

Restoration of the Kingdom of God – 7

“Those who are counted worthy” by Jesus at the judgement will be awarded with the *“divine nature”* - **1 Peter 1:4** - they will not be able, he taught, to *“die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection”* - **Luke 20:35**. These new immortals, added Jesus, *“will inherit the earth”* - **Matthew 5:5**. Despite this, Vine’s *Expository Dictionary* (p.208) asserts that HEAVEN “is to be the eternal dwelling-place of the saints in resurrection glory - **2 Corinthians 5:1.**”

- But the apostle Paul had no expectation of leaving his mortal body to go to heaven. He goes on to say in **2 Corinthians 5:4**, *“not because we want to be unclothed [die], but further clothed [with an immortal body, in v. 2 called “our house which is from heaven”], that mortality may be swallowed up by life.”*

Paul did not expect to go to be with Jesus as soon as he died. He was waiting for Jesus to come back to the earth. This is clear from his other writings -

- **Colossians 3:4** *“When Christ, who is your life, appears, then, you also will appear with him in glory.”*
Romans 8:16-17 *“We are children of God, and if children, then heirs - heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together”* [Greek, *sundoxazo* = “to exalt to dignity all at the same time”].

If Paul believed in going to heaven at death, then he would have written to the believers in Thessalonica, “you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, so that you may go to his son in heaven” - but he did not say that. He actually said -

- **1 Thessalonians 1:9-10** *“you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven”.*

Paul hoped for a new body. He said in -

- **1 Corinthians 15:39** *“All flesh is not the same: Men have one kind of flesh, animals have another, birds another and fish another. 40 There are also heavenly bodies and there are earthly bodies; but the splendor of the heavenly bodies is one kind, and the splendor of the earthly bodies is another... 44 ... There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body”.*

It is these two distinct and **different kinds of bodies** Paul has in his mind when writing the 15th chapter of his first letter. He speaks of only two living states, the **present** and the **future**; and both of them are **bodily states**. He has nothing to say about any disembodied state, the interval between the two being passed over as nothing. The first is the *“natural body,”* or *“earthly body,”* he refers to as *“our earthly house, this tent”*. The second is the *“spiritual body,”* or *“heavenly body”* which he calls *“a building of God,”* *“our house which is from heaven.”*

- More about this soon, God willing.