

THE IMMORTAL BODY OF CHRIST

Peter Hay, prepared for word ministry, 9 May 2021

Transcription of recording, slightly edited

Introduction

Hello, everyone. In our Bible study today, we are going to continue to consider how we become children of Abraham in the flesh, through Christ.

We are considering what it means to be a citizen of the heavenly Jerusalem in this age, which is fundamental to being a citizen of the new heavens and earth as children of Abraham in the age to come.

We will look at Christ, and how His body became an immortal body, of which we are to be partakers.

As we consider this subject, we will revisit some of the points from our previous session.

We obtain our identity and biological body from Adam through the process of procreation

We remember that the apostle Paul called Adam 'the first man'. He said that 'the first man' was 'a living soul'. 1Co 15:45.

We are created as *living souls* from Adam, *through the process of procreation*.

Obviously, through the process of procreation, we get a *physical body*, which Adam received. His body was created from the dust, but ours is a *biological substance* which, when we die, goes back to the *dust*.

We also received, through this biological process of procreation, *our spirit - our identity, our soul*.

So, we obtain two things from Adam who was a living soul. We obtain our *identity*, and the 'life' of our soul is in our *biological body*.

A way of thinking about what it means to have 'life' is to understand that our *identity* has *expression*. Who we are is evident by how we speak and 'do things' in this body. That is what we receive from Adam.

Jesus was not a son of Adam - He was a new creation

Now, Jesus was *not* a son of Adam. This may be a new thought to you.

He did not receive His identity through the process of procreation. We know that there was no procreative process through which He was conceived in the womb of Mary.

However, more fundamentally than that, His identity *preceded* His conception. We get our identity *through* conception, but Jesus' identity *preceded* His conception in the womb of Mary.

It even preceded His being brought to birth, or begotten, by the Father as the Son of God, through the word of the Father. His identity preceded the process through which the Father said, 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You.' Heb 1:5. Heb 5:5.

This is a significant point. The Son of Man's conception and birth occurred through an entirely different process from that which was established in Adam.

It was not simply a 'different procreation' or a 'special procreation'. It was not procreation at all!

It was *incarnation*. The outcome of this was that Jesus was the first of a new humanity. *He was a new creation*.

In contrast to the identity of the first man, Adam, the life of Christ's identity was not through His biological life, which is what we receive from Adam. He had identity before His conception.

Jesus lived by a different life. He was still flesh and blood, but *His identity was not expressed through His biological life*.

His life was the divine nature from the Father.

This is where we see the principle, or the understanding, of *exanastasis*. The word '*anastasis*' means 'resurrection'. It refers to *the life that is from the Father*. *Exanastasis* is that resurrection life, in a physical, mortal body.

Before Jesus Christ was born, no-one had the life of the Father in their physical body. That is what made Jesus unique.

He wasn't 'Superman'. He had a physical, mortal body in which was the life of God - that life of God had become *flesh*. It was a new flesh, a new creation.

This is amazing! He was the perfect 'pattern' of what we are to be, because we have been born of the life of the Son as sons of God, and that *exanastasis* life is in our body now, as well.

The Son fully emptied Himself and received the life of the Father as His own life in the flesh

It is important that we understand the distinction between procreation and incarnation.

Jesus made the point that the life of God the Father was in His mortal body. He said, 'For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, and has given Him authority to execute judgement also, because He is the Son of Man.' Joh 5:26-27.

That is amazing! The Son fully emptied Himself and received the life of the Father as His own life in the flesh. And, because of that, He received authority to execute judgement, because He is the Son of Man.

Jesus lived by a different principle, or a different food - the word of the Father

While on earth, Jesus did participate in biological life. While the expression of His identity was not based on biological life, He did partake as One of flesh and blood. He was made like us - He ate food and He needed to eat food to sustain His mortal body.

But His life, or His expression, as the Son of God, was not based on that principle. It was from *the word of the Father*.

This is why He said to the disciples, 'I have food.' He was hungry, and they went to get Him some food. When they came back, He said to them, 'I have food to eat which you do not know.' Joh 4:32.

Why did they not know?

It was because that was not what their life was based on. Their expression was based in this biological principle.

Jesus was saying, in effect, 'I live by a different principle, or a different food.'

'I have food to eat of which you do not know. My food [the source of My life for the expression of My identity] is *to do the will of Him who sent Me*, and to finish His work.' Joh 4:32,34.

This was the incarnate Son of God.

Christ was not born into sin or with 'another law'

Christ was not born into sin; neither did He have 'another law' in His heart. We know that because He did not get His identity from Adam.

When Adam and Eve ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the other law was established in their identity – right at the heart of their being. And that other law was passed on as a principle of life in every one of those identities who came from them.

Christ was not born into sin or with another law. For this reason, He was not born under the curse of sin. That is an amazing principle, isn't it!

Every one of the people with whom He interacted was completely subject to the implications of the Fall. But Jesus was not, because He was not born under the curse of time and chance, nor under the condemnation of death.

Jesus could only be killed when, in obedience to the Father, He laid down His life for us

He was not 'dying' in Adam. Paul said, 'In Adam all die.' ICo 15:22. Jesus was not a son of Adam, so He did not 'die' in Adam.

If Christ had not been made an offering for sin – He was not under the curse of time and chance; neither was He under the condemnation of death – He would not have died at all in 'the likeness of sinful flesh'. Rom 8:3.

He would have still been there, His body sustained by the *exanastasis* life of the Father. And He would have continued to eat, as a normal person.

So, He was not under this way of life. He did not 'die' in Adam. Jesus Himself said, 'No-one takes My life from Me.' Joh 10:18.

Importantly, He did not say this as Yahweh Son, although He is Yahweh Son. He did not say this as the Son of God, even though He is the Son of God.

He said it as a man.

He said, 'No-one takes it [My life] from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father.' Joh 10:18. This is an amazing principle.

Even when the Jews took up stones to stone Him, and they sought to kill Him more than once, they could not even lay a hand on Him. No-one could kill Him. No-one could take His life from Him. He was able to hide Himself and to walk straight through them. Joh 8:59.

The only time that He was able to be killed was when He, in obedience to the Father, laid down

His life for us, and gave Himself to be taken, bound and crucified. This is an important point to make.

Jesus joined us in our death and ended the whole of the old creation

We have established the incarnation of Jesus and the point that He was not under the condemnation of death that is 'in Adam', because He was not a child of Adam.

But, when He went to Gethsemane and was made an offering for sin, He who knew no sin *became sin for us*. 2Co 5:21.

He was completely joined and conformed to our condition, and was *separated from God*; from the Father. The Son of Man *joined us in our death* when the Father made Him who knew no sin, to be sin for us.

The amazing thing that we have come to understand is that Jesus became sin when the Father made every individual person, from Adam through to the last child that will ever be born, a member of Christ's body.

Jesus Himself confessed that He had been given authority over all flesh. Joh 17:2. He had become *the Head* of this *corporate body*, which was now *a body of sin*.

Through His offering as the Son of Man, Christ was progressively cursed and cut off from God. And, as the embodiment of sin, iniquity and transgression, these aspects of the human condition were *ended* as He died. They were ended in Him, as He 'went out'.

Significantly, the whole of the old creation, including all of the sons and daughters of Adam - the entire old creation; not only this physical world, but also all of its citizens - went out with Him into the sea of God's forgetfulness. He experienced their judgement.

We know, of course, that He experienced it *by the grace of God*. And *He turned this judgement to chastening*.

The point is that He brought everything to a conclusion; to a *finish*.

Christ brought back from the death of sin by the resurrection life of the Father that was in His shed blood

At the same time as this happened, His physical blood was being shed. Why is it important that we are 'clear' about the physical blood of Jesus?

It is because the resurrection life of the Father was in that blood. It wasn't in the blood 'in type', as though merely the shedding of His blood was symbolic of something.

The resurrection life of the Father was *actually* in His blood. And, as it was being shed, He was being brought back from the death of sin by the life of the Father. Heb 13:20.

So, at the same time as His physical blood was shed through the wounds that He suffered, Christ was being made alive from the death of sin.

Christ pioneered the pathway of every person's salvation and fulfilled the works of their sonship

Christ was made alive as *a corporate body*. Everything that 'came back' with Him was now *of His substance*.

He pioneered the pathway of every person's salvation and fulfilled the works of their sonship.

In the weeks to come, we will understand that it was right where He was in this process that this corporate body, comprising every person's heavenly body, was being formed, or established. It happened there.

And those works that He has *finished* are the works that were written in the Lamb's Book of Life for you and I to do. They were finished there, as He did them. Rev 20:12.

So, He pioneered the pathway of every person's salvation; He fulfilled the works of their sonship.

Jesus established a corporate, new creation - sons and daughters of Abraham

Furthermore, the resurrection life in Christ's blood is being multiplied and given to become the life of every son and daughter of God.

This life belongs to those who will receive His word, because He became the author of salvation *to those who obey Him*. Heb 5:9. It belongs to those who *receive His word* and *accept their participation* in the fellowship of His offering.

He brought an end to the old creation in Adam, and established a *new creation in His likeness*, of which Abraham was the heir or the father.

Let us think about it this way. When Jesus came in the flesh, He was completely alone. He was the only One who lived by the principle of *exanastasis*.

When He went to the garden, He was completely conformed to join us in our death and separation, as the Father made *every one of us a member of His body*.

Then, through offering, He finished that judgement. He also came back from the dead by the life in His blood, and He established *a corporate, new creation*.

This is a new humanity. It is a great multitude of sons and daughters who belong to Abraham, whom Abraham saw as 'the stars of heaven'. Gen 15:5. They were *numerous*, and they were *full of the light of life*. Now, where have we heard that?

That is what Jesus was. He was the Word made flesh, in whom was life; and that life became 'the light of men'. Joh 1:4.

These are the lights of those who are the 'stars of heaven'; the children of Abraham.

The exanastasis life of the Father perfected in Christ at the conclusion of His offering

We will now look specifically at the nature of Jesus' body, because He had a 'flesh and blood' body when He first came. He had to eat for it to be sustained.

However, at the conclusion of His offering, that principle of mortality, and the sustaining of the body through eating and through the principle of blood, was completely finished.

So, what is His body like? And why is that important to understand?

It is important because the expression of our sonship will be because *we are partakers of that body*. We need to understand what that body is like.

When the Son of Man's journey was complete, *exanastasis*, the resurrection life of the Father in His mortal body, His physical body, had *attained full perfection and expression in Him*.

His Spirit went to the Father; His body that hung on the cross now immortal

His Spirit had gone to the Father. After He said, 'It is finished!,' He said, 'Into Your hands I commit My Spirit.' Joh 19:30. Luk 23:46.

So, His Spirit went to the Father, and His body was still hanging on the cross. He had gone to the Father, but His physical body remained on the earth, in a tomb, for another three days and three nights.

And we know that it didn't experience any corruption. Psa 16:10. There have been various theories as to why it did not corrupt. It is actually really quite straightforward when we understand the offering and sufferings of Christ, and what He finished.

The reason why Christ's body did not decay was not because it had some special 'stuff' on it. It was because the *exanastasis* life of the Father had already been perfected in Him. That body that was hanging on the cross was now *immortal*.

So, what was *exanastasis* previously – the resurrection life of God in a mortal body – had now become *anastasis*.

His body had become a fully immortal body in the sense that it no longer lived by – was no longer sustained by – the principles that are associated with mortality, which were in Adam.

That principle was completely finished by Christ.

When He 'took out' the old creation, He actually 'took out' the whole need for eating food to sustain our biological body. He had already been perfected in His physical body through His offering.

On the day of resurrection, three days and three nights following His death, His body was not changed at all. He came back from the Father; His Spirit returned to that body; and He stood up in it. That now became His inheritance.

To be co-heirs with Christ we must be joined to the fellowship of His offering

When the Scriptures refer to our being 'co-heirs' with Christ, part of that inheritance is that we are recipients of a body like His. It is not merely 'like' His body; it is *of* His body! Rom 8:17.

His body did not need to be changed into a spiritual body. It had already become *spiritual* through the power of *exanastasis*. This is amazing!

It means that the full provision, or the full plan, of God was completely finished on the cross. There was no 'other bit' to do afterwards; nor a waiting for the next little 'bit'. The entire purpose of God was fulfilled in that twenty-one hours.

And, if we are to be recipients, as co-heirs of Christ with a resurrection body, we must be *joined to the fellowship of that offering*, because that is where the finished work is done.

Jesus' resurrection body not sustained by biology - He still ate and drank

Through His offering journey from Gethsemane to Calvary, Jesus brought an end to biology as the principle of life for mankind. That was part of the end of the old creation.

He was flesh and bone, but He no longer had blood in His body. That was no longer the principle by which He lived. His physical body was raised to *immortality*, and it is now a spiritual body that is sustained by a different principle.

Paul said, 'He now lives only by the power of an endless life.' Heb 7:16. So, that is how that body operates.

Another way of saying it is that the life of that identity is through the power of an endless life. This reveals *anastasis* in an immortal body. And it was obtained as the outcome of His offering journey.

The beauty of the *anastasis*, or the resurrection body of Jesus, is that He was still able to eat and drink natural food, even though He didn't need to. This was no longer necessary for sustaining His mortal body.

And, for those who are raised in His likeness, we also won't need food to sustain us in the new heavens and earth; but we will still eat and drink together. Isn't that a beautiful thought?

Eating and drinking will no longer be necessary to sustain our biology; it will be purely and simply because we love one another. It will be the expression of our hospitality, as those who are part of a community of faith forever.

The 'adoption' refers to the resurrection to immortality

Paul called the promise of the resurrection to immortality 'the adoption'. We have spoken about this adoption in the past but, in the light of what we are understanding about the offering journey of Christ, this principle is becoming far more clear to us in terms of what it is and how we participate in it.

Abraham received the adoption when the Lord said to Him, 'Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them.' And He said to him, 'So shall your descendants be.' Gen 15:5.

The adoption refers to *the resurrection to immortality*, and Abraham received the adoption when he received that word: 'Your children will be like the stars of heaven'. They will not be of 'the dust of the earth'; they will be like the stars of heaven. There is a distinction here; there is a change.

Obtaining 'the adoption' is to join the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings

We remember that, in response to Abraham's query regarding how he would inherit immortality, the Lord invited Abraham to join, in type, the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings.

Through His offering and sufferings, Christ brought an end to the way of life in Adam.

And Christ, being the first of a new creation, established the pathway by which we would all become new creation in Him.

When Abraham received the adoption, he said, 'How will I know that I will inherit?' Gen 15:8.

The answer to obtaining that which he had seen - the adoption - was for him to join the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings. And that is true for us as well.

The promise of the adoption belongs to Abraham and to his natural descendants, as well as to those who walk according to the faith that he had while uncircumcised. Rom 4:11-13.

We receive a new, immortal body from Christ; the flesh comes from Abraham

We will consider this term 'adoption' further, because you will have to shift your understanding of what you might have thought about it previously.

When we think about adoption, naturally or adoption within our society, we think of a child who becomes part of a family with whom they have no genetic connection. As an example, my wife and I may adopt a child. That child would receive their body and their identity from another family, or another mother. They would become part of my family, and I would treat them like the rest of my children.

But that child, even though now in my family, would have no genetic, or familial, connection to me. That is obvious in terms of what we understand adoption to be.

The adoption that Paul was speaking of is different from this principle. It is important to understand how it is different.

Paul said, in effect, 'We who are children of Adam are all becoming children of Abraham.' This is why the adoption is connected to the resurrection.

We are all sons and daughters of Adam. We can trace our lineage back to their parenting, can't we? But, when the Lord replaced Adam as the heir of the world, He replaced him with Abraham, and said, in effect, 'Abraham, you are going to become the heir of a new creation, a new humanity.'

All of the sons and daughters of Adam, if we are to obtain the adoption, are now to become part of a different family. In the first instance, we may say, 'Oh yes, I see how that is "adoption".' But it is even more spectacular than that!

We are all becoming children of Abraham *through fellowship in the offering and sufferings of Christ*. In this fellowship, we are receiving a new, immortal body from Jesus.

Now, we are partakers of His body; and where did He get His flesh from? He received it *from Abraham!*

As sons of God who are born of His life and are joined to the fellowship of His offering and sufferings, the resurrection body that we will receive will have the DNA of Abraham in it. We will be full of the light of life. Our resurrection body will be glorious.

We who were in Adam, dying, of the dust, and 'gone', have now become children of Abraham in Christ; and we will be of his flesh.

We have been taken from one family, and we have been made a new family. However, it is not that we are still simply children of Adam, living by that principle, and children of Abraham by association.

We are now completely made into a new creation. That is the adoption! How awesome is that!

We do not 'pretend' that we belong to that family. We are actually *of that substance*.

In this fellowship, we receive a new, immortal body from Christ, the flesh of which comes from Abraham.

We are called out of darkness, out of that principle of life, to be the people of God

The apostle Peter summarised it this way.

'But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who *called you out of darkness*.' 1Pe 2:9.

Darkness belongs to all the children of Adam. Jesus went down to the lowest parts of the earth, right out into outer darkness, and took all of the family of Adam out there. Eph 4:9.

When we receive that 'call out of darkness', we come up out of that principle of life. Peter said, 'That you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness and into His marvellous light; [you] who were once not a people but are now *the people of God*, who had not obtained mercy but have now obtained mercy.' 1Pe 2:9-10.

That one 'people', which is everyone 'in Adam', has now become the people of God, in Christ, by this call.

We are delivered from bondage to the fear of death - we receive a spirit of adoption

In Adam, the whole world is in bondage to Satan through the fear of death. We became part of his kingdom.

However, when we are born of the Spirit as sons of God, we are delivered from bondage to the fear of death. Heb 2:15.

Paul said that the mark of having been delivered from the bondage of the fear of death, as one who is born of God, is that we have a different spirit.

We remember this from the book of Romans. 'Not having any longer a spirit of fear', but 'you have received *the Spirit of adoption*, by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father"'. Rom 8:15.

The adoption, then, is part of or fundamental to our sonship, which is what Peter described as those who have come 'into the marvellous light'.

We are joint heirs with Christ if we suffer with Him

'You did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." The Spirit Himself [this is the Holy Spirit] bears witness with our spirit [our identity] that we are children of God, and if children, then *heirs*.' Rom 8:15-17.

We are heirs of the promises to Abraham and joint heirs with Christ. We are heirs of everything that Jesus received through this offering journey, when

it was all finished - 'if indeed *we suffer with Him*'. Rom 8:17.

The *only* way by which we are obtaining what Jesus received as the inheritance of sonship and immortality, marked by, or the substance of which is a resurrection body, or an immortal body, is found 'if *we suffer with Him*, that we may also be *glorified with Him*'. Rom 8:17.

In our next session, we will discuss the glorification of our bodies. This is 'being changed from glory to glory'. 2Co 3:18.

'Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit [the Holy Spirit], even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.' Rom 8:23.

When Paul was referring to the redemption of our body, he was referring to the resurrection body that we would receive.

The Holy Spirit is joining us to the travail of Christ

The point that I want to highlight is that if we have the firstfruits of the Spirit, 'we groan in ourselves, eagerly awaiting the adoption'.

This means that the Holy Spirit is joining us to the travail of Christ – to the travail, or the fellowship, of His offering and sufferings. That was the travail through which the new creation was brought forth, or brought to birth.

He is enabling us, as the sons of God who have received the Spirit, to remain connected to the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, so that we are recipients, or co-heirs, with Him, of that which He brought forth out of the waters of judgement.

Receiving the glory of a heavenly body now

In our next session, we will consider what it means for us, practically, every day, to be receiving a heavenly body, the glory of which will be seen in the new heavens and earth, as the sparkle of stars in the heavens.

But that glory depends on how we join and walk in the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings *now*.

There is no further glory to be obtained in the new heavens and earth apart from that which we obtain in the finished, perfect offering of Christ.