

THE RESURRECTION AND INHERITANCE

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Romans 8:17 says that those who are children of God are “*heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.*” Galatians 3:29 also says, “And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” According to Colossians 3:24, from the Lord we shall “receive the reward of the inheritance.” What inheritance are we eligible for through God’s Son Jesus Christ? James 2:5 says that we are “heirs of the kingdom” which God has promised “to them that love him.” Titus 3:7 says that in Christ we have been made heirs “according to the hope of eternal life.” Indeed, in Christ we have an *eternal* inheritance (Heb 9:15). And 1 Peter 1:3-5 teaches us both about our inheritance and the very basis of our hope for it: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope *by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,* who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” Our “lively hope” for receiving the eternal inheritance in heaven is Christ’s resurrection.

Groaning for the resurrection

We are reminded in 1 Corinthians 15:50 that we absolutely cannot receive the eternal inheritance without the resurrection: “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.” In speaking of our hope of being “glorified together” with Christ in the resurrection, Romans 8:19-25 says, “For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, *because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.* For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, *the redemption of our body.* For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.” The redemption of our body and putting

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(continued)

on of incorruption occurs with the resurrection. We are shown this “mystery” in 1 Corinthians 15:51-54: “Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and *the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.*”

A house not made with hands

The Apostle Paul was also “groaning” to have the eternal spiritual body of the resurrection: “For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life” (2 Cor 5:1-4). Jesus said he was going to prepare a place for his disciples where there are “many mansions” (John 14:1-3). There, he was referring to heaven. But the “house” he is speaking of in the context of 2 Corinthians 5:1-4 is the resurrected body. Back in chapter 4, Paul spoke of the treasure of the gospel that they had in “earthen vessels” (2 Cor 4:7), speaking of his physical body, or mortal flesh (2 Cor 4:10-11). Paul was suffering greatly in his body, always bearing about in his body the dying of the Lord Jesus (2 Cor 4:8-12). Though death was working in Paul, Paul’s faith was in the resurrection (2 Cor 4:13-14). The fact that Paul’s outward man was perishing did not cause him to faint, as he had his hope in his eternal reward (2 Cor 4:16-18). This context continues into chapter 5. In verse 1, Paul repeats that the “earthly house of this tabernacle” will be dissolved, referring to the temporal nature of our physical body. We are then told about a “building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens,” which is the body of the resurrection. Paul was groaning for that body, “that mortality might be swallowed up of life” (2 Cor 5:4). The resurrection is the moment at which we conquer death (1 Cor 15:54).