

Dear Jessica,

Thank you for writing us at Christian Questions Radio. You asked if all people, good and bad included, are to be resurrected, then why does it matter how we live our lives now?

"For a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out—they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment." (John 5:28-29) This scripture definitely addresses the two parts of the resurrection process, with the "good," or those who have chosen to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, being awakened to eternal life as the "bride" of Christ in heaven, and the "evil," or those who either never knew Christ or chose deliberately to follow their own wills, being awakened to a period of judgment on earth. What will this judgment period on earth be like?

We need to remember that all the billions who ever lived will be returning in an orderly process from their graves. The last to die will be awakened first. Some of those will be the inherently good people from every race and religion of the world. On the opposite extreme of the spectrum, those who deliberately committed terrible sins will also be on the scene. All sins, known and unknown, will be exposed at that time. "For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil." (Ecclesiastes 12:14) "Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account." (Hebrews 4:13) The judgment day will be a mix of all kinds of people with unresolved issues. Those who have done evil to their fellow humans, will need to ask forgiveness and set about correcting the wrongs they inflicted onto others in their past lives. Also, those who had been sinned against must be willing to forgive those who trespassed against them. The cleansing work of reconciliation during the time of judgment will be enormous. This is where Christ and his Church have an active role as ministers of reconciliation, reconciling the world of mankind back to God (2 Corinthians 5:18). At the end of this time of judgment, which will last 1000 years, peace and friendship between God and man will be restored as it was prior to Adam's fall in the Garden of Eden. "Then will I purify the lips of the peoples, that all of them may call on the name of the LORD and serve him shoulder to shoulder." (Zephaniah 3:9)

You asked it if matters what we do now, since the world will have a judgment period later on earth. We answer you that it matters very much. If a person spends his present life willfully sinning, his future life will be so much more difficult because he will have many more people to face and ask forgiveness for the sins he committed against them. He will also have a mindset of sinful habits that will be difficult to break. Furthermore, he will be solely responsible for any sins he commits in that judgment day. He will not be able to blame his parents for bad upbringing or bad genes. And if, after a period of 100 years, he has not yet learned the ways of righteousness, he will be taken away in death for a second and final time (2 Thessalonians 1:9). "In those days people will no longer say, 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge.' Instead, everyone will die for his own sin; whoever eats sour grapes—his own teeth will be set on edge." (Jeremiah 31:29-30) "He who fails to reach a hundred will be considered

accursed." (Isaiah 65:20) So you can see that any character development that takes place now in this present age, will be of great benefit in the rehabilitation process in the next age. Therefore, "tell the righteous it will be well with them, for they will enjoy the fruit of their deeds." (Isaiah 3:10)

In conclusion, it behooves each of us to work on our characters as we try to live righteously in all aspects of our lives. For "the eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." (Proverbs 15:3) And God "is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Hebrews 11:6)

We hope we have answered your question. Please write us again.

Sincerely,  
Christian Questions Radio