*DAILY DEVOTIONS*

May 24 - 29

The Resurrection

**Monday, May 24 1 Corinthians 15:1-11**

*“He was raised from the dead”*

 When the gospel is reduced to its essence, it is an event in history. It was not something which was enacted in another place, like the activities of the Greek gods, but a happening that can be given date and place and person. Paul summarizes God’s activity in three statements: Christ died for our sins, was buried, and he rose again. In a very condensed form Paul focuses on the significance of the cross in salvation, the reality of his death on our behalf, and our hope in the resurrection.

 Paul’s main argument for the truth of the resurrection was that there were still eyewitnesses to the event. That Christ died and was really raised from the dead was a fact that could be corroborated by individuals who were still living at the time his letter was being written. While Paul confessed his unworthiness and that his meeting with Christ came later, he made no distinction between the Christ who was seen by those he mentions and the Christ who appeared to him on the road to Damascus.

*My faith, Lord, is based upon the historical event of your resurrection. Amen.*

**Tuesday, May 25 1 Corinthians 15:12-19**

*“If Christ has not been raised”*

 In these verses, Paul argues for the absurdity of Christian belief and practice if the bodily resurrection is not true. If there is no coming bodily resurrection of all Christians, then Jesus himself was not bodily raised, and that makes Christianity futile. Paul continuously repeats this thought from several different angles in these verses. The upshot is that all the following result if there is no bodily resurrection:

1. Both the apostolic preaching and the Corinthians’ faith are useless.
2. Paul and his companions are liars.
3. All humanity stands condemned because of their sin.
4. Those who have already died, including believers, are eternally lost.
5. Christians are most deserving of other’s pity or compassion, since they have given up creaturely comforts and endured persecution for the sake of an empty promise.

*To deny your resurrection, Lord, is to deny the hope of eternal life. Amen.*

**Wednesday, May 26 1 Corinthians 15:20-28**

*“But in fact, Christ has been raised”*

 But, Christ *has* been raised bodily and has thus set into motion an inexorable chain of events that will culminate in the universal demonstration of the absolute sovereignty of God. Christ’s bodily resurrection guarantees the future bodily resurrection of all believers, just as the firstfruits of a harvest herald a much larger crop to follow. Paul points out the parallel between Adam’s sin leading to the sinfulness of all humanity and Christ’s resurrection leading to the resurrection of all his followers.

 But the general resurrection of believers at the time of Christ’s return is just the beginning. Christ’s return will also signal that both the end and goal of human history has arrived. Christ will have destroyed all opposition to his reign in the universe – both human and demonic – and death itself will be destroyed, so that God’s people have nothing to fear for all eternity. In the end, God will be all in all, that is, he will be sovereign over all things, including, in a mysterious sense, Jesus himself who has placed himself under his Father’s authority.

*To put my faith in your resurrection, Lord, is to believe in my resurrection. Amen.*

*DAILY DEVOTIONS*

May 24 - 29

The Resurrection

**Thursday, May 27 1 Corinthians 15:29-34**

*“If the dead will not be raised”*

 In these verses Paul goes back to arguing the absurdity of denying the bodily resurrection. He uses several arguments based on what he and the Corinthians were experiencing. The most puzzling of these is the first. Despite all sorts of ingenious alternatives that have been suggested, the plain meaning of verse 29 remains that some sort of proxy baptism is being practiced among at least some in Corinth. Paul neither condemns nor condones such a practice but argues for its irrelevance if Christ is not raised.

 Paul then turns to his own experience. Why should be continue to tolerate hostility from others and risk his life for the sake of the gospel if there is no hope of resurrection? Moreover, if this life is all there is, then people ought to follow the Epicurean slogan to “eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die.” But he immediately proceeds to reject such logic, since Christ has in fact been raised. Instead he quotes another popular Greek proverb. Those who deny the resurrection make for bad company, and their rejection of God’s truth fosters immoral behavior.

*May I know you, Lord, and the truth of your resurrection. Amen.*

**Friday, May 28 1 Corinthians 15:35-44**

*“What kind of body is the resurrected body?”*

 Paul uses the analogy of seed and plant to illustrate the resurrection body. By being buried in the ground, the seed seemingly dies, and it certainly decomposes. Yet on that very spot new life emerges, totally different in appearance from the seed, and yet somehow the mature plant remains the same living entity. In fact, the world is filled with different kinds of bodies that God has created. So why should it be thought incredible that he could create still one more kind – a resurrected human body?

 There yet await for believers resurrection bodies that will be far more glorious than their present ones. Unlike their current bodies, these new ones will be fitted for eternity, never again to die or be limited by sin or impotence. Whereas humans in this world are animated by merely physical life, Christians will one day be fully empowered by the Spirit.

*The resurrection body that awaits me, Lord, will be amazing. Amen.*

**Saturday, May 29 1 Corinthians 15:45-58**

*“We will all be transformed”*

 Believers who have shared in the finite, fallen likeness of the first Adam can look forward to sharing in the kind of perfect humanity Jesus (the last or perfect Adam) embodied, but only after this life, when Jesus comes back again.

 Paul goes on to further unpack the need for bodily transformation. Frail, mortal humanity cannot survive in God’s eternal and perfectly holy presence. Rather, we must inhabit a body that is imperishable and immortal.

 The time when this transformation will take place is when Christ returns. Not all Christians will die first; some will be alive when he comes back. But all will undergo whatever transformation is necessary to give them their glorified bodies. This change will take place instantaneously not gradually.

 Appropriately, Paul returns from these lofty flights of theological reflection to the practical implications for Christians. Since Christ has been raised bodily, they too will one day be physically transformed. Therefore they should remain unswervingly committed to the work of the gospel – to the purity of living and the faithful exercise of their service for the Lord.

*No matter what becomes of my body in this life, Lord, it will be transformed. Amen.*