

Dear Heavenly Father,

Praise

Paul said, “Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed” (1 Cor 15:51–52). I praise you today as the God who will transform my weak, perishable body into the glory and power of the resurrected body of Jesus Christ. Just as I have borne the image of the man of dust, one day I shall also bear the image of the man of heaven. Hallelujah!

Today in Your Word

Today you told me the conclusion of Paul’s second letter to the church at Corinth (called 1 Corinthians). Having discussed the gifts of the Spirit, Paul now addressed the issue of the resurrection of the dead. Some in the church were saying that there was no resurrection of the body after death, and this belief had led to a *carpe diem* attitude toward life: “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die” (1 Cor 15:32). Their error was rooted in the Greek worldview which divided human beings into body and soul, with the soul imprisoned in the body. At death, the soul escaped from the body and was free to inhabit the spiritual realm. This led some of the Corinthians to reason that since the physical body passed away, it didn’t really matter what was done in the body. Paul countered this error by reminding them of the physical, bodily resurrection of Jesus. Jesus’ resurrection was established beyond doubt, for he had appeared and spoken to hundreds of his disciples after his death. This meant that *the dead could be raised*, and although the resurrected body was an imperishable, spiritual body, it was still flesh and blood (cf. Luke 24:39–43). Paul’s discussion of the resurrection teaches me several important lessons: (1) Jesus’ bodily resurrection is the foundation of the Christian faith. If there is no resurrection, then Jesus did not rise, and if Jesus did not rise, then I’ve put my faith in a lie and I’m still in sin. Because he rose, I know with certainty that my sins are forgiven. Because he rose, I know that I too will be raised in glory. Because he rose, “the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me” (Gal 2:20). (2) Union with Jesus is the essence of the Christian life. Adam, the first man, was the head of the human race, and his sin brought death into the world. Jesus, the last Adam, is the head of the Church, and his obedience brought life to the world. I have been united with Christ in his death and raised with him in the power of his resurrection. I have spiritual life now, and I will enjoy physical life in the world to come. (3) Imitating Jesus’ example is the calling of the Christian walk. The false doctrine of no resurrection had led to a collapse of moral standards in the church (1 Cor 15:33), and Paul urged the Corinthians to “wake up from your drunken stupor, as is right, and do not go on sinning” (1 Cor 15:34). Paul wanted them to remember that Jesus left an example so that they might follow in his steps (1 Pet 2:21). He lived a life of obedience to your will, and I am called to do the same.

Reflection

Paul’s defense of the resurrection reminds me that theology matters, for there is a direct connection between right thinking and right living. Do I pay attention to the doctrinal teachings of Scripture, or am I quick to skip over them, looking for something that I feel is more practical and applicable?

Request

Father, impress the truth of the resurrection deep on my heart. Help me to see that it testifies to the necessity of holiness and godliness in this present life, for all of eternity hangs in the balance.

Thanksgiving

“Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor 15:57). I rejoice in the knowledge that you can keep me steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord!

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Suggested Hymn: “[Life Out of Death](#)” – Anonymous.

Meditation Verse: 1 Corinthians 15:54.