

common life. The full corn though is magnificent in its splendour – so, says Paul will our resurrected bodies!
This will happen (1 Cor 15:52) *in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.*

Our bodies will be made new! Imagine what a resurrection upgrade will be like!

- Reflection: As you consider the resurrection of the body and the present perishable nature becoming imperishable, what changes do you sense will be the most exciting to look forward to experiencing?

Creation also waits for our resurrection for the glorification of the universe is dependent on the glorification of the children of God.

- Read the great section in **Romans 8:19-23**

The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed.

For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.

We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

- The early Christians used the Aramaic word ‘Maranatha’ that formed a prayer and a proclamation – **‘Come Lord Jesus, come quickly.’** Perhaps we should encourage ‘Maranatha’ to be a word in our Christian vocabulary.

Alan

HEAVEN HERE I COME

Study 2 : CHRIST’S RETURN CHANGES EVERYTHING!

**Willesborough Baptist Church small group notes
based on the Sunday sermon on 5th June 2016**

We are taking time to specifically focus on heaven. This is perhaps something that generally eludes us – we don’t speak about heaven, sing about heaven and therefore it is possible that we do not long for heaven.

All the jokes about heaven and cartoons parody the greatest and most glorious of all experiences we are to ultimately enjoy. Heaven is something far more exciting, fulfilling, rewarding...far more glorious than our minds and hearts can grasp.

Remember what Paul declares in **1 Cor 2:9?**

I return to the **time line** that indicates a **present heaven** and a **future heaven**.

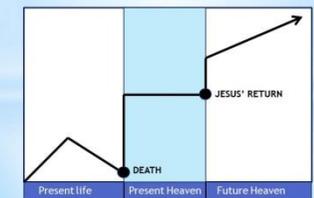
There is the present heaven that is a ‘temporary’ heaven until something spectacular happens – and that is, Jesus returns.

This one future event will usher in the **New Heavens and New Earth**, what I have spoken of as Future Heaven that we will occupy with resurrected glorified bodies.

1 Thessalonians 4:13 *Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope.*

- How can the Thessalonian believers ‘encourage’ those who have been bereaved according to **1 Thess 4:18?**

Heaven Here I come (2)



- What do some of your non-Christian friends think about the future of the world? Do they express any sense of real hope?

1. THE SECOND COMING OF JESUS

Yes, one day it is going to be 'all change' – this is not a temporary change but an eternal transformation.

- Take a few minutes within your group to reflect on one or two of the verses below:

Paul emphasises the note of change connected with Jesus' return in **1 Cor 15:52** *in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable and we will be changed.*

Titus 2:13 *while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ.*

1 John 3:2 *Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.*

JESUS WILL RETURN PUBLICLY

Jesus will visibly return – it will be no secret event but it will be seen by all for it will affect all. Rev 1:7 *'every eye will see him.'*

There will be those 'in Christ' who will welcome the coming of Jesus but there will be others who will be distraught by his coming.

JESUS WILL RETURN PERSONALLY

Christ is present with us now by his Spirit – but he will personally come. He will not send an angel but will come himself.

Acts 1:11 *'this same Jesus...will come back...'*

JESUS WILL RETURN POWERFULLY

It will be a great triumphant event. Jesus came to Bethlehem in relative secrecy but he returns in great power and splendour.

'The appearing of Jesus Christ will be the final chapter in the human story.. His coming will bring governments, nations, authorities and every kind of enemy of God under his rule and judgement. Death will be destroyed. Satan, and the whole empire of evil will be overthrown for ever. And Christ's people will be united to their lord in the new creation that he has prepared for them.'

2. THE BODILY RESURRECTION

When Jesus returns he will bring change:

For those who have died and are in the present heaven will join Jesus (1 Thess 4:14) and they will be united with those who are living when Jesus returns, v.17 *'...we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.'*

All this will happen as we occupy the New Heavens and the New Earth that we will look at in a future study.

Let's focus on resurrection – Jesus is the model for our own resurrection body.

When Jesus died on the cross, it was not just to save your soul but to salvage your body as well! We do not believe simply in the immortality of the soul but the resurrection of the body that will ultimately inhabit the New Heavens and New Earth.

- Think in your group about Jesus' resurrection body. What does it teach us about our resurrection body? The appearance of the resurrected Jesus to the disciples in the Upper Room or the Emmaus Road gives us a number of insights.
- Look up **1 John 3:2** that offers us a great promise.

The change that takes place is further emphasised in **Philippians 3:20-21, 1 Cor 15:49.**

Paul uses the illustration of the grain of seed in **1 Corinthians 15:35-38.** The seed is linked to the final product for there is the sharing of