

WILL WE RECOGNIZE EACH OTHER IN HEAVEN?

INTRODUCTION:

The title of this lesson is one of the most frequently asked questions about the Bible. Everyone seems to have a strong curiosity to know what we will be like or look like in the next life. Will we have a body, float around like a spirit, or what? If a body, what will it be like and will it be recognizable as us? Does the Bible address these and similar questions? Let's see!

I. CHRISTIANS WILL HAVE BODIES IN THE NEXT LIFE.

I Corinthians 15:35-38. Using the analogy of a person's body being like a planted seed, what is said NOT to be planted? What is God said to give to that "planted seed" (meaning the body that is buried at death)?

II. THIS BODY WILL BE IMPERISHABLE AND SPIRITUAL.

- A. Corinthians 15:42-44. Name four things said about the nature of our bodies upon being raised. How is the distinction between our present bodies and our future bodies described?
- B. Revelation 21:4-5. What experiences will be absent from a person's body in the "new heaven"? How does God describe "everything" in that state?

III. CHRISTIANS WILL BE LIKE ANGELS.

Matthew 22:24-30. What earthly state or relationship will NOT be recognized following the resurrection?

IV. CHRISTIANS WILL BE LIKE JESUS.

- A. I John 3:2. What will Christians be like when Jesus appears? How will they SEE Jesus? Will Jesus be recognizable?
- B. I Corinthians 15:49. What kind of "likeness" ("image") will Christians bear in heaven?

V. PEOPLE IN THE AFTERLIFE WERE RECOGNIZABLE.

- A. Luke 16:19-30. Whom did the "rich man" (in "Hades" v. 23) recognize from a distance?

- B. Matthew 22:32. Who is said to be "living" in this verse? What is suggested by these men being referred to by NAME? (Refer to Luke 16:23 where it is said that Abraham was recognizable).
- C. Matthew 8:11. What is suggested by the fact that people will dine with "Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" in the kingdom of HEAVEN?
- D. Luke 23:40-43. What is suggested by Jesus promising that the repentant thief would BE with him that day in PARADISE (See II Corinthians 12:3-4 on "Paradise")?

Other discussion questions

1. Do you think it would DETRACT from the joy of being in heaven IF people there were NOT able to recognize one another?
2. Since we know that recognition in heaven will NOT include sexual distinctions (See Matthew 22:30), does that necessarily imply that people will lose their INDIVIDUALITY or their RECOGNITION AS PERSONS?
3. Since Matthew 22:30 says Christians will be "like angels" in the next life, how does that bear on the fact that angels have NAMES? (Michael - Jude 9; Revelation 12:7; Gabriel - Luke 1:19, 26)