

Eastertide: The Body You Always Wanted

1 Corinthians 15:35-49

In the first century, in a culture that viewed physical death as the liberation of the soul, Christians believed something radically different. The physical body was not an empty shell to be disregarded but a valuable part of the person to be resurrected! This aspect of the Christian hope was under attack in Corinth and Paul argues vehemently against it. Why is the resurrection of the body so important? It turns out that the Biblical vision for the future of our bodies is far more *beautiful* than many people are led to believe. Embracing this vision can give us strength and hope to face not just the aches and pains of living in a broken world but terminal illness, injury, and even death itself.

Thinking It Through (agree/disagree, consider/contemplate)

“Death and taxes are inevitable, but death doesn’t get worse every time Congress meets.” Joan Welsh

“God’s purpose has never been simply that of ‘saving souls’ for a disembodied existence in heaven, as though creation itself was of merely temporal usefulness and significance... Physical, earthly, and bodily existence have to do with the nature of creation as God made it and, in a completely redeemed and transformed version, is part of the nature of the context and existence that God has in mind for us and the rest of creation throughout eternity. Our life in this world matters, in part, because it turns out to be not merely a waiting room in which we pass our time until being invited into the rest of the building where we will really live. Our life in this world establishes the starting chapters for a story that will continue and flourish in radically new ways (and not merely begin for the first time) upon the resurrection of the dead.” Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner

“Just before the party gets going in heaven, the wedding feast of the Lamb, the first thing I plan to do on my resurrected legs is to drop on grateful, glorified knees, kneel quietly before the feet of Jesus. And then I’m going to be on my feet dancing. Can you imagine the hope that this gives someone with a permanent spinal cord injury? Can you imagine the hope this even gives one who is a manic depressive? No other religion promises new bodies, a new material universe. Only in the gospel of Christ do people hurting like me find such enormous hope to live.” Joni Eareckson

Working It Out

1. Read 1 Cor. 15:35-49. What do you observe? What words or themes stand out to you? What parts seem confusing?
2. Read the second quote above. (It’s long! But gives a great, Biblical worldview on this subject and text.)

How does this quote land for you? Do you find it encouraging? Why or why not?

3. Read v. 36-38. What relationship, according to this, does our current body have to our future resurrection body?

4. In v. 42-44, we're given 4 pairs of contrasting adjectives describing our current bodies and our future bodies. Which one of these descriptions of our future bodies is most encouraging and hopeful to you right now?
5. Matt summarized Paul's primary point in v. 45-49 in this way: what happened to Jesus will happen to us. (Read Phil. 3:21)

What light does this shed on how we imagine our future bodies?

6. Matt gave three implications of the doctrine of the resurrection of the body. What were they? ([see outline](#) if you forgot!)

Which of these three is most encouraging to you right now? Which one is most challenging?

7. What do you think your life would look like if you really, deeply grasped what this text is saying?

Prayer Point

- Pray that your group and our church would lay hold of the beauty of the hope that we have through God's promise to resurrect our bodies.
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