



👁️ Skeletons Reborn: Exploring Metaphysical Resurrection 😊

What is resurrection? (General Resurrection Thesis) A *central, essential, and creedal* orthodox Christian doctrine involving a *bodily and physical* (not merely “spiritual”) reversal of your death in which some sort of *transformation* occurs within an *eschatological* framework (aka. when the world is made new at Christ’s return).

What grounds ongoing existence philosophically?

- Identity: The thing you are
- Causality: Being caused directly by what came before

Why does resurrection seem impossible?

- The Duplication Problem: “Resurrected you” is a duplicate / replicate of “current you”, not the same thing! → ***Lack of identity***
- The Problem of “Gappy” Existence: When something has been totally destroyed, it is impossible to bring it back again because there is nothing that maintains identity across the “gap” → ***Lack of causality***
- ***Animalism***: A human person is identical to a human animal

##

(P1) The General Resurrection Thesis is true only if human persons are nonmaterial beings ().

(P2) Human persons are material beings ().

(C3) Hence, The General Resurrection Thesis is not true.

 Address P1: Resurrection is possible on materialism .

- **Reassembly Theory:** God regathers all of the atoms that make up you (or some portion which is a core of your identity), puts them back together again, and transforms them.
- **Simulacrum Model:** At the moment of your death God clandestinely removes you (or essential parts of you), and replaces you (or those parts) with a simulacrum (aka. A fake) which rots and decays. You, however, continue to live or are revived in eternity from what was taken.
- **Falling Elevator/ Fission Model:** God gives each atom the miraculous power to produce an exact duplicate at a certain distance in space or time (or both), at an unspecified location in “the next world”. You at death “split/fission” from your body
 - Improvements include fission across space and time
- **Four Dimensional Materialism:** You are some combination of matter and space-time or just spacetime. The temporal parts of you get you “across the gap”.

Materialist

Immaterialist



- **Lockean Identity Type Models:** You are “software”, consciousness (specifically memory), brain structure, or an information bearing pattern of some sort. You survive by the continuance of the software in a new body.



→ **Alternate Option: Challenge the duplication problem or the problem of gappy existence**

- **Agnostic Approach:** Gaps are actually fine as there are no identity criteria that are actually consistent with reality, so this is a non-issue. God can just bring you back, miraculously.
- **Divine Command Model:** Accept gappy existence as possible and assume current animal self somehow enables God to cause your future self.
- **God Thinks, Therefore You Are:** Christians hold all causal processes are upheld by God (He sustains everything), so what makes an apparent replica of X be X is God’s will that the apparent replica be X.



Address P2: You are not your matter.

- **Constitution View:** You are person constituted (something arising from an assembly with new causal powers) by a human body at some part of your existence. You survive by your first-person perspective.
- **Emergent Dualism:** You are a soul that emerged naturally during the course of biological evolution. You survive by being immaterial and going on after death.
- **Hylomorphic/Thomistic Dualism:** You are a hylomorphic combination of a substantial form (immaterial transcendental that gives you an essence) and matter. You survive not as a “damaged soul/blueprint that contains everything needed for identity” that will one day be united with matter again to become a full hylomorphic thing.
- **Platonism/Substance Dualism:** You are an immortal and indestructible soul. You cannot die, but you can get a new body later.

Materialist

Immaterialist

Takeaway: There are many possible ways to address Alvin’s struggle. With God, resurrection IS possible whatever your metaphysical view! It’s at least plausible Christ was really raised, and, if so, we can be too!

Recommended Resources

1. Personal Identity and Resurrection: How Do We Survive Our Death, Georg Gasser
2. The Blackwell Companion to Substance Dualism, John Wiley and Sons Inc. (2018), Jonathan J. Loose, Agnus J. L. Menuge, and J.P. Moreland
3. The T&T Clark Handbook of Analytic Theology, James M. Arcadi & James T. Turner, Jr.
4. On the Resurrection of the Dead: A New Metaphysics of Afterlife for Christian Thought, James T. Turner Jr.
5. The Possibility Of Resurrection And Other Essays In Christian Apologetics, Westview Press (1997), Peter van Inwagen
6. Heaven and Philosophy, Lexington Books (2017), Simon Cushing
7. The Palgrave Handbook of the Afterlife, Palgrave Macmillan UK (2017), Yujin Nagasawa, Benjamin Matheson (eds.)