

10-1-2023 Sunday Sermon Message
Devotional of the Week: Psalm 91:1-16
Text: Psalm 17:14-15

Title: **God will change our vile body into the glorious body of Christ at the rapture**

King David, who lived about three thousand years ago, confessed in prayer that his only hope and greatest satisfaction in life was to be changed into the image of the Lord Jesus Christ in his resurrection through the Spirit of Christ who lived in him. He foresaw and confessed in the Holy Spirit that Christ Jesus, who would appear on earth in the distant future, would be his Lord:

" The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." (Psalm 110:1)

When King David **confessed, " I will behold thy face in righteousness,"** he testified that he who lived in the days of the law would see the face of the Lord because of the righteousness of the law. But now, in New Testament times, it is justification to receive the Lord Jesus Christ by faith, to be justified by grace through the blood of Christ, to be born again by the Holy Spirit, to the bride of Christ, who is the child of God and belongs to the church of God.

King David also believed that he would be resurrected from Abraham's bosom (paradise) (Matthew 27:50-53) and be one of the firstfruits of the resurrection when Christ Jesus died on the cross and was buried to shed water and blood and takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29) and resurrected on the third day. Furthermore, he believed that when he resurrected, he would be transformed into the image of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is indescribably wonderful and mysterious. The Apostle Paul and the Apostle John, who indwelt the same Spirit of Christ and the Holy Spirit as King David, bore witness in the same faith as King David:

" For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:²¹ Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself..... Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.² Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.³ And every

man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."(Philippians 3:20-21, 1 John 3:1-3)

For the past six thousand years, since the first man, Adam, sinned and lost the image and likeness of God, God has planned through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ that everyone who believes in Him shall be justified and transformed into the same body as the Lord Jesus Christ appears at the rapture, when the body shall be resurrected like King David.

God said to Adam, the first man who sinned:

" , Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;¹⁸ Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;¹⁹ In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."(Genesis 3:17-19)

When God created the first man, Adam, He did not want his body to return to dust in vain:

" And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them....And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."(Genesis 1:26-27; 2:7)

God breathed the breath of life into Adam and created him as a living soul, but He gave life under the guise of obedience to the word that he would not eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. But when he could not resist the temptation of the serpent and sinned, he lost the life that had been given to him. The breath of life that had been given to him was gone, his spirit died instantly, and the living soul was supposed to be wandering as his body returned to dust. In the end, Adam lived for 930 years and died (Genesis 5:5).

But God planned to send His only begotten Son into the world to be a sacrifice to remove the sins that plagued the world, and to overcome the devil and bruise the devil's

head through His resurrection to restore His plan before the creation of the world (Gen. 3:15).

God called the Apostle Paul to preach the gospel of Christ, the gospel of grace, and the gospel of peace, so that whoever believes this gospel shall have the grace to save the soul and regenerate the spirit from the dead. The Apostle Peter testified of the blessings of believing in the Lord Jesus Christ:

" Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:⁹ Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.¹⁰ Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you:¹¹ Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.¹² Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into."(1 Peter 1:8-12)

God gives all those who have lost their image and likeness of God because of sin and are born sinners to hear the gospel of Christ through the death, burial, and resurrection of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and to understand God's plan, and to all those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, giving the Holy Spirit, which is the breath of life that Adam lost, so that the dead spirit may be revived, and the soul that has lost salvation may be restored to become a living soul and live with Him in heaven forever and ever.

Now we must realize how important the rapture that shall take place in the day of Christ is. In order to realize this, we need to know step by step what is in God's plan of salvation. We must understand through the Word that God's plan of salvation is accomplished in three stages.

The first step is that when sinners hear the gospel and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and receive Him, they receive the Holy Spirit and the dead spirit is brought back to life. Jesus said, **" Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God...Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."**(John 3:3, 5).

The Apostle Paul testified of this:

" For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."(1 Corinthians 12:13)

The second step is that the soul is saved when the spirit is born again. The salvation of the soul means that the soul does not die forever, so if the spirit is not reborn by the Holy Spirit, the living soul is destined to burn like garbage in the lake of fire in hell, not in the kingdom of God for all eternity. Therefore, when the soul is saved through the regeneration of the spirit, it lives with God forever.

If you don't know the third stage of salvation, you can't understand what the rapture is. The third step is the salvation of the body. Even though the spirit and soul have been saved and made into the image of God, the body that has already become a body of sin because of sin must be saved.

Although the redeemed spirit and soul dwell in the body of sin, God allows them to live as if they had already been putting off the body of sin through the circumcision of Christ. The Apostle Paul testified of this:

" In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:"Colossians 2:11)

The salvation of this body is completed when we are resurrected in an incorruptible body on the day of the rapture. In other words, the day of the rapture is the day when the body of sin is resurrected and ascends to heaven in the glorious body of Jesus Christ to meet the Lord. Only then will God's restoration of man to his own image and likeness be completed.

The Apostle Paul testified that all of these plans were preplanned in Christ before the foundation of the world:

" According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:⁵ Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,⁶ To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."(Ephesians 1:4-6)

Amen! Hallelujah!