

GLORIFICATION

INTRODUCTION



- We come to the final stage in the *ordo salutis* with the doctrine of glorification, which is the final result and aim of the many steps in God's plan to bring sinners to himself
- The salvation Christ purchased for us did not come all at once...rather it was applied to us in stages
- Glorification represents the final stage of the application of our salvation...when our salvation will be fully granted to us and we will live forever in the new heavens and earth, perfectly enjoying all the benefits of salvation that Christ has won for us
- This is where our true hope lies as believers...not mere wishful thinking about some possible future event
- Rather, biblical hope is certain, a confident expectation of good things to come for believers based on God and his precious promises

Romans 5:2 ~ through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.

Ephesians 1:18 ~ I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

Colossians 1:27 ~ to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

¹ <https://www.challies.com/visual-theology/visual-theology-the-order-of-salvation/>

Titus 3:7 ~ so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Hebrews 6:19 ~ This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil,

1 Peter 1:13 ~ Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

- “It should be easy to see from this that our Christian hope should be a cause of great joy and happiness! As we consider and look forward to our future with Christ, our hearts will become very excited – thus giving us joy and happiness during our stay upon the earth.”²
- Hope is critical for a life that glorifies God and enables us to endure trials, mortify sin, and set our minds on things above
- Sadly, many believers seem to live without a lot of hope, focused on the present rather than the eternal, consumed with the earthly rather than the heavenly, and overwhelmed with the many issues of life on a broken planet
- This lack of hope manifests itself in spiritual depression, fleshly living, lack of interest in spiritual things, and worldly-mindedness
- Part of living a robust Christian life is knowing what awaits us as believers and being confident of the wonderful things the Lord has in store for us
- Ignorance of these things almost always results in a dull and listless Christian life
- A proper understanding of our future glorification gives us this hope!
- “So the first thing that we need to do if we are going to be a people of greater hope is to learn about the good things that God has in store for us. But this won’t be enough. We must also see the beauty and excellency in these things so that we will set our affections on them. We can’t just know what is in store for us and call it hope. We must look forward to what God has in store for us... When we have our heart set on enjoying a wonderful eternity with Christ, that is hope... the joy that arises from this hope is a very powerful force that drives us to be ‘zealous for good works’ and the glory of God. Our hope fuels obedience.”³
- “There are many things that Christians are to hope for. One of these things is our glorification. Focusing on our future glorification is a very effective way to increase our hope because it involves so many of the good things in store for us. It involves the return of Christ, the resurrection of the body, our reunion with all of the saints of all time, and our introduction into our eternal home of the new heavens and new earth where righteousness dwells. As we consider glorification, remember that this and every aspect of our hope is focused on Christ. Jesus Christ is the object of our hope. We rejoice in the ‘good things’ in store for our future because they glorify Christ and bring us into a greater enjoyment of Christ Himself.”⁴
- “Scripture regards the doctrine of glorification as absolutely essential to the Christian faith, so much so that if it were not true, the apostle Paul says that we, of all people, would be most to be pitied (1 Cor. 15:12–19). It was the hope of a glorified body that galvanized Paul to totally surrender his natural body to the mistreatment and persecution that attended a life of gospel ministry... The ‘sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us,’ and so believers welcome the sufferings of Christ if it means that ‘we may also be glorified with him’ (Rom. 8:17–18; cf. Phil. 3:10–11). Therefore, while life in a world and in a body that are both cursed by sin causes us to groan, that groaning is assuaged by the eager anticipation of ‘the redemption of our bodies’ (Rom. 8:23).”⁵

² <https://www.monergism.com/great-christian-hope-glorification>

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, eds., *Biblical Doctrine: A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017), 654–655.

DEFINITION OF GLORIFICATION

- “Glorification is the final step in the application of redemption. It will happen when Christ returns and raises from the dead the bodies of all believers for all time who have died, and reunites them with their souls and changes the bodies of all believers who remain alive, thereby giving all believers at the same time perfect resurrection bodies like his own.”⁶
- “[Glorification is the] last stage in the process of salvation, namely the resurrection of the body at the second coming of Jesus Christ and the entrance into the eternal kingdom of God. In glorification believers attain complete conformity to the image and likeness of the glorified Christ and are freed from both physical and spiritual defect. Glorification ensures that believers will never again experience bodily decay, death or illness, and will never again struggle with sin.”⁷
- “Glorification is the radical transformation of both the body and the soul of believers, perfecting them in holiness, and thereby fitting them for eternal life on the new earth in perfect communion with the triune God.”⁸
- “[Glorification is] the complete and final redemption of the whole person, when in the integrity of body and spirit, the people of God will be conformed to the image of the risen, exalted, and glorified Redeemer, when the very body of their humiliation will be conformed to the body of Christ’s glory.”⁹

THE INTERMEDIATE STATE IS NOT THE SAME AS GLORIFICATION

- When we die, God completes our sanctification and removes all of our sins from our hearts and makes us perfectly holy (perfect sanctification)
- However, even though our sanctification is complete at death, our salvation is not yet complete because we are still without our glorified resurrection bodies
- When a believer dies, they enter into the intermediate state, a period when they exist apart from their bodies
- At death, a believer’s soul is separated from his body...his body remains on earth but his soul goes to be with the Lord in heaven
- The Bible does not teach the existence of purgatory or soul sleep
- Rather, upon death the believer immediately enters into heaven to experience the great blessings of communing with Christ

2 Corinthians 5:8 ~ we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord

Philippians 1:23 ~ But I am hard-pressed from both *directions*, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for *that* is very much better

Luke 23:43 ~ And He said to him, “Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise.”

- Although some have said that the souls of OT saints did not enjoy the blessings of heaven, the Scriptures do point to OT believers being in the presence of the Lord as well:

2 Kings 2:11 ~ As they were going along and talking, behold, *there appeared* a chariot of fire and horses of fire which separated the two of them. And Elijah went up by a whirlwind to heaven.

⁶ Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 828.

⁷ *The Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms*, 55.

⁸ MacArthur and Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine*, 654.

⁹ John Murray, *Redemption Accomplished and Applied*, 175.

Psalm 23:6 ~ Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life, And I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Matthew 17:3 ~ And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him.

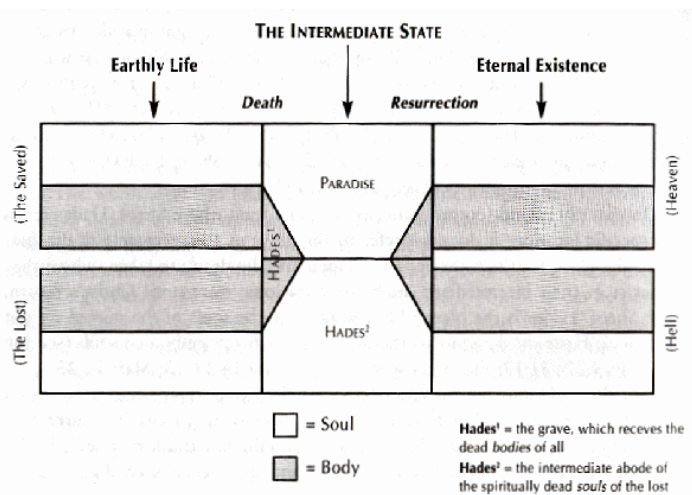
Matthew 22:32 ~ ‘I AM THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, AND THE GOD OF ISAAC, AND THE GOD OF JACOB’? He is not the God of the dead but of the living.

Luke 16:25 ~ But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that during your life you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus bad things; but now he is being comforted here, and you are in agony.

- So, for believers who die before the return of Christ, their soul goes to be with the Lord in heaven, while their body remains in the earth awaiting its redemption
- Undoubtedly, the intermediate state will bring us great joy as we will finally be free from the presence of sin
- But there is something even better than being with Christ in a disembodied state...being with Christ in heaven in our glorified bodies
- God has not designed us to live in a disembodied state forever...thus, even in the intermediate state, we will look forward to the time when our bodies are raised and reunited with our souls

2 Corinthians 5:4 ~ For indeed while we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed but to be clothed, so that what is mortal will be swallowed up by life.

- Thus, the intermediate state is not the same as our glorified state because, “however glorious is the transformation of the people of God at death and however much they may be disposed to say with the apostle that to depart and to be with Christ is far better (cf. Phil 1:23), this is not their glorification.”¹⁰
- This is also evident in the fact that, while believers die at different times, all believers will be glorified together at the same time
- “In this respect [glorification] radically differs from death and the glory with Christ upon which saints enter on that event. Each saint of God who dies has his own appointed season and therefore his own time to depart and be with Christ. We can see that this event is highly individualized. But it is not so with glorification. One will not have any advantage over another – all together will be glorified with Christ...Glorification is an event which will affect all the people of God together at the same point of time in the realization of God’s redemptive purpose.”¹¹



¹⁰ Murray, *Redemption Accomplished and Applied*, 174.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 175.

BIBLICAL DESCRIPTION OF GLORIFICATION

- Scripture tells us that God made human beings both body and soul together...an outer and an inner self

Genesis 2:7 ~ The Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature

2 Corinthians 4:16 ~ Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.

- Therefore, our ultimate perfection demands that both body and soul be renewed
- The Bible doesn't teach the immortality of the soul – the belief that our bodies are like prisons, and thus death is a great blessing to liberate us from these prisons so that we can continue living forever as disembodied spirits
- Rather, the Bible clearly teaches the resurrection of the body and the fact that our souls will live forever in our glorified bodies, not apart from them...one day our bodies will be resurrected and joined to our spirits and we will enjoy the eternal perfection of body and soul
- The creation of a new heaven and earth demands that we have bodies...a physical earth calls for its inhabitants to have physical bodies

Romans 8:30 ~ and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

Glorification Will Occur at Christ's Return

- The resurrection of our body will occur when Christ returns

Job 19:25-27 ~ As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives, And at the last He will take His stand on the earth. 26 Even after my skin is destroyed, Yet from my flesh I shall see God; 27 Whom I myself shall behold, And whom my eyes will see and not another. My heart faints within me!

Daniel 12:2 ~ Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt.

John 5:28-29 ~ Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment.

John 6:39-40 ~ This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day."

1 Corinthians 15:23 ~ But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming,

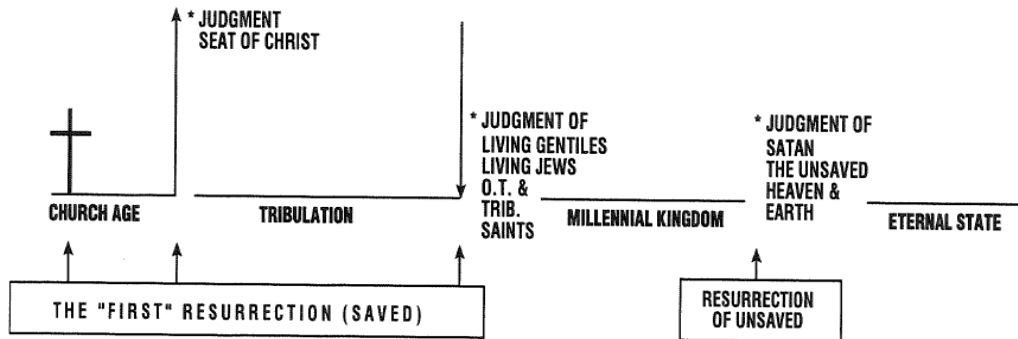
1 Thessalonians 4:14-17 ~ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.

Revelation 20:4-6 ~ Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. 5 The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first

resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.

- The phrase “the rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed” (v. 5) is a parenthesis and refers to the second resurrection after the Millennium → Great White Throne
- The “first” resurrection (v. 5) refers to a category of resurrected people rather than a chronological order...a kind rather than a sequence
- Only believers are resurrected in the “first” resurrection and it has multiple phases
 - Christ at his resurrection
 - Those who rose immediately after Christ’s resurrection (Matt 27:52-53)
 - The purpose was probably to provide further support for Christ’s resurrection
 - These people were probably well known to those still living and did not die again (like Lazarus)
 - They were probably taken directly to heaven
 - Church saints at the Rapture
 - The two witnesses in the middle of Tribulation
 - OT/Tribulation saints at the Second Coming
 - (Millennial saints who die? → the Bible does not say but it’s possible that they may be instantly glorified at death)
- Only unbelievers are resurrected in the second resurrection/death after the millennial kingdom
- Thus, as church saints, we will receive our glorified bodies at the Rapture...OT saints and Tribulation saints will be given their glorified bodies at the Second Coming

THE COMING JUDGMENTS AND RESURRECTIONS



12

- Thus, “the hope of the believer is centred in the coming of the Saviour again the second time without sin unto salvation...So indispensable is the coming of the Lord to the hope of glory that glorification for the believer has no meaning without the manifestation of Christ’s glory. Glorification is glorification with Christ. Remove the latter and we have robbed the glorification of believers of the one thing that enables them to look forward to this event with confidence, with joy unspeakable and full of glory.”¹³

¹² Paul Benware, *Understanding End Times Prophecy*, 277.

¹³ Murray, *Redemption Accomplished and Applied*, 178.

Glorification is Connected with the Renewal of Creation

Romans 8:19-23 ~ For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. 23 And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for *our* adoption as sons, the redemption of our body

- Paul says that all of creation groans and waits eagerly for everything to be made new, including our bodies
- Ever since the fall of mankind, creation has been looking forward to the day of its renewal
- Creation “knows” that when believers get their new bodies it too will be restored
- “When will this glory of creation be accomplished? Paul leaves us in no doubt. He tells us expressly that the terminus of the groaning and travailing of creation, groaning and travailing because of the bondage of corruption, is nothing other than ‘the adoption, the redemption of our body’ (Rom 8:23). This is just saying that not only do believers wait for the resurrection as that which will bring the liberty of their glory but the creation itself is also waiting for this same event...[cursed creation] is going to be delivered from the bondage of corruption, and its deliverance will be coincident with the consummation of God’s people’s redemption. The two are not only coincident as events but they are correlative in hope.”¹⁴

Glorification Involves Deliverance from Corrupt Bodies

- “The great, final hope of Christians is not to die and be freed from our bodies, but to be raised with new glorious bodies, like Christ’s resurrection body.”¹⁵
- Several passages indicate that there is some sort of continuity between our present earthly bodies and our future resurrection bodies (i.e. that our resurrection body will be our earthly body made completely new)

Romans 8:11 ~ But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your **mortal bodies** through His Spirit who dwells in you.

Philippians 3:21 ~ who will transform **the body of our humble state** into conformity with the body of His glory

- When Christ comes, he will “transform” (*metaschematizo*) our bodies in their fashion and appearance
- And he will bring them “into conformity with the body of his glory” which means that our bodies will literally have the same form (*symmorphos*) as Christ’s body

- Our earthly bodies are considered the “seed” of our glorified bodies:

1 Corinthians 15:37-38 ~ and that which you sow, you do not sow the body which is to be, but a bare grain, perhaps of wheat or of something else. But God gives it a body just as He wished, and to each of the seeds a body of its own.

- Believers will apparently recognize each other in heaven:

Matthew 8:11 ~ I say to you that many will come from east and west, and recline at the table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven;

Matthew 17:3 ~ And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him.

¹⁴ Murray, *Redemption Accomplished and Applied*, 179, 181.

¹⁵ John Piper

- Thus, “the body we inherit in glorification will not be an entirely new body but will be in some way the body we currently inhabit in this life...[God] will not replace your current body; he will renovate it. Our bodies will be changed, not exchanged...whatever trauma the believer’s body might experience as it succumbs to the curse of sin and death in this life, the omnipotent God will raise that body to perfection and unite it with the soul in the resurrection.”¹⁶
- But there will be a discontinuity with our earthly body as well

1 Corinthians 15:39-41 ~ All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one *flesh* of men, and another flesh of beasts, and another flesh of birds, and another of fish. 40 There are also heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is one, and the *glory* of the earthly is another. 41 There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory.

- Paul’s point is that God has arranged the universe such that various bodies are adapted to a variety of kinds of existence...some adapted for one existence, others for another
- Paul wants us to understand that God perfectly fits bodies for their purpose and existence
- Earthly bodies are fit for earthly existence...heavenly resurrected bodies are fit for heavenly existence
- The variety in creation reflects this fact

1 Corinthians 15:42-49 ~ So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable *body*, it is raised an imperishable *body*; 43 it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; 44 it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual *body*. 45 So also it is written, “The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL.” The last Adam *became* a life-giving spirit. 46 However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual. 47 The first man is from the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven. 48 As is the earthy, so also are those who are earthy; and as is the heavenly, so also are those who are heavenly. 49 Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the image of the heavenly.

- Our glorified bodies will be: 1) Imperishable (v. 42); 2) Raised in glory (v. 43); 3) Raised in power (v. 43); 4) A spiritual body – i.e. in perfect harmony with the Holy Spirit (v. 44); 5) Adapted for heaven (v. 48-49)

1 Corinthians 15:50-54 ~ Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. 53 For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, “DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP in victory.

- What happened with Christ’s body in the resurrection is what will happen to our bodies in the resurrection
- Christ’s resurrection body was his same earthly body but made perfect and more glorious in every way
- It was his same body raised back to life...it wasn’t in the tomb after his resurrection...he was not merely an apparition or a phantom (Luke 24:39)
- He looked human in every way...he talked with the disciples on the road to Emmaus and they never once questioned His humanity
- His body had the same nail marks in his hands and feet...same wound in his side
- It was a real body...he could be touched (Luke 24:39)...he talked...he ate with disciples (Luke 24:41-43)
- His body was recognizable (Luke 24:31)
- But it was different too...in the garden, Mary Magdalene didn’t recognize him (John 20:14)
- There was something unique and different about Jesus’ resurrection body...it had supernatural qualities

¹⁶ MacArthur and Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine*, 657.

- He could pass through solid walls (John 20:19)
- He could suddenly appear out of nowhere (Luke 24:31, 36) entering rooms without opening the door
- He could appear in different forms so his identity was not immediately obvious (Mark 16:12)
- He could ascend into heaven in bodily form (Acts 1:9)
- The resurrection changed Jesus' body in marvelous and radical ways

- Our bodies will be exactly like that...they will be real, physical, genuinely human bodies—the very same bodies we have while on this earth—yet wholly perfected and glorified
- And the bodies that believers will possess in the age to come will be of the same nature as Christ's own resurrected and glorified body
- He was the firstfruits from the dead (1 Cor 15:23)
- Christ's resurrection body is a promise and guarantee of our resurrection body...his body is the prototype of our resurrected body
- In many ways our glorified bodies will be the same (continuity) – they will still be our bodies
- But in many ways they will be different (discontinuity) – they will be changed marvelously and radically

- “This deeper understanding of glorification, and the resurrection of our bodies that is involved in it, gives us a greater understanding of the great things in store for us if we are trusting in Christ for salvation. What a wonderful thing it will be when Christ returns to see the whole church together in spotless purity, without any spots or wrinkles. How glorified Christ will be to have such a great multitude reflecting his glory back to him, brighter than the sun. What great fellowship there will be among the whole church – Christians from all times and all ages – in that we all enter this experience together. How deeply we will fall in worship and thankfulness at the power and love Christ displayed in raising our bodies from the dead. How much we will honor and respect Him for having abolished all his enemies, including death. And how much more deeply we will know Christ when we are fully like him both physically and morally. What a great hope this should give us!”