,Adventists etc..(Hoenecke L.c.P247.)

Even the Lutheran theologian Hofman declares:"The annihilation of death(1 Cor.15,26)also means annihilation of the underworld and abode of the dead!" Others prefer to hope for a restoration

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Hofman,Schriftbeweis,II,2.P.658.

of the wicked when they shall be granted another opportunity to be converted.(Some Chiliasts.)

In spite of all opposition,the solemn fact remains(2 Cor.10,5):

"We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ that every one may receive the things done in his body,according to that he hath done,whether it be good or bad!" According to

St.Paul there can be no thought for a future restoration.Such vain hopes are shattered when he declares(2 Cor.6,2):"Behold, now is the accepted time;behold,now is the day of salvation!"

While the unbeliever is filled with dread and horror at the thought of a bodily resurrection,the Christian is animated

with an entirely different spirit. The believer looks forward for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ(1 Tim.2,13)!" Together with

St.Paul the Christian longs for a "deliverance from the body of this death(Rom.7,24)"and "desires to be with Christ"because he sees before him that "better country" which "God has prepared for

those that love him!" The whole life of the children of God is directed toward that goal or "receiving the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls(1 Pet.1,9)!"

There will be people yet living at the time of Christ's Advent. Paul calls our attention to this fact in 1 Cor.15,51: "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed!" Thus also in 1 Thes.4,17: "Then(after the trumpet has been sounded)we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them(the resurrected dead)in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air!" Both the living and the dead shall be called before the throne of the great Judge.

Scripture is silent about the resurrection of animal life. The passage in Romans(8,21)merely states that animals and nature in general shall be freed from the curse which rested upon it since the fall of man. The great difference between man and beast proves that man was created with an immortal soul to live on forever while the beasts were merely created for this life. To summarize: Christ will resurrect all human beings that have ever possessed a body and a soul. The individual to a great extent must decide for himself whether he wishes to meet Christ on the last day as his glorious King or as his righteous Judge. Today mortal man may resist the call of grace, he may reject the Word, he may despise the Savior, but "God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom he hath ordained(Acts 17,31!" Christ's verdict will decide every man's fate for all eternity.(Pieper, III, 604).

IV. The Time of the Resurrection.

One of the great questions of all times has been: When shall this all occur? Men have tried to foretell the time of Christ's Advent, but thus far they have always been put to shame.

It may be natural for the human mind to try to find the answer, but such attempts are not in accordance with the Word of God. This is one of the great secrets which God has not revealed. If God had considered this knowledge necessary for our salvation, he would have recorded the time of his coming. Christ declares in Mt.24,36:"Of that day and hour knoweth no man,not the angels of heaven,but my Father only!"Paul testifies(Acts 17,31): "God has appointed a day in which he will judge the world!" Since that is part of God's eternal plan,we can be confident that it will be carried out;"Heaven and earth may pass away;" but the Word and promise of God will not fail to be fulfilled.

Another most instructive passage containing information about the last times,we find recorded in Mt.24,14:"The Gospel of this kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations,and then shall the end come!"This word of Christ implies the following important truths: 1)The world exists today in order that men may be converted to Christianity.2)The Christian Church will remain in this world until the end of time.3)All nations will be given the opportunity of hearing the Gospel.4)On the last day no nation will be able to find a valid excuse for having rejected the word.5)The end will not come until the last elect has been saved.

Another noteworthy bit of information is the fact that Christ will on the last day appear suddenly,and then,when least expected. The Savior sounds the warning(Mt.24,27):"As the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be!"And again in Mt.24,42:^{42:} "Watch therefore:for ye know not what hour your Lord cometh!" The apostle admonishes(1 Thes.5,2-3):"You know perfectly that the day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night.For when they shall say:Peace and safety,then sudden destruction cometh

upon them as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape!" This uncertainty is to aid in keeping us constantly mindful of the Lord's Coming.

To be sure, our gracious Lord and Savior has also given us certain visible signs by which we are to recognize the nearness of the time of his great Advent. In speaking of the forerunners of that great event, Jesus says: (Mt. 24, 24) "There shall rise false Christs and false prophets and shall show signs and wonders, in so much that, if it were possible, they would deceive the very elect---(V. 29) After the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven shall be shaken, and then shall appear the sign of the son of man!" (See also Mk. 14, 21ff.) Also St. John in the book of Revelation speaks of a visible coming (Chap. 1, 7): "Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also that pierced him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him!"

While it is true that our information as to the time of that glorious Advent is very limited, God has given us sufficient revelation to know what the time is very near at hand. Christ's warning of 1900 years ago should be all the more impressive today, because we are surely living in the very last days of this sin-cursed world's existence. We have reason to feel confident that all the signs of the last day have appeared and that they are now in the process of fulfillment. As far as the false prophets are concerned or which Christ speaks in Mk. 14, 21, we may be sure that the world has never suffered so much from these "wolves in sheep's clothing" as at the present ^{time.} time.

Paul calls our attention to another sign, saying (1 Thes. 2, 3ff): "Let no man deceive you by any means, for that day shall not come, except there be a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition!" Even this sign which refers to the revelation of Antichrist has started its fulfillment. Today as never before in the history of the Church, Christianity ought to heed the warning (Rev. 1, 11) "Behold, I come quickly; hold that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown!"

Scripture also contains a few remarks with regard to the sequence of events on the last day. This has been recorded in 1 Cor. 15, 52; 1 Thes. 4, 15, and in Mt. 24, 31ff.. We shall state them briefly in chronological order: 1) Christ shall appear in power and glory. 2) The trumpet and the voice of the archangel shall be heard. 3) The dead shall rise incorruptible. a) First the believers. b) Then the unbelievers. 4) The living shall be changed. 5) The judgment shall be conducted. 6) The blessed shall be taken into heaven; the cursed shall be cast into everlasting fire.

The Word of God does not tell us how long this process of resurrection and judgment will last, but it seems that the resurrection will be the work of a moment. This conception would seem very probable, since God is not limited to time in any of his actions.

The Bible teaches one final bodily resurrection. In opposition to that Millennialists assume a double resurrection on the basis of Rev. 20, 5: "The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection!" However, if Millennialists would only take the context into consideration and read the following verse, they would soon see that this passage, speaking of the first resurrection, deals with a spiritual rising, namely conversion to faith.

The second death(V.14) has no power over such as are converted. The believers may die the temporary death, but that is merely the transition into the blessed eternity.

The opinion of extreme and crass Millennialism, that Christ will come to raise the martyrs and rule a thousand years, is antisciptural. Although the attempt is made to find scriptural support in 1 Cor.15,23, by stating that first Christ shall rise, afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming(the martyrs and good men shall reign a thousand years) and finally(V.24) then cometh the end(the judgment and the universal resurrection). To this false exegesis we answer that "telos" does not refer to the end of different resurrection periods, but to the end in general. (Hoenecke, L.c.P.247). All that this passage tells us is that first Christ shall rise, then all men, and then the end of all things is at hand. It is against the analogy of the Christian faith to maintain a particular and a universal resurrection, because scripture tells us in plain terms: "It is appointed unto man(all men without exception) once to die, and after that the judgment (universal resurrection and judgment)!"

V. The Purpose of the Resurrection.

Thus far we have considered the author, the objects, and the time of the resurrection. The next point of consideration would naturally, be concerning the purpose of such a universal resurrection.^{-tion} Scripture offers us a very satisfactory explanation. Jesus tells us(Jn.12,48): "He that rejecteth me and receiveth not my words hath one that judgeth him, the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him on the last day!" Paul reminds Timothy (2 Tim.4,1): "Jesus shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing!" And again Jesus sounds forth a last call of

repentance to the Jews saying(Mt.11,22): "Capernaum, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of Judgment than for thee!" Thus, for the sake of a final judgment, it is necessary that all men be resurrected to receive their reward. And again St. Paul reminds the Corinthians(2 Cor.5,10): "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ that every man may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad!" On that great day myriads of people shall rise and come before the throne of judgment. If already the descendants of Abraham are as numerous as the sands on the seashore, which no man can count, how much less will man be able to enumerate all the human beings that have ever existed in this world, every one of whom shall be raised on the last day. Indeed, the universal resurrection will be a marvelous manifestation of God's omnipotence. God will on that day raise the body of every individual human being without a single exception and unite it with its soul. If in a single instance God should fail to accomplish this great miracle, He would cease being the omnipotent God. That God who claims to be able to destroy both body and soul in hell will surely not fail in carrying out the work of the resurrection to the minutest detail.

Another purpose of this resurrection is to reveal God's righteousness unto all nations and peoples. St. Lk.14,14 records an occasion at which Jesus urged the rich Jews to perform works of charity toward the poor and adds: "Thou shalt be blessed, for they cannot recompense thee, for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just!" At another occasion Christ asserts: "The son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works(Mt.16,27)!"

We may be sure that the omniscient God will make no mistakes when he pronounces his final verdict. Paul writes about this impartial judgment as follows (Acts 17,31): "God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained!" In Rom. 2,5 Paul calls the last day "the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God!"

Finally, the universal resurrection will be a manifestation of God's infinite wisdom. In this connection St. John writes (1 Jn. 3,2): "We know when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is!" After the resurrection and glorification we will have a much more perfect understanding of God's infinite wisdom in his dealing with humanity. We will have a much better conception of God's eternal plan of salvation. In "paradise regained" we will never be separated from that wisdom and glory "which eye hath not seen and ear hath not heard, which hath not entered into the heart of man, but which God hath prepared for them that love him!" (1 Cor. 2,9)

It lies in the very nature of things that the purpose of the resurrection for mankind is twofold. On the last day the great Judge will place all people into two classes; some to his left, some to his right. Those at his left will hear the words of the Judge for the last time: "Depart from me, ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels!" And then Jesus adds the terrible truth: "These shall go away into everlasting punishment!" (Mt. 25,44)

Those at his right hand will also hear the voice of the Judge, but he will speak to them as their eternal King: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom, prepared for you from the foundation of the world!" Here Jesus adds: "The righteous

shall go into eternal life(Mt.25,46)!" First comes the resurrection, then the judgment. That is absolutely necessary, because only a resurrected and changed body can partake of eternal bliss and suffer everlasting punishment. St. Paul shows that this is true in the case of those who will enter heaven, because "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor doth corruption inherit incorruption(1 Cor.15,50)!" And again in Phil.3,21 he expressly asserts: "Christ shall change our vile body!"

That the body of the wicked will be changed is not expressly taught in scripture, but so much is true that their body shall be made incorruptible and capable for suffering for eternity. Christ teaches(Mk.9,48): "Their worm shall not die, and the fire shall not be quenched!" St. John adds(Rev.14,11); "The smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever; and they shall have no rest day nor night!"

As the body is the partner of the soul's crimes and companion of her virtues, the justice of God will demand that the body share the soul's eternal punishment or its everlasting reward.

VI. The Nature of the Resurrection Body.

One of the great questions which troubled the Christians at Corinth and which has puzzled the minds of men at all times is this: "How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?"(1 Cor.15,35)

It seems that the men of Corinth raised this question in order to ridicule the doctrine of the resurrection, because Paul calls them fools. Such a rebuke is not to be looked upon as an encouragement to neglect the reading and study of scripture.

The admonition of Jesus: "Search the Scriptures" applies also to the study of the doctrine of the resurrection. Paul's word in this instance must be considered as a warning to such as question the possibility and desirability of the resurrection, but it is also a rebuke to such who make all sort of rationalistic conclusions which are against the spirit of Scriptures.

It is indeed a most difficult undertaking to give a reasonable description of the resurrection body. In fact, it is impossible to proceed beyond a few definite characteristics which Scripture ascribes to the resurrection body.

At the very beginning of our consideration, we shall note that it is a fundamental principle of this doctrine that the same body shall rise which has been placed into the ground; the same flesh and bone shall be called back to life that has turned to dust and ashes.

The great champion of the resurrection doctrine, St. Paul, so to say, points his finger at his own body and declares (1 Cor. 15, 53): "This corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality!" In Phil. 3, 21 he teaches: "Christ shall change our vile body"—this same body which today is weak and subject to all manner of suffering—this body which will be vile indeed when it must undergo the process of decay and decomposition. We quote again the fine summary of Quenstedt: "Subjectum quod resurrectionis est totus homo antea mortuus et cinerfactus; subjectum quo est idem numero ac substantia corpus quod in hac vita gessimus, resurget in novissimo die!"*

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Quenstedt L.c. thes. X. P. 582.

We must uphold the principle that the same body will be raised substantially and numerically which man possessed at the time of his death.* According to 1 Cor.15,53 there
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Pieper L.c.P.604.

can be no glorification of mortal bodies, if the same substance is not raised that has fallen prey to corruption. The corrupt body cannot assume incorruption if it remains in the grave. The very word which Paul uses in V.53: "ἐνδύσασθε" - put on", proves that the substance is the same, but there is merely a change in quality and appearance. The same truth is expressed in Phil.3,21 which has not been so well translated in the King James Version as it might have been done. A literal translation of Paul's words may be rendered thus: "Who shall change the form of our body of lowliness (that it may be) conformed to the body of his glory!" In view of such plain passages the identity and entirety of the resurrection body cannot be denied, but must be firmly supported. These two characteristics will be common to all the resurrected bodies, both just and unjust.

This part of the doctrine is denied today by prominent theologians who claim to belong to the ranks of the "conservatives." Delitsch, for example, virtually denied the identity of substance in the resurrection body when he writes: "The identity is not based on the sameness of matter, because already in this life it changes continually; nor on the sameness of form with total difference of substance. (Origen, Socinians, Arminians, Baptists, etc..) The true identity lies between the material substance and the pure formal body. God will unite the original substances of our body, so that powers and contents will be alike in as far as the individuality of the person will require!"*
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Delitsch! System of Biblical Psychology! P.457.

Delitsch holds that the materials will be renewed and that God will unite them in some way to create a body similar in content to the former. The result of such a position, while it admits that the original elements are present, is a plain denial of the resurrection of "this mortal body!" Thus it is not the corrupt body which puts on incorruption, but the glorified soul which assumes an incorruptible body. This position cannot be harmonized with 1 Cor. 15, 53: "τὸ φθαρτὸν τοῦτο" where the individual body, substantially and numerically, will put on incorruption.

On the last day there will be no new creation, but a restoration and a resurrection in the fullest sense of the term. This sublime truth is the greatest assurance that the resurrection will not change the personality of the individual. Then, it also proves beyond a doubt that the blessed in heaven will recognize one another. Scripture has not revealed to what extent man's personality will be retained. Undoubtedly man will have the opportunity to exercise his thinking faculties and his memory.

Without memory man would hardly be conscious of his own identity, to say nothing about being conscious of the identity of others in heaven. It is contrary to Scripture to suppose that we would enter heaven as newly created creatures without a history. We would have no reason for singing songs of thanksgiving, because we would not recognize God's gracious dealings with us before the time of our temporal death.

It seems rather that our memory will be exalted, so that we will have a clearer understanding of the past, with the exclusion of the knowledge of sin, because that will have passed away forever. According to all indications it seems that in heaven the human form will be a glorified likeness of that very body we possessed on earth. The emotional and mental peculiarities,

and whatever else distinguished man from man in this life will very likely remain a part of the individuals, after their personality has been cleansed and purified from all weakness and permeated with divine beauty and glory. And now, shall that God who provides for the most insignificant creatures, who assures us "there shall not an hair of your head perish," shall he not be able to restore every atom of our body? If it would be necessary to assume even a partial re-creation instead of a resurrection, we would be compelled to admit that death has conquered and destroyed our mortal body beyond all hope of restoration. Moreover, it would be against the justice of God to reward and punish a body which had done neither good nor evil, which in fact had never existed before. Therefore, Scripture compels us to hold firmly to a literal resurrection of the mortal body according to form and substance.

Scripture has also recorded a few examples to substantiate such a view of the bodily resurrection. The sceptical apostles were soon convinced that they were not looking upon a spirit without flesh and bone, but that their resurrected and glorified Master was speaking the words (Lk. 24, 39): "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is myself; handle me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bone as ye see me have!" Selfevidently the nail-marks were no longer evidence of suffering, but signs of glory which served to identify the Savior, and strengthen the faith of the fainthearted apostles.

To be sure, material wounds and blemishes will not be found on the glorified bodies of the saints, because they will be raised in power and glory, free from all sin and corruption. There is no doubt that the individual personality of the saints, after it has been freed from sin, will serve as an identification of the glorified body.

Thus we can understand how brokenhearted Mary, weeping at the tomb of her Master, suddenly recognizes the risen Savior when he calls her by name. The personality of the living Jesus flashed before her mind. Immediately the gloomy clouds of Good Friday are dispelled by the bright rays of the Sun of Easter morning.

At another occasion this personality of Jesus manifested itself in the presence of two disciples while they were observing the manner in which he "took the bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to them!" (Lk. 14, 30).

The objection has been raised that it would not have been difficult to identify Jesus with whom they were intimately acquainted, but that it would be more difficult to recognize those with whom we are not so well acquainted. This objection may be answered by the event which took place on the Mt. of Transfiguration (Mk. 9) where the three Apostles evidently recognized Moses and Elias.

Another matter of importance pertaining to the resurrected bodies is that they will have the ability of assuming a visible and an invisible form. The resurrected body of Jesus possessed this power. Here we are reminded of a most remarkable incident which occurred on the first Good Friday when "the graves were opened, and many of the bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after His resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many. (Mt. 27, 52ff.)"

One of the most interesting testimonies that the body will rise and that it will on the last day possess the same human qualities and the same personality, we find in the various passages which refer to the actions of the resurrected bodies. We shall quote a few of such passages for illustration.

Rev.1,7: "Every eye shall see him and they also which pierced him, and all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him!"

Rev.20,12: "I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God!"

Mt.25,44: "Then shall they also answer him saying: Lord when saw we thee hungered or athirst-----and did not minister unto thee?" Also V.37ff.

Mt.12,41: "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation and shall condemn it!"

Also V.42: "The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation and shall condemn it!"

Thus the very actions typical of a human being will be noticeable on the day of judgment and remain an essential part of man throughout eternity.

Scripture gives us very little information about the nature of the resurrection body of the wicked. It seems to be pretty well established that the chief characteristics will be identity, entirety, and immortality. Their bodies will not be glorified nor will their sins and weaknesses be taken from them. They will be provided with bodies fitted to suffer forever as St. Peter asserts (2 Pet. 2, 9): "The Lord knoweth how to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished!" Paul writes 2 Thes. 2, 9: "They shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of God and from the glory of his power!" Jesus himself adds the terrible description: "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Mt. 24, 51)!" Together with the devil all unbelievers shall be cast into the lake of fire" and the smoke of their torment shall ascend up forever and ever, and they shall have no rest day nor night (Rev. 14, 11)!" According to Lk. 16, 24, the rich man in hell cries for deliverance, because he is suffering unspeakable torment.

What makes the tragedy of the condemned all the more terrible is that they will never be freed from these torments. Their immortal bodies and souls will prevent them from ending their misery. They must live to suffer and die eternally. Thus the resurrection of the unbelievers is a resurrection unto eternal death and everlasting damnation.

Today Christ warns all men and pleads with them (Mt. 7, 13-14): "Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it!" And again he declares (Mt. 22, 14): "Many are called, but few are ^{chosen} chosen!"

On the basis of these passages men have tried to compute the number of souls that will be saved and lost. Calvin, for example, held that about 20% of humanity would be saved, and the rest lost. To that we reply: Such a mathematical procedure is entirely against the spirit of Scripture. According to Christ's Word we are to strive to enter in at the strait gate, instead of trying to pry into the secrets of that which has not been revealed.

The writers of Scripture have given us greater detail and a better description of the resurrected body of the believers. Augustine has given us the following brief summary on the basis of Scripture: "The body of the blessed will not only not be thus as it is now, even in its best condition, but not even thus as it was before the Fall. Our first parents would not have been compelled to die, had they not sinned, but even then they needed nourishment as men who had no spiritual, but natural earthly bodies!"*

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Synodical Report, Middle District, 1886. p. 52.

Here the venerable church father has named one of the main characteristics of the resurrection body. It will be a spiritual body. As such it will be immortal and incorruptible. The proof we find in 1 Jn. 5, 13: "Ye that believe on the name of the Son of God have eternal life!" However, a change must take place in the "σάρξ", the material body before it will become fitted for eternal life. In 1 Cor. 15, 44, Paul distinguishes between the "σῶμα ψυχικόν" which is the natural body and which is joined to the soul in this life and the "σῶμα πνευματικόν" which is the spiritual body, the glorified resurrection body of the saints which will be free from all weakness and no longer subject to change. The first body becomes weary and requires rest and refreshment. After 70 or 80 fleeting years it wears out completely and becomes a prey to death. The natural bodily functions must discontinue in the future life, "because flesh and blood (our material sinful body) cannot inherit the kingdom of God!" Our vile bodies which today depend upon food and drink, rest and sleep shall be changed to become like unto Christ's own glorious body which is no longer subject to any physical needs.

In the future life sexual relationship will also cease to exist. Christ declares: (Mk. 12, 25; Lk. 20, 35.) "When they rise from the dead they neither marry nor are given in marriage!" This passage does not prove that sex distinction will be abolished. We are rather inclined to think that it will remain for the sake of retaining the true personality of the saints.

St. John the Divine gives us a most remarkable vision of the future glory in Rev. 2, 14: "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away!"

The body will no longer be subject to weakness and fatigue, but that which has been sown in weakness shall be raised in power. It seems to be implied that all physically deformed, the lame, the cripples, those who have been deprived of certain members of their body, the blind, the deaf, and all those suffering from physical and mental defects will be restored to perfection and beauty. Thus Paul writes (1 Cor. 15, 42-43): "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory!" We may be sure that there will be nothing in the future life to prevent any of the saints from the full enjoyment of the blessedness of heaven.

Nor will our bodies be limited to time and space, but as real spirits and yet possessing a body, "we shall be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall ever be with the Lord. (1 Thes. 4, 17)."

Jesus describes the heavenly glory which all the saints will enjoy in the following words (Mt. 13, 43): "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father!" Our glory will unquestionably be similar to that glory with which Jesus was transfigured in the presence of his three disciples "when his face did shine as the sun and his raiment was white as the light (Mt. 7, 2)."

The bodies of all saints will be equally incorruptible and impassible, but there will be degrees of glory. Paul declares (2 Cor. 9, 6): "He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly, and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully!"

Just as in this life there is a difference between the flesh of beasts and of man, and a noticeable distinction between the glory of the planets, between the sun, moon, and stars, just so in the resurrection there will be degrees of divine glory among the saints. (1 Cor. 15, 39ff.)

As in this life every grain of seed brings forth its peculiar kind of plant, thus in the resurrection there will be a glory peculiar to each of the saints of God. (1 Cor. 15, 36ff.)

Finally St. Paul refers to the spiritual body itself as standing in a contrast to the natural body. The first Adam had only a natural body, one that soon became subject to corruption; the second Adam, Christ, who is the "Lord from heaven" shall clothe us with the image of the heavenly. (1 Cor. 15, 49)

Paul does not say that our body will be a spirit, but that it will have spiritual attributes. The bodies will be heavenly in as far as their attributes will be heavenly. No doubt we shall retain the same physical organs, but their purpose will be changed. (So Luther Vol. IX, 122.) Thus we will see God with our physical eyes as well as with our spiritual eyes. Our hymns of praise will flow from the same lips and tongue which we are using in the Lord's service today.

Unfortunately all illustrations from nature which have been employed to make this doctrine clearer and more reasonable have their weakness and dare not be pressed beyond the point of comparison. Spring may be called a type of the resurrection, but it is in fact merely a faint resemblance of the same. Our bodies which are placed into the graves are absolutely lifeless, while the seeds which have been sowed are not actually dead; although they must decay, they have a germ of life which produces a new plant as soon as these seeds come into contact with the warmth and moisture of spring.

And again, the same seed which has been planted does not reappear, but a new plant and new seeds are reproduced. In the resurrection of the dead the same body which has been buried without such a resurrection germ will be brought forth out of the dust of the ground.

In the reawakening of nature we have an excellent illustration of God's omnipotence, but even then we cannot understand how the resurrection will take place. To be sure, the resurrection is no greater miracle than the creation of heaven and earth, nor will it be a greater miracle than the destruction of this great universe.

Paul's comparison (Phil. 3, 21) that "Christ shall change our body, so that it shall be like unto his own," dare not be carried beyond the point of consideration. Our glory will be of the same nature, because "we shall see him as he is," but the degree of Christ's glory far exceeds the glory of the saints.

The words of Jesus (Mt. 22, 30) "We shall be like the angels," also have their peculiar point of comparison. In so far we will resemble the angels that we will partake of the same glory and happiness and cease leading a marital life, but we will retain our true body while angels remain merely spirits.

In speaking about the glorified body Hodge argues: "Our bodies will retain their human form, because an essential change in the nature of the body would mean a change in the internal constitution!" *It certainly is true that man's body

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Hodge, Systematic Theology. Vol. III, P. 780.

is an essential element of his constitution. The fact that Christ appeared in human form after his resurrection seems to indicate that we will retain our human form in the future life. The ridiculous argument of Origin that the future body will be globular, because the sphere is the most perfect figure, requires no refutation.*

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Hodge L. c. P. 781.

Another indirect proof that we will retain the human form which we possessed at the time of death we find in Rev. 20, 12 where St. John expressly declares: "I saw the dead, small and great,

stand before God! Therefore, we are inclined to believe that only that which belonged to the body at the time of death will be restored. Deformity is the result of sin and not a part of the essence of man.

Augustine becomes ridiculous when he says that all matter that has ever entered the body will be restored in the resurrection body.* Scoffers have taken advantage of this
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Augustine, De Civitate Dei, 22, 19-20.

folly and have objected that such a resurrection body would never be recognizable. However, it seems that we can be reasonably sure that in heaven we will find both small and great, young and old, with their own peculiar stature of body, but free from corruption and weakness.*

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Philippi, quoted in Hoenecke L.c.P. 244.

Scripture has revealed nothing as to whether there will be racial distinction in heaven. If race difference is the result of sin, it will be done away with entirely. Referring again to Christ's resurrected body, it would seem that the color of the skin would be such that it would correspond to the shining brightness which will be reflected from the bodies of the saints. However, at present this must remain an open question for us.

Still another problem of dispute which we would like to solve, but which Scripture leaves unanswered is: What means of communication and intercourse will be employed in the future life? To our limited minds it seems that a language will be used. This viewpoint seems to be verified in Rev. 19, 6: "I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude and as the voice of many waters and as the voice of many thunders saying: Alleluja; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth; let us be glad and rejoice and give honor to him; for the marriage of the Lamb

is come, and his wife hath made herself ready!" Scripture no where informs us as to the kind of language that will be employed, and although some theologians have suggested Hebrew, the language problem must remain an open question.

Paul himself in a state of ecstasy, when he had been caught up into paradise "heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful (possible) for man to utter (2 Cor. 12, 4)!" It was no doubt a heavenly language which has not been revealed and which we cannot learn to know in this life with our limited understanding.

Thus, many questions may arise which are closely related to the doctrine of the resurrection and which God has not answered, because he knows full well that at the present time our limited reason is not able to comprehend them. Our dear heavenly Father has merely revealed a few dim rays of that heavenly splendor, because as frail, sinful mortals we could never fathom those glories "which God has prepared for them that love him!"

We know that the three disciples on the Mt. of Transfiguration fainted and became as dead men in the presence of the glory of Christ. We may rest assured that even greater splendor shall be revealed when God shall return as judge, and when heaven and earth shall flee from before his presence. While such glory is far beyond the human intellectual powers at the present time, we shall then be clothed with the same kind of celestial beauty. Christ will then take us to our eternal home where we will enjoy the perfect bliss of heaven forever and ever.

According to the Scriptures no man can deny this blessed doctrine and consistently remain a Christian. At times doubt may arise as to the nature of the resurrection, as was the situation at Corinth, but that which we cannot understand, although God has revealed it, we must accept in humble faith. After all, this teaching is a part of divine revelation which we "earthlings" can never fully comprehend.

As Christians we have the certainty of faith which finds a firm foundation in the immutable Word of God that also our bodies will be glorified on the Last Day. Our hope and sure confidence rests upon the Word of God which cannot deceive us when it assures us: "Whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life (Jn. 3, 16b.)!"

Let us ever be mindful of Paul's testimony (Rom. 8, 11): "If the Spirit of him that raised 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!"

In view of such a blessed future, let us join the great Apostle in his triumphant exultation (1 Cor. 15, 55-57): "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!"

Finis.

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