

Discipleship 101

Learning to Take Christianity Seriously

Session #13: Spiritual Beings and the Resurrection (New Humanity)

Theme Verses: 1) Spiritual Beings: Psalm 8:3-6 and Psalm 148:1-4.

2) The Resurrection as New Humanity: Isaiah 65:17-18 and 2 Peter 3:13-14:

The Bible Project: Spiritual Beings and the New Humanity

1. To find these videos go to Google and search “The Bible Project: Spiritual Beings and the New Humanity.” You should find a series of seven short, animated videos. You should watch them all *in order*. They are only 3-6 minutes long each, and These videos are going to seem weird to you, but that’s okay. The first time you watch them, I just want you to take it all in. Let it challenge you with its weirdness!

Part 1—Spiritual Beings: Why Study Them?

1. The question now becomes—why are we studying the topic of spiritual beings?
 - a. Reason #1. Spiritual beings are *all over the place* in the Scriptures. (I mean seriously *all over*.) Examples? 2 Kings 6:17-20; Luke 2:12-15.
 - b. Reason #2. Since without an account of spiritual beings, you’re missing a vital piece of the biblical narrative, you have no good answers or explanations for your own questions or the questions of others.
 - c. Reason #3. Here’s where we start to get into the meat and potatoes. If we don’t fill in the blanks about a spiritual reality with how Scripture talks, we’ll fill it in with something else, something else which is contrary to the revelation of God’s grace and mercy through Jesus Christ. Examples?
 - d. Reason #4. Without a coherent account, you’ll attribute these portions of Scripture to the category of nonsense.
 - e. Reason #5. Here’s the big payoff. This understanding of a spiritual and physical reality is (absolutely!) necessary to fully appreciate the resurrection and why Easter is the most important of all Christian celebrations.
 - i. “I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.”
 - ii. “Our Father, who art in heaven... Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”

Spiritual Beings—Answering Some Initial Difficulties

1. First of all, the narrators are grossly understating their case when they say that our modern conceptions of spiritual beings are based on serious misunderstandings. Enlightenment and empiricism.
2. The problem with this approach is that a) A non-physical reality exists beyond the physical world—love, emotions, thoughts, imagination, truth, beauty, etc. and b) Since a non-physical reality still exists people just find alternative ways of trying to deal with it—romanticism example.
3. We confess as Christians the existence of non-material reality. I know you might be thinking, “Geez, Pastor! Do we really need to talk about non-material reality?” My answer is, obviously, yes, and the reason for this is partly because of what we say together in The Nicene Creed, “I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things *visible and invisible*.” So, for us as Christians, the question isn’t *if* there is a non-physical reality. The question is *how* we are going to talk about this reality in light of Jesus Christ as Lord of all.
4. Taking a spiritual reality seriously requires a pretty radical reorientation to how we view the world. Functional atheist analysis.
 - a. We confess the truth of Christ and the Biblical account in church, but then we act as though science or popular culture or education or politics or sports are truer than Christianity in our daily life outside of church. Essentially in our talk and actions outside of church, no one would be able to discern us from an unbeliever. Functionally, we act as though we’re atheists.
 - b. Part of this is seen with respect to our conversations about idolatry.
5. One of the more difficult points these narrators make is that the stars and sky formed their categories for how they thought about spiritual reality.

Conclusion

Idolatry is real. Sin is real. Demons are real, and God is real. This may seem overwhelming and even scary, but Jesus is also real, and the Savior of the world cleansed us from all sin by His blood, and on Easter morning He rose victorious over sin, death, hell, and the devil. That victory is a real victory, and it is yours because you are one of God’s holy, baptized people, a people He has faithfully shepherded from the time of Adam and Even until now, and He will shepherd you every where you go through His Son, the Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ, our Lord.