



## Ask, Father James:

**How old will my Resurrected body be? Will it be 33 years old, similar to Jesus? Or, will it be the same age as when it died?**

The above question was the question that the Greeks (philosophers who believed in immortality of the soul) wanted St. Paul to resolve when he went to preach at Corinth, Greece. They asked the Apostle Paul in Corinth; "What happens when one die?" "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?" (1 Cor. 15:35). What they wanted to know was whether we will retain our sexes and genders when we are raised. Would God re-assembles the individual at the resurrection and give the being their original person and age?

Earlier, before Paul, Jesus was asked a similar question and Jesus answered them thus; "You are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven" (Matthew 22:29-30). Jesus was teaching about the resurrection and how we would all be. Not with our biological bodies which are dust and have returned to dust.

Joseph Ratzinger, later Pope Benedict XVI, in his explanation of the Creedal formula; "I believe in and look forward to the resurrection of the dead." explained that; This resurrection does not consist at all in the idea of the restoration of bodies. Even when John (6:63) and Paul in (1 Cor. 15:50) state with all possible emphasis the 'resurrection of the flesh,' the 'resurrection of the body' is not a 'resurrection of physical bodies' but the resurrection of persons, and this is not in the return of the 'fleshly body. We have to exert caution on an overemphasis on bodies. The awakening of the dead (not bodies!) is what Scripture speaks about and this is what is reflected in the Creed. (*See Joseph Ratzinger; Introduction to Christianity*).

The doctrine of bodily resurrection is fundamental to the Christian faith. Jesus returned to life after having been dead and buried. We Christians hope for a similar resurrection. The resurrection is 'not merely a resuscitation into the same kind of body, but is rather a going on, out on the other side of death. The partnership of the soul and body is temporarily dissolved at death. The soul and body partnership is traveling on a three-stage journey of life, death, and resurrection. At the resurrection, the person takes on an imperishable form like the angels. St. Paul describes it in this way; "For our dying bodies must be transformed into bodies that will never die; our mortal bodies must be transformed into immortal bodies." (1Cor. 15:53). Quoting Ratzinger again; it goes without saying that the life of him who has risen from the dead is not once again bios, the biological form of our mortal life within history; it is *zoe*, new, different, definitive life; life that has stepped beyond the mortal realm of bios and history, a realm that has here been surpassed by a greater power.

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