

Eastertide: Resurrection Victory

1 Corinthians 15:50-58

Warren Wiersbe once said, "If Jesus Christ can do nothing about death, then whatever else He can do amounts to nothing." Death is, in the words of the Apostle Paul, the last enemy (1 Cor. 15:25), and one that we are powerless to overcome on our own. Praise God that through the resurrection of Jesus, He dealt with that problem for us! Because of the death and resurrection of Jesus, death has now lost its sting (15:55). But what does that mean? After all, we live still in a world marked by death and decay. And how should our lives, as believers, be different as a result of Jesus' victory over death?

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

"It's not that I'm afraid to die. I just don't want to be there when it happens." Woody Allen

"Hope means hoping when things are hopeless, or it is no virtue at all...As long as matters are really hopeful, hope is mere flattery or platitude; it is only when everything is hopeless that hope begins to be a strength." GK Chesterton

"Their belief in the bodily resurrection of Christ, which emerged out of the many postresurrection encounters they had with Jesus, had a profound impact on how they viewed life in this world. Far from disparaging it, they saw life in this world as a prelude and preparation for life in the next world, which they viewed as a completion and perfection of this world. It made them value life as it is, but it also gave them courage to sacrifice their lives in anticipation of another, greater one." Jerry Sittser about the early church martyrs, Water From A Deep Well.

Working It Out

1. Read 1 Cor. 15:50-58. What words or phrases stand out to you? What emotions do you sense in the Apostle's Paul tone? What emotions does this passage of Scripture stir in you?
2. How does imagining Jesus entering into death not as a captive but as a conqueror change the way you think about His death on the cross?
3. Why is it important for us to reflect on Jesus' victory over death? (Another way of getting at this is – what happens when we don't?)
4. What does it mean to view death as an "enemy," as opposed to "a natural part of life" or something to make peace with?
5. Our vision for the future impacts how we live today. How do you see this principle at work in your lives or the lives of those around you?
6. What do you think it looks like, right now, for you to "give yourself fully to the work of the Lord?"

And how does Jesus' victory over death help with the motivation, strength, etc. to do those things?

7. What do you think the church would look like today if we 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 the victory of Jesus over death.
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