

## **Victory Over Death**

**Sermon Text:** 1 Corinthians 15:50-57

**Study Text:** 2 Corinthians 5:1-10

**Sermon Recap:** The main idea of this week's sermon is: The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead gives His people victory over death and the promise of a future bodily resurrection. Take time before your growth group to review the key points you noted from today's sermon.

**Sermon Connection:** As we come to Easter each year, we remember what Christ has done for His people. That is, He came to earth in human form, lived the perfect life God demands, assumed the full weight of sin as He died on the cross, and, in victory, He rose to life on the third day after His death. We are moving into what is called "Holy Week." It is during this week that we remember the Passion of Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup> Paul had this great truth in his mind when he penned all of his letters, and we see this particularly in writing 1 Corinthians 15. He wants to assure the Corinthian church of the guarantee of our eternal life with Christ. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the guarantee that all who trust and follow Him will, likewise, receive the resurrection from the dead to a body that is imperishable and perfectly fit for life eternal in heaven. Paul picks up on this idea in 2 Cor. 5:1-10, noting that this earthly body is but a *tent* (a temporary dwelling) that we will one day lay down as we step into eternity with God. Such is our hope in Christ, and such is our motivation to live with full faith now.

### **Lesson Plan**

**Lesson Goal:** To see how the guarantee of the resurrection calls us to more faithful living now

#### **Lesson Points:**

**Point 1:** Groaning for the Future Hope of Heaven (vv. 1-5)

**Point 2:** Living in Light of the Future Hope of Heaven (vv. 6-10)

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<sup>1</sup> The Passion of Christ refers to His sacrificial death, burial, and resurrection.

**The Context:** The Corinthian church was having difficulty understanding how our earthly bodies would be able to live forever with God.

**Point 1 - Groaning for the Future Hope of Heaven** (vv. 1-5)

- What does Paul mean when he says, “*For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed...*”?
- Paul goes on to say, “*...we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*” How does this help us to better understand 1 Cor. 15:53?
- Why does Paul state that we groan in this earthly tent (body)? Look back at 2 Cor. 1:8, 4:7-15; 6:4-10; 11:23-27.
- In the context of this verse, *groaning* is a distinctly Christian exercise. Why can Christians alone experience this type of groaning? See also 1 Thess. 4:13.
- What is Paul saying in v. 4 about the earthly body vs. the heavenly body? What should this teach us about the dignity and value of life and the body now?
- In v. 5, what is “*this very thing*” that Paul refers to? What role does the Holy Spirit play in teaching us about heaven and our heavenly bodies?

**Point 2 - Living in Light of the Future Hope of Heaven** (vv. 6-10)

- Paul writes in v. 6, “*So we are always of good courage...*” or “*We are always confident.*” What is the truth/reality behind the courage and confidence of the Christian?
- How does this courage and confidence free Paul from worry so that he might live boldly for the Lord?
- How does such a truth affect your life? How would such confidence change how you live?
- Paul says that while we are joined to Christ through the gospel now, we are not yet fully with Him (v. 6). How does v. 7 help to explain this present reality?
- In vv. 8-9, Paul expresses an idea that he would rather be away from his body and at home with the Lord, but that something else is of greater importance. What is Paul saying here? See also Phil. 1:21-26.
- What coming reality does v. 10 highlight? How can we have any confidence knowing that this event is coming?

**The Big Picture - Living in Hope**

The main point of the sermon is this: The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead gives His people victory over death and the promise of a future bodily resurrection. There is much in this life that gives us cause for worry, anxiety and stress without ever thinking about the life to come. We can become so easily overwhelmed with how hard this life can be. And yet, that is Paul’s point. In this life, this earthly tent as Paul calls it, we face hardship, struggle, and anxieties of various kinds. All these things teach us to long for the coming day when we lay aside this broken, earthly body and put on the imperishable heavenly building that God has

prepared for us. While this promise is not yet realized, we know that God has sent His Spirit as a guarantee, a down payment to assure our hearts and minds. We know that when we die, if we die in Christ, we will go to be with the Father. As Paul notes in 1 Cor. 15, we must shed this perishable body in order to put on the imperishable, heavenly body. Therefore, we live in hope, we honor God, we preach and cherish the gospel.

### **Application Questions**

- In what ways are you hoping in the resurrection from the dead?
- What are some specific ways you can bring focus to the resurrection in your family during Holy Week (Easter)?
- In what ways are you teaching your children to look past death to the hope of eternal life with Jesus?
- How might your growth group intentionally engage your community with the gospel during Easter?