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# Sermon Notes

November 26, 2023

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

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## Onward to the Prize Before Us Philippians 3:8-21

### A Common Enemy

- ❖ The inevitability of death
  - our bodies will age, fail, die and decay
  - BUT, our physical death is NOT the end of life
  - our spirits will continue to live
- ❖ “I believe in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting.”
  - the Christian faith speaks with clarity and significance about our ongoing, eternal existence
  - the Christian faith has something profound and beautiful to say about our common enemy, death
  - the Christian gospel announces a message that is different and distinct from all other faiths and “isms”
    - Christianity proclaims that death is a defeated foe
    - when Jesus returns from heaven ALL people will be raised to eternal life (John 5:25, 28-29)
      - the resurrection of life
      - the resurrection of judgment

### Glorified Bodies

- ❖ Philippians 3:20-21 states that, for all who belong to Him, Christ will transform their lowly bodies to be like His glorious body
  - the final stage of the redemption process
  - in the same way the Holy Spirit gives new hearts to all who come to saving faith in Christ, so too will new, glorified bodies be given to those who are in Christ
    - this is not a renovation project!
    - glorified bodies are like the body Jesus, Himself received when HE was raised from the dead
- ❖ Our glorified bodies will be
  - appropriate for our new life in a renewed world
  - suitable for us to live an active, creative, undying lives **for** God and **with** God
  - similar to but different from our current, physical bodies
    - a degree of continuity
    - yet different in the same way a seed differs from the plant which springs from it (1 Cor 15:35-49)
  - “spiritual bodies” are not necessarily immaterial
    - like Paul, we must resist the common Greek thought that “physical is bad” and “spirit is good”
      - God created matter and declared it good
      - we cannot blame our misdeeds and moral failure on our defective bodies
    - glorified bodies are real bodies
    - a new and improved “model”

## Life Everlasting

- ❖ All people have “life without end”
  - for those who follow Christ, this entails an unending fullness of joy that results from eternally being where Christ is and seeing His glory
  - John 17:24
  - J. I. Packer: “Being with Jesus is the essence of heaven; it is what the life everlasting is all about.”
- ❖ Despite whatever hardship and loss we face, we continue to experience and receive good things from God
  - but, no matter how good things are, our relationship with God and with others is never as rich and full as it is meant to be
  - “all good things come to an end”
  - our souls are always left with a longing for “just a little more”
- ❖ If you are in Christ
  - the best God has for you is yet to come
  - you will be forever in the face-to-face presence of the One who knows you best and loves you most
- ❖ Feed your soul, sustain your soul and live off of what the Bible says about heaven
  - all of your heart’s desires will be met in heaven
  - in heaven, your heart will only desire what the Lord holds in store for you

- ❖ If you have never known what it is to live with the hope of life everlasting in a resurrected body
  - settle things between God and yourself now, **TODAY!**
  - to do that is as simple as **A B C**
    - Acknowledge your need as a sinner
    - Believe in Jesus’ substitutionary sacrifice for your sin
    - Confess your desire to receive the salvation that Christ and Christ alone offers you (Romans 10:9)
- ❖ Do this before it is too late
  - *how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation?* (Heb. 2:3)
  - *Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts.* (Psalm 95:7-8)

## Personal Reflection

1. What is your attitude toward death? How are you preparing yourself for it?
2. Do you personally expect and look forward to heaven? Why or why not?
3. If you are one who confidently looks forward to life in heaven, why will heaven be a delight?
4. What are some ways in which you might be able to discuss these difficult but essential topics with those who live apart from Christ?