

The Resurrection of the Flesh

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The Resurrection of the Flesh

Introduction

The resurrection of the flesh is a cardinal Christian doctrine¹. The resurrection teaching was central to apostolic proclamation² and features prominently in the New Testament in the words of Christ himself³. It also was prefigured in the Old Testament predictions of the future ministry of the Messiah⁴.

The connection between the resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of the believer is fundamental to understanding the resurrection of the believer⁵. There is some level of similarity and some degree of dissimilarity between the two events. For instance, Christ was the prototype of our resurrection⁶, but we expect to not be raised with the scars of our death⁷. Christ ate and

¹ 1 Cor 15:14 And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.

² 1 Cor 15:1 ... gospel ... Christ died ... was buried ... rose again...

³ John 2:19 Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.

⁴ Psalm 16: 10 For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

⁵ 1 John 3: 2 ... it doth not yet appear what we shall be ... when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

⁶ Col 1:18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

⁷ John 20:27 Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.

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drank after his resurrection⁸, but we expect to not need to eat or drink in the resurrection⁹. Much of the discussion about the similarity and dissimilarity between the two is speculative and needs to be clearly labeled as such.

Finally, the doctrine of the resurrection is an irritation to the world. In the Greek dominated culture of the apostles, it flew in the face of the ruling paradigm of Platonic dualism which viewed the flesh as the prisonhouse of the spirit¹⁰. In the modern world the resurrection flies in the face of scientific skepticism and materialistic philosophies which deny the existence of the spirit and anything that hints of supernaturalism.

Thesis

The current controversy, in the Christian community, centers around the degree of continuity between the current body and the resurrection body. This paper takes the position that the resurrection of the flesh is the raising of the body from death to life with the added attributes of glory and immortality. This paper advocates a high view of the level of continuity between the body in this life and the resurrected body. This paper will discuss the historical background and exegetical debate points of the controversies surrounding the resurrection of the flesh. Since the case is either made or destroyed on the basis of the Scriptural texts, the proof texts used to deny the physical resurrection are examined in detail.

⁸ Acts 10:41 ... us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.

⁹ Rev 7:16 They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more;

¹⁰ 1 Cor 1:23 But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness;

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Historical Background

The historical background has three main time divisions. These are the pre-Christian philosophy, historical Church stance, and current controversies. While it is beyond the scope of this paper to cover the historical background in detail, it is important to have a broad picture of the past to understand the present debate points¹¹. Much of the current debate is merely an echo of past controversies.

Pre-Christian Philosophy

At the center of pre-Christian philosophy is Platonic dualism¹². This is the notion that the soul is immortal and that the flesh is the prison-house of the spirit. This dominant paradigm was at the center of Greek thought and was a significant component of the resistance that Paul encountered in preaching the Gospel¹³. The resurrection of the flesh was simply a foreign concept to the Greek mind.

¹¹ The historical background was covered in a paper done for a Church History class, by the author, found on the Internet at (note the upper case letters in the path): <http://members.xoom.com/DouglasGG/bible/jcrose/resurr.htm>

¹² Geisler & Feinberg. Introduction to Philosophy. pp. 212-213. Plato viewed the soul as immortal and the body as temporal.

¹³ Acts 17: 18 Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoics, encountered him [Paul]. And some said, What will this babbling say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection. ... 32 And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter.

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Historical Church Stance

The historical Church has consistently affirmed the physicality of the resurrection body. Over the centuries isolated individuals have attempted to deny this, such as Valentinius and Origen. As Schep points out, these individuals were answered consistently by the historical church¹⁴ in its apologetic replies to heretics¹⁵ and the Creeds they formulated¹⁶.

Current Controversies

This section covers some of the recent controversies over the resurrection of the flesh.

Geisler / Harris Controversy

Perhaps, the most noted recent controversy in the evangelical camp has occurred inside the Evangelical Free Church and at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (TEDS) between Norman Geisler and Murray Harris. Harris wrote a book in which he presented a spiritualizing view of the resurrection¹⁷. Geisler responded with the book answering Harris¹⁸, and a number of articles in various Evangelical Journals. The issue also involved the opposition of tenure of Harris by Geisler at TEDS. As a final volley, Harris wrote a reply directly answering Geisler in an

¹⁴ Schep, p. 229. "Whenever the early Church Fathers and Creeds speak of the resurrection "of the flesh," they mean by "flesh" man's flesh body. The word "flesh" is employed to safeguard the truth against spiritualizing interpretations."

¹⁵ Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, and Tertullian, *Prescription Against Heretics*, are two such apologetical documents.

¹⁶ Apostle's Creed "I believe in ... the resurrection of the flesh".

¹⁷ Harris, Murray. *Raised Immortal*.

¹⁸ Geisler, Norman L. *Battle for the Resurrection*.

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appendix¹⁹. Geisler responded with another revision of “Battle for the Resurrection” and another book²⁰.” Geisler also did a radio program on “The Bible Answerman” with Hank Hanegraaff where he presented his position on the resurrection²¹. Geisler is so literal that he believes that people who are missing limb in this life will be missing limbs in the next.

Geisler has been also critical of other evangelicals such as Millard Erickson for what he perceives as their compromise on this issue.²² Geisler criticizes Erickson’s position as “a concession to Gnosticism.”

Extradimensionality and Timelessness

Alternative objections against the resurrection come from modern physics. String theory²³

¹⁹ Harris, Murray, From Grave to Glory.

²⁰ Geisler, Norman L. In Defense of the Resurrection.

²¹ Geisler and Hanegraaff, CRI Tape C052.

²² Geilser, Norman L. Evangelical Theology Society Papers 1995, Theological Research Exchange Network. Portland, Or. P. 7. Geisler wrote “Even Erickson claims that at the ascension Jesus’ body was no longer tangible or physical , writing: “We will not have those characteristics of Jesus’ post resurrection earthly body which appear inconsistent with the description of our resurrection bodies (e. g., physical tangibility and need to eat).”

²³ Discussed on the Internet at:

http://quark.theory.caltech.edu/stringtheory/index_p.html

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hypothesizes that we live in a ten dimension universe²⁴. Just as the characters in a comic strip are unable to escape the limits of their "flatness", we are part of the three dimensional universe are unable to escape those two dimensions²⁵. God is said to inhabit all ten dimensions simultaneously and the claim is that we will be able to do so at death as well²⁶. This allows its

²⁴ From <http://superstringtheory.com/cosmo.html> - "Superstring theories require 10 spacetime dimensions. Today we observe four spacetime dimensions: one time and three space (height, width, and depth, for example). If string theories are right (and we think they are, because they contain quantum gravity) then during the expansion of the Universe, only time and three space dimensions can expand and grow."

²⁵ Ibid, "Our present natural, or mortal bodies, (because of the Fall) allow us to experience a flow of time from the future through the present and into the past--only. This kind of time is known as "linear time" and we can not escape this imprisonment in time as long as we still inhabit our fallen present bodies. It is true that in spirit and soul, regenerated people already are in touch with eternity, we already possess eternal life and are aware of qualities of time in the heavenly places they we were not aware of before coming to know God. Arthur Custance eloquently discusses the many dimensions of time in his books ["Journey out of Time"](#) and ["Time and Eternity"](#)."

²⁶ From the Internet site: <http://www.ldolphin.org/newbodies.html> "When we die we step out of time and enter eternity--"to be absent from the body is to be at home with the Lord"--that is clear. Our immediate experience is to arrive at point in the heavenly dimension where eternity invades time--an event we call the resurrection of the righteous dead. It is described for us in I Thessalonians 4:13-18. We believers from the age of the church all arrive together and we all put on your new bodies as if there's a set of fine

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advocates to assert logically contradictory arguments with the claim that somehow it all works out in ten dimensions.

These explanations have the added benefits of blinding with science and a dose of unfalsifiability. Few people, even inside the scientific community, can understand ten dimensions. The adherents can say that "sure we are physical in the resurrection, but we inhabit dimensions beyond the physical". Who would dare to correct such an assertion and risk looking foolish scientifically? The fact is that this is pseudo-science at its worst. It makes the church look foolish before a world that is already skeptical of its claims.

Chuck Smith²⁷, most likely borrowing from Lambert Dolphin and Chuck Missler²⁸, appeals to

clothes and we were dressing for a magnificent wedding (which is the actual situation)."

²⁷ Senior Pastor of Calvary Chapel of Costa Mesa. Smith is a prominent evangelical in the Southern California area. On tape 5263, Smith says: "Right now, the **first resurrection is a process over a period of time**. It began with Jesus Christ. He is the first fruit and **it continues** as each child of God living and believing in Jesus Christ as they **fall asleep in Christ**. The first resurrection continues. It will be completed when all of the martyred saints from the tribulation period have been fulfilled and entered the heavenly realm. That will complete the first resurrection."

²⁸ On the Internet at: <http://www.khouse.org/>

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this approach when he states that God inhabits a timeless dimension²⁹. Further, he says, we become residents of that timeless dimension at death as well. Hence, for Smith, the day of our death is the final day for all mankind. We all appear to arrive at judgment simultaneously. In Smith's view, the resurrection occurs at the moment of death since that moment is the same moment as the judgment and all people are basically "fast forwarded" to that point outside time at their death. This is really the same as the ancient doctrine of soul sleep, but packaged under a psuedo-scientific guise.

There are several problems with these approaches. Although Jesus was a first century inhabitant, he was also God. Future developments in science would not surprise him and his teachings outlive the faddish nature of scientific discoveries. Jesus did not teach extra-dimensionality as the solution, although adherents of extra-dimensionality do look to some of his words as source material. There's no reason to assume that string theory is the ultimate solution to the problem, it's merely today's way of pushing off the problem. In some ways it provides the same sort of challenge as Darwin presented at the end of the 19th century.

Another charge against this position is that it's ultimately anti-incarnational. Even if God does inhabit all 10 dimensions simultaneously, when the Second Person of the Trinity became a man, God was limited, at least in some sense, to three dimensions in the person of Jesus Christ. The "scientific" explanation of many of the miracles, is not that they were miraculous, but rather that Christ sort of "remembered" how to manipulate the dimensions or manipulated the dimensions to perform the miracles. Thus, matter could be brought into existence in this way at the feeding of the five thousand, for instance. Or, due to time compression, the moment we die could be the last day and we could all arrive at the same point at the same time.

²⁹ Smith, Chuck. The Word for Today. Tape 4743.

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Hyper-Preterist Challenges

At the other end of the eschatological spectrum³⁰ is hyper-preterism. Hyper-preterism is the belief that all prophecy, including the Second Coming, Resurrection, and Final Judgement have already occurred. Hyper-preterists spiritualize the resurrection equating it with the new birth. Since this position is clearly outside of orthodox Christian belief³¹, it is also beyond the scope of this paper to present a detailed refutation of the position³².

Skeptical/Atheistic Challenges

Another area of challenge comes from some of the modern ideas of biology. In particular, the notion that human bodies are made of cells which are constantly recycling and being replaced, about every seven years. Actually, it should be noted that not all cells are replaced in the human body. Collagen and brain cells are never replaced. The argument is made that if there is no continuity of the present body due to this replacement, then why does there need to be any continuity with the body at resurrection? Certainly it must be admitted by all sides, that if the human body was completely obliterated by an event, such as a nuclear weapon, that God is able to come up with new material to "build a body". Even in the current condition of new cells being created there's still a continuity of identity that is conserved. The body in all the stages of life still remains physical. What is observed is only a change of various aspects of the physical (size, color, etc.)

³⁰ As contrasted with Dispensational literalism.

³¹ The fathers of the Church as well as the creeds are consistent in affirming a literal future resurrection.

³² <http://www.preterist.com> is the home site for many hyper-preterists.

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For example, the author was at the Phoenix airport recently and saw a man who he had not seen in nearly 15 years. The person looked familiar and upon questioning did turn out to be the person that the author knew. The person had lost some hair, gained a bit of weight, and gotten more wrinkled, but the after talking with the person for several minutes it was clear that this was still the same person. The essential attribute of identity remained even with the two complete change of cells that science tells us happens in that time.

Since the Bible often does not put its concepts into the same sort of linguistic packages as modern science, mapping the two together becomes problematic. In the resurrection, our bodies are described as "incorruptible" and that we will never die. Does that mean that the entire organism will not die, and that all of the individual cells will never die? Is the body contingent on God making constant repairs, or will there be a change of the nature of the very elements of the body themselves so that there is no more atomic decay? The Bible does not address this with any specificity.

Exegetical Debate Points

At the risk of a gross over-simplification, the exegetical debate points center on alleged discrepancies between the narrative accounts of the resurrection and the Pauline descriptions of the resurrection body. This is what has led Erickson and Harris to positions denying the essential physicality of the resurrection body.

In the case of Erickson, he solves the dilemma by positing a change of body between the

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resurrection of Christ and his ascension³³. Erickson can't reconcile the passages where the resurrection body is described by Luke as flesh and bones³⁴ with those where the resurrection body is described by Paul as a spiritual body³⁵. The solution, at least for Erickson, is to assume that Christ had one body at the resurrection, and a different body at his ascension. In contradiction, Erickson writes that that Second Coming will be physical³⁶.

The exegesis of several crucial passages is the key to the problem. Can the Pauline passages be understood as a physical resurrection? Is there an essential contradiction between the two sorts of passages which requires the change of body at the ascension? To answer the question, the following sections will examine each of the difficult passages. Finally, the passages making a positive case for the physical resurrection will be examined.

1 Cor 15:44 "spiritual body"

In 1 Cor., Paul uses the phrase "spiritual body" to describe the resurrection body. If the resurrection body is presumed to be physical, this appears at least on the surface to contradict that premise. However, a closer examination of the phrase "spiritual body" shows that there's nothing about the phrase denying physicality at all. As an example, the rock that followed the children of Israel in the wilderness is described as a "spiritual rock" out of which flowed

³³ Erickson, Millard. *Christian Theology, Volume 3*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 1987. Erickson wrote about the ascension of Jesus that: "The ascension, involving a transition from this space-time universe to the spiritual realm of heaven, may well have produced yet another transformation.

³⁴ Luke 24:39 Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

³⁵ 1 Cor 15:44 It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.

³⁶ Erickson, p. 1189. "... the statement that Jesus will return on the same way as he departed implies that the return will be bodily."

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"spiritual water" (1 Cor 10:14). Yet, from reading the narrative account in the Old Testament it is clear that this rock was a physical rock that was really physically present. Water really flowed from the rock when Moses struck it. The word "spiritual" is simply used as an adjective to describe the spiritual characteristics of the rock. The Spirit of God animated the rock.

In a similar manner, a "spiritual body" is really still a physical body. It is controlled by the spirit, and is not subject to carnal/fleshy desires. The fact that it's called a spiritual body does not deny it's essential physicality, but rather shows that the Spirit controls the body.

1 Cor 15:50 Flesh and Blood Cannot Inherit the Kingdom of God

Similarly, the phrase "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" is not actually a denial of the physicality of the resurrection body, but rather is a description of the contrast between the unregenerate person who has not been born again (flesh and blood = a carnal person) and the spiritual person. The spiritual person is not motivated by carnal desires and a person who is motivated by their carnal desires won't enter the Kingdom of God.

Chuck Smith also appeals to this passage as evidence that the essential nature of the resurrection body of Jesus is spiritual³⁷.

³⁷ Smith, Chuck. *The Word for Today*, Costa Mesa, Ca. Tape 5263. Smith said: "But flesh and blood, can't inherit the kingdom of heaven, so I've got to have a new body. A new body that will be fashioned like to the body of Jesus Christ; His **spiritual**, heavenly body. That's what my new body will be like." Note that Smith is not saying that the body will be made new, but that it will be replaced. Other tapes which demonstrate the heterodox position of Chuck Smith on the resurrection include 4743, 5266, 5702, 8150, 8156, 8661, and 8667. These tapes are as recent as 1997.

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Matt 23:30 "like the angels at the resurrection"

The passages describing believers as being like the angels at the resurrection is understood by some to refer to the nature of the resurrection bodies. The angels are described as spirits (Heb 1:14) and if we are to be like the angels, we will be spirits also – or so the reasoning goes. This ignores the core context of the Mt. passage where Christ is contrasting sexuality and sexual roles in the current age with the age to come. Just because there is no longer marriage or the pro-generation of offspring does not mean that the essential nature of humankind will be non-material.

Walking Through Walls

Some evidence is inferred from the resurrection accounts themselves to attempt to make the case against the resurrection of the physical body. In particular, the fact that Jesus came and stood in a room with locked doors (John 20:19) is taken as proof that Jesus walked through the walls. First, there's nothing in the text, or any other Biblical text, which portrays Jesus as walking through walls. While Jesus was in his flesh he (and Peter as well) walked on water. Walking on water violates the same laws of nature that appearing in a locked room violates.

Secondly, there's nothing unique about Jesus disappearing from their midst in such a manner as that. Jesus did the same thing in his pre-resurrection body. When a hostile crowd tried to take him to a cliff and throw him over, he "passing through their midst he left". Additionally, in Acts, Philip is described in a similar manner as being taken in the spirit to another place³⁸. This certainly was supernatural, but offers no proof that the resurrection body is immaterial.

³⁸ Acts 8:39 And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip,

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Resurrection Appearances/Visions

Paul describes his calling as a “vision” to King Agrippa (Acts 26:19). Yet, when we read the account of Paul on the road to Damascus, it's clear that Paul hears a real voice³⁹ and is knocked off his horse. The others with him heard a voice⁴⁰ but it was not articulated for them.

This appearance is similar to the transfiguration which was prior to the resurrection. At the transfiguration, Christ appeared in glorified form to the disciples. However, the transfiguration of Jesus is explicitly described as a “vision” by Jesus⁴¹, so even before Jesus was crucified he appeared in a vision to the disciples.

There is also some ambiguity in the Acts 26:198 passage as to whether Paul is referring to the experience on the road to Damascus, or to the vision that Ananias received telling him to inform

³⁹ Acts 9:4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

⁴⁰ Acts 9:7 And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man.

⁴¹ Matt 17:9 And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead.

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Paul of his calling⁴². In the vision of Ananias, he has is told that Paul has had a vision of a man coming to see him for the sake of healing him and for the imparting of spiritual gifts and calling on Paul. In that example, even though Anaias is in a physical body, Paul still has a vision about him. Similarly, Christ could appear to someone in a vision and yet still be physical. There's nothing about a person appearing in a vision to another person that requires that the person appearing in the vision be non-physical. In other passages, Paul describes the experience of his conversion as an appearance of Christ⁴³.

They did not recognize Him

There were several post-resurrection appearances of Christ where the people who saw him did not initially recognize him. The first appearance to Mary in the tomb is such an example. She

⁴² Acts 9:10-12 And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight.

⁴³ Acts 26:16 But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee;

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mistook him for the gardener of the grounds around the tomb of Christ⁴⁴. This can be understood as grief and concern over the missing body. In some of the passages, people knew Jesus was dead and simply did not expect him to be resurrected. In the case of the men on the road to Emmaus, the identity of Jesus was supernaturally hidden⁴⁵ from the men as he sparked their faith by telling them that he had to die and rise again⁴⁶. The eyes were then opened and they recognized who He was⁴⁷. Geisler lists a number of reasons that they might not have recognized Jesus⁴⁸:

Supernatural reasons (see above)

Perplexity (Luke 24:17-21)

Sorrow (John 20:11-15)

Dim light (John 20:14-15)

Suddenness of His appearance startled them (Luke 24:36-37)

Different clothing (John 19:23-24 – grave clothes were left in the grave)

Spiritually dull (Luke 24:25-26)

⁴⁴ John 20:15 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.

⁴⁵ Luke 24:16 But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.

⁴⁶ Luke 24:27 And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

⁴⁷ Luke 24: 31 And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.

⁴⁸ Geisler, Battle For the Resurrection, pp. 45-46.

The Positive Case

The positive case for the physical nature of the resurrection is quite conclusive from the words of Christ and the apostolic witness.

Luke 24:39 "a spirit hath not flesh and bones"

At the resurrection, Jesus made some strong statements about the physicality of his own resurrection body. In Luke 24:39, Jesus describes his own body in both positive and negative terms. He explicitly denies that his resurrection body is immaterial and explicitly asserts that his resurrection body is material.

The strength of this assertion has left those who deny the physical resurrection with few alternative explanations. Chuck Smith asserts that the resurrection of Jesus was a singularity in that regard and that the reason God raised his body is because he was sinless. Smith informs us that we should not expect to be raised like Jesus since we are not sinless. Smith claims that “God doesn’t redeem the body⁴⁹”, but Paul pointed out that God does redeem the body⁵⁰.

Millard Erickson accepts this passage as proof of a physical resurrection, but states that to reconcile the other passages (listed previously) it is necessary to posit a different body for Christ presently than the body at the resurrection.

⁴⁹ Smith, Chuck, The Word For Today, Tape 4491. Clip can be heard on the Internet at: <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Forum/4491/notbody.rm> (requires Real Audio 5.0 player and Internet Explorer Browser for streaming audio).

⁵⁰ Rom 8:23 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.

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To deny that Christ was in a body of flesh and bones, it's necessary to assert some extra knowledge that's not present in the text. It's as if the person is claiming to know what Christ would have told the disciples if only they were sophisticated enough to understand it. This is chronological snobbery.

2 John 7 "Is coming in the flesh"

2 John 7⁵¹ is particularly devastating to the position of those who assert that Christ is no longer in a body of flesh⁵². The Greek language construction of passage⁵³ suggests that Christ presently is in a body of flesh and that he will return in a body of flesh. Further, it describes those who deny this as bringing the doctrine of Antichrist and being deceivers. This is a particularly stern warning to those who deny that Christ is presently in a body of flesh.

⁵¹ 2 John 7 For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.

⁵² Some commentators miss this point in their exegetical analysis of the passage. Others that don't include A. T. Robertson's Word Pictures in the New Testament and several of the in-depth Greek text commentaries.

⁵³ They key part is the present participial construction translated "is come" in the KJV.

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Eating and Drinking after the Resurrection

There are a number of passages that show Christ eating and drinking after the resurrection. He's described as eating fish, a honeycomb⁵⁴ and bread⁵⁵. He's also described as drinking⁵⁶. Christ seems to be going out of his way to deny that he's a spirit in these passages by the act of eating and drinking in front of the disciples⁵⁷. Although angels are described as eating⁵⁸ in the Old Testament, they are not eating and drinking as proofs that they are material in the way that Christ did.

Pre-Death Comments of Christ

Before his crucifixion, Christ commented directly on the resurrection of his flesh when he said "destroy this body and in three days I will raise it up". This evidences the high degree of continuity between the pre-death body of Christ and his resurrection body. The body that was to be destroyed is the same body that was to be raised up. This established a continuous identity that the empty tomb finally testifies to.

⁵⁴ Luke 24:42 And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb.

⁵⁵ Luke 24:30 And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.

⁵⁶ Acts 10:41 Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.

⁵⁷ Luke 24:43 And he took it, and did eat before them.

⁵⁸ Gen. 19:1, 3 And there came two angels to Sodom at even ... he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat.

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Conclusions

Alternative views have gained in popularity in recent days due to the prominence of their advocates. These views are nothing more than rehashed Platonic dualism and in some cases Gnosticism. The denial of the resurrection of the flesh, in some cases, is symptomatic of a denial of the power of God to raise the dead.

However, the resurrection of Christ was of his physical body. The resurrection of the believers will be like that of Christ. The church has consistently affirmed the resurrection of the physical body and there are no Scriptures which deny it. There's no compelling reason to reject the doctrine and every reason to accept it.

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