

When I die, when do I receive my glorified eternal body?

First, the Bible does not refer to the body the believer receives for all eternity as a “glorified body”. Paul calls it a spiritual body in contrast to the natural body (1Co 15:44,46). Second, you must be born-again to receive a glorified or spiritual body. Unbelievers will spend eternity separated from God without a body of any sort. But those who have the birth from above, born-again Christians, are promised a body like the one Christ had when he rose from the dead.

Now, it is important to recognize that the question of when believers get a spiritual body is not something evangelicals debate about like Calvinism or Arminianism. There is a universal agreement and understanding that the believer must wait for the resurrection of the dead to receive his or her spiritual body. When you die, your natural body stays here on the earth, and your soul or spirit departs to be with the Lord God and His Christ in heaven. Twice in Revelation, John says he saw the souls of those who had given their lives for the gospel and testimony of Christ (6:9, 20:4). We have no idea how you see a soul, but that is what he says. In 1Co 15:51 Paul says, "We will all be changed." The "we" are two groups of Christians—those who have already died and those who are alive when Jesus returns. The dead in Christ rise first (1Th 4:16). (Then those who are alive are caught up [raptured] to meet the Lord in the air.) If the believer already has his spiritual eternal body, then there isn't any need to speak of the dead in Christ being resurrected. Now, don't run over this part. Christ did not receive his spiritual body until he rose from the dead, and you will not receive your spiritual body until you rise from the dead. But we don't sleep in the ground—our body does, but not our spirit/soul. Absent from the body is present with the Lord for the believer (2Co 5:8).

Daniel 12:2 - And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

The words "shall awake" refer to the resurrection of the just and the unjust (John 5:29, Acts 24:15). It describes us as sleeping in the dust because our body is still on the earth, waiting for the moment when God calls for the resurrection of every soul ever to have lived. If you had a body in heaven already, you would have no interest, need, or relationship to the body you left behind. But you don't. You are in heaven and are waiting for that moment when God resurrects the dead when Christ returns. What God did for Christ on the third day, He is going to do for you and for all who have been regenerated by the power of the Holy Spirit from the very beginning of time. When God gives everyone a body like Christ's, the story of redemption will be complete, and we will spend eternity with our God.