

Resurrection

If resurrection is not reality—nothing else really matters

If there is no resurrection, all else is futility. If resurrection is not reality, everything else amounts to nothing. Without resurrection, even all the other glorious things of the Bible end in nothingness. The triumph of all other Bible doctrines hinges on the reality of resurrection. What is election, or redemption, or regeneration without resurrection? Did God in the covenant of grace before the foundation of the world give the vast host of His children to Jesus Christ so that the grave might be the end for those much-loved children? Did Jesus shed His precious blood of redemption for His people so that they might remain forever entombed in death? Does the Holy Spirit breathe regeneration into each of the heirs of eternal glory so that the crypt of death might forever take away the life that He had given? No! No! A thousand times, No!!

If there is no resurrection, then Jesus is dead. What hope is there in a Christ who is not resurrected? If Jesus is still dead, then He did not ascend back to heaven. If Jesus did not go back to heaven, then He is not coming back from heaven. If Jesus is not resurrected, then nobody else ever will be.

Paul understood the nothingness of everything else without resurrection. In response to those who doubted the reality of a literal resurrection, Paul countered that if there is no such thing as resurrection, then all faith is empty, all dead are perished, all hope is nothing, and all men are most miserable. *If in this life only we have hope in Christ, then we are of all men most miserable.* (1Co 15:19) Resurrection is the centerpiece of the Bible. It is the exclamation point of all the doctrines of the Bible. Resurrection is what separates Christianity from all others. The angel said: *He is not here: He is risen.* Paul said: *But now is Christ risen from the dead.* Jesus declared, *"I am the resurrection, and the life."* OUR MAN LIVES!!!

If resurrection is reality—nothing else really matters

If there is really such a thing as resurrection, then all the terrible things of this world will eventually amount to nothing. To truly know the reality of resurrection is to experience a changed life. After Jesus' resurrection the apostles were new men. There was no more arguing about who was the greatest. None of that mattered. There was no more denying that they knew Him. The cowards suddenly had courage. What was the worst thing that could happen to them? They might get killed for preaching Christ. So what! They had seen resurrection. They knew the reality of resurrection. They knew He was real. They had seen His hands. They had supped with Him. They had watched Him go through the cloud. They knew He was coming back. Resurrection was reality. Nothing else mattered.

Christ is risen from the dead. Resurrection is eternal reality. Jesus had the power to lay His life down, and Jesus had the power to raise it up again. At the last day Jesus will again show His great power when He shouts from the clouds and resurrects His beloved children. Jesus was the first fruit to rise, and those that sleep in the graves will follow in His pattern. What a hope! In our glorious resurrected bodies we will enjoy the very presence of Jesus for the entirety of eternity. What a wonderful never-ending day that will be!!!

Resurrection is everything! Resurrection is the only thing! Resurrection is worth getting excited about!

The closer you are to death—The better the idea of resurrection sounds

Once upon a time something very special happened while I was preaching to the lonely dying residents confined to a local nursing home. From the Book of Matthew I began to read about the women coming to Jesus' tomb and finding the stone rolled away. I proceeded through the passage making a few comments along the way. Then I came to the words of the angel: *He is not here; for he is risen.* All of a sudden the room was filled with applause. Those old folks were cheering with excitement. It was 'happy time'. We were on 'shouting ground'. I was shocked, even kind of knocked me off my feet. I was unaccustomed to such an interruption to my preaching, but I believe that I could learn to enjoy such things.

As I think back on the occurrence I suppose that there were two things that I had failed to realize. First of all, I had failed to sense the extent of the presence of the Holy Spirit in that place that day. Secondly, and even more to my shame, I had also failed to sense the true wonder in the words, *He is not here; for he is risen.* Oh, but those who were so near to that *walk through the valley of the shadow death* cheered with anticipation at the preaching of the miracle of the resurrection. Through many years of preaching at nursing homes, I have learned that "Resurrection" is their favorite subject. Preaching about the resurrection really means something to them. The closer you get—the better it sounds.

One time after the nursing home experience, I sat quietly watching a much-respected pastor. I was to assist in a funeral that he was to preach. The hour of the funeral was quickly approaching, and he kept flipping back and forth through his Bible. He finally shut the book and confessed to me his desire to come up with something different to preach at this funeral, but that he guessed that he would just talk about the resurrection. I assured him that when we face the hopelessness of death there is no better message than the story of resurrection, and that I felt that he had again made a good choice.

At the appointed time he rose and preached what had been preached so many times before. God abundantly blessed him with a message that we should just patiently wait for the resurrection; patiently wait for the coming of the Lord. People from the back of the crowd began to amen the message. The preacher continued to talk about patiently waiting for the resurrection, and the saddened eyes and faces of the family on the front row began to focus on his every word. They began to amen the message

about a coming resurrection.

The 'Amen's' of those who faced death at the funeral home that day reminded me of the applause from those who had faced death in the nursing home on another day. Oh, when we must face death, no message brings more hope and comfort than that of resurrection. The closer you get—the better it sounds.

Facing death and dying

I received the first text from my son at 9:40 on a Tuesday morning and it read like this: "Saw a man die in front of our house late last night. Wrecked his car into the median. I tried to help and called 911, but they didn't get there fast enough. It's really bothering me...Can barely work."

I responded: "I'm sorry. Life is full of experiences—some good and some bad, but many are for purposes we don't understand. You may need this for preparation for the future, or for awakening for the present, or the man may have needed your presence for the moment. May God give you peace."

My son replied: "I just can't stop playing the reel in my head and questioning the speed of my response. It's crazy that he was alive one second, then dead the next. Guess I wouldn't have been a good soldier."

I answered: "Every good soldier has had to—and continues to—deal with what you are dealing with."

Not receiving an immediate response from him—I further responded: "As I looked back on the previous message that I sent to you, I fear that you might have thought I was unconcerned. My heart aches for you as it aches for many good soldiers who have watched men die. My point was that you are not alone in what you are feeling. Many have had these trials, but with the trials God will give you strength that you may be able to bear it. The feelings you are having are common to men, and Jesus is touched with the feelings of our infirmities."

My son responded: "I didn't think you seemed unconcerned at all. I always appreciate greatly your counsel. I'm very fortunate that I've had limited contact with such things. However, that fact creates a disconnect with the fragileness that exists in our dealings with our brothers and sisters. The suffering that sin has created connects us all so deeply. Life is so fragile, and you never know when your service, words, or actions with others could be the last you or they experience. It was very much a perspective building experience. I want to learn who he was and write to his family. Thanks and love ya."

As I think about the words of my son concerning what soldiers have seen, I am reminded of another recent experience. A good friend, a preacher friend, came to me and said that he would like to ask a favor. He said he needed to talk about something. He wanted to talk about Vietnam. He asked if I would be willing to listen. I told him that I never ask anybody about what happened in a war, but if he wanted to or needed to talk, then I was more than willing to listen. For about an hour I listened. He is in his sixties and still has trouble sleeping at night. As has been said, "War is hell."

Death is truly a monster. These are two otherwise stable men who witnessed death in two different ways. Both men are strong Christians, yet both are struggling with what they saw with their eyes. The deaths they witnessed were not near as personal as the death of a loved one, yet just watching death happen is difficult. Death seems so final—so cruel—so real: And at the same time—in some strange way—so unreal. When we sit with a stranger... When he looks into our eyes... When he gasps his last breath... We ask the question, "Why?"

In some ways it seems like only yesterday that I watched a man die—my Dad. My dear wife and I received a phone call as we were walking across the parking lot of the hospital. "Where are you? —Get here quick." We raced up to his room. My Mom, my wife's parents, and a nurse were standing around his bed. I was discouraged that we had arrived a couple minutes too late. In my sadness I leaned over the bed and said, "I love you, Dad." Much to the surprise of all, Dad muttered, "You too." Though it had seemed so certain that Dad was already gone, God in His mercy allowed me to hear one last, "You too." It has been nearly three years now since I heard those last words. I still dream of him, and we talk in the dreams. Oh, when I awaken they are good dreams. One day soon I will awaken, and it will not be a dream—I will see him again. Maybe I will say, "Love you, Dad." And he will say, "You too." There is certain hope of eternal life. Resurrection is reality. God is good!!!

The certain hope of eternal life

Oh! To conquer death! Men fear death. Men yearn for a life after death. As mortals we know that our lives fly by quickly. We know that we will soon face death. We know that we have no power to conquer the beast. Yet God's word claims that the beast was once conquered—even has already been conquered. Jesus said that He would rise again after three days—and He did. Jesus conquered death in His own behalf, and through His death and resurrection He has conquered death for us. God's children can enter death's door, not knowing how to conquer the beast, but knowing the One who has already conquered it.

Paul preached the gospel of grace. Paul preached that Jesus hath saved us. Paul preached a successful Savior and a certain salvation. Paul preached the God who planned salvation—the Christ who paid for salvation—the Holy Spirit who applies salvation. Paul preached that from start to finish: Salvation is of the Lord. Paul did not want his hearers to be ignorant of the good news that salvation is by God, and totally by His grace. If we know these things, then we will not sorrow about death like those who do not know these things.

1Th 4:13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

If we believe that Jesus can and will resurrect the dead, then we can be different to the world, “*Who through fear of death are all their lifetime subject to bondage.*” (Hebrews 2:15) The Bible is clear that Jesus will one day deliver His children from death to life, and the knowledge that Jesus will do that will even now deliver His children from the bondage of fear to a life of peace. There is much comfort in knowing the certainty of life after death. There is deliverance in understanding the truth and reality about eternity. By having certain hope concerning the reality of eternal life, we will be saved from much despair as we face the loss of loved ones, or as we anticipate our own deaths.

Rom 8:24 For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

When the verse says that *we are saved by hope*, it does not mean that we can hope ourselves into heaven. That is Wizard of Oz mentality. The Wizard of Oz told Dorothy that if she would close her eyes, click her heels together three times, and hope real hard, then she could hope herself from Oz to Kansas. Nobody but a child would really believe such a thing. *The Wizard of Oz* was a movie, and besides that Dorothy was dreaming. Heel clicking and hoping have never gotten anybody to Kansas, and if we cannot hope ourselves to a nearby Kansas, how can we expect to hope ourselves to a faraway heaven? Now we all may hope to get to heaven, but our hoping to get to heaven is not what saves us to heaven. The Lord Jesus Christ saves us and gets us to heaven. Yet that certain hope that Jesus is going to get us to heaven is what will save and deliver us right here. If we are certain that Jesus is going to get us to heaven, then that certain hope saves us from doubts and fears right now. So that is how we are saved by hope.

The Bible uses the word hope differently to the way we commonly use the word. In our language someone might say, “I hope I win the lottery.” Yet everyone knows that such a thing is very doubtful. In the Bible the Greek word, *elpis*, (which is translated as *hope*) does not refer to some long shot, near impossible, pie-in-the-sky idea. As used in the Bible hope is not some fairy tale, happily-ever-after, never-really-going-to-happen-anyway nonsense. The Greek word, *elpis*, refers to a future event with assurance of its coming to pass. The hope of the Bible is absolutely certain; it is just not here yet. The hope of eternal life is a hope that is going to happen.

In the Book of Titus Paul speaks of our hope of eternal life three times, and each time he declares in a different way the certainty of our hope. First of all, Paul assures us of our hope of eternal life by tying it to God’s promise of eternal life.

Tit 1:2 In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;

Before the world began God promised eternal life for His children in what has come to be called the covenant of grace. Before creation God had a great plan that would end in our eternal life. God cannot lie, and His eternal plan cannot change. So by two unchangeable things we can be certain that our eternal life is not a long shot. This certain hope is based in both the irreversible purpose of God and the irrefutable promise of God: *Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us.* (Heb 6:17-18)

Secondly, Paul declares that the same Jesus who gave Himself for us is coming back to get us.

Tit 2:13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

Tit 2:14 Who gave himself for us...

We are looking for a blessed hope, even the glorious appearing of Jesus Christ when He comes to resurrect. Furthermore, the next words give us the certainty that Jesus is going to return. *He gave Himself for us.* Jesus has already come once in order to die for us. Now I ask you to think reasonably. If He has already gone so far as to die for us, will He not now finish what He has started? If He has gone thus far, what could stop Him now? We can be certain that if He came once and did the dying part, then He is going to come again and do the resurrecting part. *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?* (Rom 8:32)

Thirdly, Paul proclaims that it is not our works, but the work of the Holy Ghost that makes certain our hope of eternal life.

Tit 3:5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

Tit 3:6 Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;

Tit 3:7 That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Some will agree that God promised eternal life, and further acknowledge that Christ paid for eternal life, yet then leave the sinner to somehow work his way into the eternal life. No! No! No! These words take out that loophole. Our hope does not hinge on our works, but our hope rests in the work of the Holy Ghost to regenerate us to that eternal life. If my hope depends on me, then certain hope becomes filled with doubts. If my hope is in my works, how much good is good enough? If my hope is in my faith, how much faith is faith enough? If my hope is in me, there is no certainty. If my hope is in me hoping hard enough, then I am living in a dream. Yet if God does it all, then that is successful salvation. From start to finish our eternal life is of God. That is what makes it so certain! Indeed, our hope of eternal life is **a hope that is going to happen!**

So how can we be sure about our hope of eternal life? If we know that our hope of eternal life is grounded in God’s unchangeable plan of amazing grace and that nothing can stop that plan, then we know the certainty of that eternal life, and we

can have a certain hope of eternal life. Before time began the Father determined to save His people, and His purposes always come to pass. Two thousand years ago Jesus successfully redeemed His people and cleansed each one of them from their sins. Jesus is our assurance of our salvation. *Thou shall call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from there sins.* (Mt 1:21) That is a strong statement of certain assurance. The finished work of Jesus guarantees the successful salvation of every one of His children. Salvation is not by man's works; it is by the work of Jesus. In time the Holy Spirit breathes eternal life into each one of those elected and redeemed people. Salvation is not by man's help; it is totally by God's grace. At the natural death of each of God's children, their spirit goes to paradise. At the last day each of them will be in glory—none lost—none missing. Thankfully, from start to finish salvation is of the Lord. God planned it before the world began. God paid for it on the cross. God applies it at the new birth. God assures it in the end. To Him be all the praise! To Him be all the glory!

Dying grace for the moment of death

We all might agree that we look forward to experiencing eternal life, but dread the path that leads to it. We do not mind being dead, but the dying part seems dreadful. I suppose this fear of dying is natural, but I do not believe it is scriptural. The Bible says, *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me.* (Psalm 23:4) What a promise! When the time comes for me to go through that dark valley, I will not be alone. My Shepherd will be there. He will be with me. As I think about dying, I imagine that I will be scared. Yet here I am told that *I will fear no evil.*

Jesus said, *I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.* (John 14:2-3) Did you hear what He said? He has gone to prepare a place for you—I go and prepare a place for you. A time is coming for you to be with Him where He is—that where I am, there ye may be also. Yet look closely at the logistics of how you get there—I will come again, and receive you unto myself. When your time comes, He does not just call you. He comes and gets you. I will not make the journey alone— *for thou art with me, and I will fear no evil.* I believe in dying grace.

Dying grace for Norma McIntyre

My last visit with her was two days before she died. It was late in the afternoon when I received a phone call at work from Norma's son. Norma had just returned from the hospital to the nursing home—sent back there to die. There was nothing more that could be done. She wanted me to come see her. So when I got off work, I headed that way. It was a long drive to the nursing home in Mount Vernon, IN, and I must confess that I was dreading the visit. You see, Norma had been sick and in pain for a long time. I had visited her often. I had prayed with her many times, but her anguish and pain just continued to plague her. She was always so discouraged, and after visiting her, I would always leave feeling so discouraged—so helpless. It seemed that I had never been able to encourage her, and now she was dying and asking for me.

When I arrived at her room, she had a death rattle in her breathing. She asked the nurse for a pain shot, and the nurse explained to Norma that she did not have the doctor's orders yet. (I tell you this so that you will know that Norma was not under the influence of narcotics.)

Upon my arrival her son and daughter-in-law left the room, saying that they would give the two of us some time to be together. Norma asked me to pray. I prayed, but she was still writhing in agony. Not knowing what to do, I began to softly sing *Amazing Grace*. I know what the Bible says about singing songs to those with heavy hearts: *As he that taketh away a garment in cold weather, and as vinegar upon nitre, so is he that singeth songs to an heavy heart.* (Pro 25:20) Yet I did not know what else to do, so I just sang and prayed to myself while I was singing. As I made my way through the verses her writhing seemed to slow down. She became still. I even thought that she might be asleep, but when I finished the last verse she opened her eyes and told me she wanted to go home. I knew that she spoke of her heavenly home. I told her that that was in the hands of our God. I told her that I did not know His times, but that Jesus knows those times, and that Jesus knows all about us. I began to sing:

*Come what may of joy or sorrow—Be my portion pain or rest.
Jesus guides me and directs me—And His way is always best.
Jesus knows—Jesus knows—All the way my feet must go.
Jesus knows—Jesus knows—Him I trust who loves me so.*

When I got to words, *Jesus knows*, a soft weak trembling alto voice echoed my words:

Jesus knows (Jesus knows) Jesus knows (Jesus knows)

Norma McIntyre was singing with me. We sang *Blessed Assurance* together. When we finished that one, she opened her eyes and told me that she felt the Spirit so strongly while we were singing that she had thought she was gone. I told her that she had not yet heard singing like she was going to soon hear. We then sang *It Is Well With My Soul*. After that it seemed right just to sit and think of the Lord. She seemed to be so at peace—and I know that I was.

About that time her son, daughter-in-law, and two friends eased into the room. Norma was lying there with her eyes closed. One of them whispered, "How's she doing?" I told them that I thought she was doing better. "She's been singing." They looked at me as if I were a fool. At that point Norma came to my rescue, as she began to sing:

I am safe in His love, for a wonderful Savior is He.

I am safe in His love, In His mercy He saved even me.

When she finished she said, "That's my favorite. They sang that when I was baptized." The six of us sang *Rock of Ages* together.

*While I draw this fleeting breath—When I close my eyes in death
When I rise to worlds unknown—And behold Thee on Thy throne
Rock of ages cleft for me—Let me hid myself in thee*

That was the last time I saw my friend, Norma McIntyre. A few days later I preached her funeral. I look forward to singing with her again soon.

Dying grace for Stephen

You might now say that I am a naïve old preacher. You might say, "It doesn't happen that way every time," and I will be the first to agree with you. Everybody does not die in peace. Some die in pain. Some die in agony. Some die horrible deaths. I know that that is the case, but let us look for a moment at a time when a man died in what appeared to be one of the worst kinds of death. Now none of us knows how it actually feels to die. We may think that we do, but we do not. We may have watched what appeared to be an agonizing death, but what appears from the outside is not always the same as what is happening on the inside. Let us look at a dying preacher.

*Act 7:54 When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.
Act 7:55 But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God,
Act 7:56 And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.
Act 7:57 Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord,
Act 7:58 And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul.
Act 7:59 And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.
Act 7:60 And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.*

When we pray for a peaceful passing, we surely do not mean that we would like to experience death by stoning. An observer of Stephen's death would not likely have declared, "Now there is a man who died in peace." From all observation it would appear that Stephen died a terrible death. Yet while the stones are crushing away his physical life, Stephen is allowed to see heaven opened. He is looking in at the throne room of God. He sees God. He sees Jesus risen from His throne and standing at the right hand of God. Think of the scene—Jesus standing as if to welcome home a friend. Stephen so filled with the Spirit that he prays forgiveness for those that are pelting him with stones. Stephen falling asleep while talking to Jesus. *Yea though I pass through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me.* What a way to die!

Dying grace for Thomas Haukes (or Hauker) (Foxe's Book of Martyrs)

Thomas Haukes, with six others, was condemned on the ninth of February, 1555. A little before death, several of Mr. Hauke's friends, terrified by the sharpness of the punishment he was going to suffer, privately desired that in the midst of the flames he should show them some token, whether the pains of burning were so great that a man might not endure it. This he promised to do; and it was agreed that if the rage of the pain might be suffered, then he should lift up his hands above his head towards heaven, before he gave up the ghost.

Not long after, Mr. Haukes was led away to the place appointed for slaughter by Lord Rich, and being come to the stake, mildly and patiently prepared himself for the fire, having a strong chain cast about his middle, with a multitude of people on every side compassing him about, unto whom after he had spoken many things, and poured out his soul unto God, the fire was kindled. When he had continued long in it, and his speech was taken away by violence of the flame, his skin drawn together, and his fingers consumed with the fire, so that it was thought that he was gone, suddenly and contrary to all expectation, this good man being mindful of his promise, reached up his hands burning in flames over his head to the living God, and with great rejoicings as it seemed, struck or clapped them three times together. A great shout followed this wonderful circumstance, and then this blessed martyr of Christ, sinking down in the fire, gave up his spirit, June 10, 1555.

Dying grace for Ridley and Latimer (Foxe's Book of Martyrs)

Dr. Ridley, the night before his execution upon seeing Mrs. Irish (the innkeeper's wife) weeping said to her, "Though my breakfast will be somewhat sharp, my supper will be more pleasant and sweet." When they came to the stake, Ridley embraced Latimer fervently, and bid him, "Be of good heart, brother, for God will either assuage the fury of the flame, or else strengthen us to abide it." He then knelt by the stake, and after earnestly praying together, they had a short private conversation.

Mr. Latimer stood venerable and erect, fearless of death. A lighted fagot was now laid at Dr. Ridley's feet, which caused Mr. Latimer to say, "Be of good cheer, Ridley; and play the man. We shall this day by God's grace light up such a candle in England, as I trust will never be put out."

When Ridley saw the fire flaming up towards him, he cried with a wonderful loud voice, "Lord, Lord, receive my spirit." Latimer was crying as vehemently on the other side, "O Father of heaven, receive my soul!" He received the flame as if he were embracing it. After that he had stroked his face with his hands, and as it were, bathed them a little in the fire, he soon died (as it appeareth) with very little pain or none.

Dying grace for Kerby (Foxe's Book of Martyrs)

Master Wingfield said to Kerby, 'Remember the fire is hot, take heed of thine enterprise, that thou take no more upon thee, than thou shalt be able to perform. The terror is great, the pain will be extreme, and life is sweet. Better it were betimes to stick to mercy, while there is hope of life, than rashly to begin, and then to shrink.

To whom Kerby answered, 'Ah. Master Wingfield! Be at my burning, and you shall say, there standeth a Christian soldier in the fire. For I know that fire and water, sword and all other things, are in the hands of God, and He will suffer no more to be laid upon us than He will give us strength to bear.'

Dying grace for Martyn Lloyd-Jones

One of my favorite preachers of all times is David Martyn Lloyd-Jones. As a young man in England he left a promising career as a physician and became an outstanding minister. His books are still sold by the thousands. He is not a Primitive Baptist, but I have read many of his books. I do not agree with everything he says, but his writings have taught me much. A while back I read his biography written by a close friend, Ian Murray. Murray gives an account of visiting Lloyd-Jones as he lay on his death bed. He found his friend to be in much pain, and as he looked at him he was grieved in his own heart. He said, "It hurts me so bad to see you so weak, so tired and so sad." It had been a while since Lloyd-Jones had spoken a word, but from somewhere (perhaps by the Holy Spirit Himself) he mustered up the strength to say two words: "Not sad." He might have been weak. He might have been tired. Yet he wanted his friend to know that he was not sad. He was perhaps even then seeing the Jesus that he had so long preached. It is not a sad time. We will fear no evil. There is something beyond this place. There is the hope of eternal life and a hope for tomorrow.

"Look—Ruby—Look"

When I was a young man, there was an old blind brother in our church. Harvey Purdy was his name. Where we have two eyeballs, he had two holes in his head. Of course, he could not see; he did not have all the parts. Now Harvey had been in the hospital for some amount of time, and he finally passed away. So I went by the funeral home to give my regards to his widow. When I walked in Ruby said, "Brother Jeff, Brother Jeff, come here. I have to tell you something." She was so excited. That is not generally what you encounter when you see the widow at the funeral home.

I said, "What is it, Ruby?" She said, "We were over there in the hospital. The doctor was in the room. Harvey was lying back in the bed, and all of a sudden he sat up and said, 'Look, Ruby, look.'" (I would bet that that old blind man had not said that too many times in his life. He did not have any eyes, but he said, "Look, Ruby, look.")

Ruby said to me, "I didn't know what to do, Brother Jeff. I looked at the doctor, and he nodded his head like I ought to just agree with Harvey. So I just said, 'Yes Harvey'. About that time Harvey said again, 'Oh, look, Ruby, look.' Then he said, 'Isn't that beautiful?' After that he just laid back in the bed."

Ponder the excitement that that old man experienced. *Was blind, but now I see!* Yet it was not just that he could see. It was whatever that he was seeing. Listen to his words, "Isn't that beautiful?" I do not know what he saw; maybe about the same thing Stephen saw. Whatever he saw, he described it with the word, "Beautiful". I do not think words can probably describe what Harvey Purdy saw. There is really something out there, and it is more real than what is around us right now. At this point the best we can do with eyes of faith is to see our hope through a glass darkly—just with vague shadowy images. Yet some day we will say with Harvey, "Look, Oh look. Isn't that beautiful?" What a day that will be!

Our spirits at death

At the time of death it is dreadfully apparent that the spirit of life is absent from the body. Death is not imaginary. It is very much real. The body is indeed very much dead and is buried to await its resurrection. Yet where is the spirit that once housed that body? What happens to that mystical thing called life—that thing that made the person that we knew to be the person that we knew? Where is the child of God after the death of his or her body, yet prior to the much-anticipated resurrection of that body?

Paul described the moment of death with these words: *absent from the body...present with the Lord.* (2Co 5:8) The mysterious thing called life is no longer housed in its incredibly engineered body. It is *absent from the body* wherein it once existed, yet it has not ceased to exist. It has only changed locations. It is now *present with the Lord.* Wow!! If that be the case, then "*Death Ain't No Big Deal*".

Solomon described the moment of death using these words: *Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.* (Ecclesiastes 12:7) From dust was man made, and to dust shall man go. Yet Solomon did not stop with, *Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was*, because God does not stop there. Solomon went on to say, *the spirit*

shall return unto God who gave it. Our bodies may rot, but we are absent from our bodies while the maggots are feasting. We are already present with the Lord. Our spirits of life have returned unto God, and our bodies will go to be with Him at the final resurrection.

Jesus said to the dying thief: *Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.* (Luke 23:43) Jesus did not say: “Just wait a few thousand years until the resurrection, and then you will be with me in paradise.” Jesus said to the thief: *Today.* Now I suppose that somebody buried that thief’s body that day, and I suspect that his body has long since returned to dust. Yet that thief was not in that body when it was buried. That thief was not in that body while it was rotting. That thief is absent from that body, but he still exists. He even right now exists with Jesus in paradise. That same thief has been experiencing paradise for about 2000 years, and he has the continual experience of paradise forever ahead of him. What a transition—from hanging on a cross—to hanging out with Jesus in paradise!

Speaking of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Jesus told the unbelieving Sadducees that *God is not a God of the dead but of the living.* (Luke 20:38) Surely His point was that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were not dead, but alive with God. This is true of the thief, and of Paul, and of thousands upon thousands of God’s children from Adam to now. The scriptures teach that the spirit, the very life, of the child of God is immediately whisked from this world to the next at the passing we call death. *Some glad morning, when this life is o’er, I’ll fly away.*

No such thing as soul sleep

Through the history of Christianity and even still today, some have erroneously believed in ‘soul sleep’. They hold fast to belief in the resurrection. They just think that the soul is asleep with the body and unconsciously waiting for the resurrection. For the weary traveler to think that the soul will just ‘rest in peace’ sleeping away the centuries until Christ comes back is not such a bad thought. Yet to say that sleeping the centuries away is just as good as consciously experiencing paradise through those same centuries would be perhaps the greatest understatement of the centuries. So what does the Bible say about the idea of ‘soul sleep’?

Php 1:23 For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:

Php 1:24 Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.

From these words it is apparent that Paul did not believe in ‘soul sleep’. Paul said that he was *in a strait betwixt two*. In other words, he was perplexed by which of two possible outcomes would be the better. On the one hand, he was ready to die and to go be with Christ. On the other hand, he wanted to live and serve Christ by continuing to serve the church at Philippi. Paul acknowledged that the option to be with Christ was the better of the two, yet he did not seem to be fully convinced, in that he knew that the people of the church still needed him.

So what does this have to do with ‘soul sleep’? If Paul had believed that several hundred years of ‘soul sleep’ was what awaited him after death, then he would have had no dilemma. Paul was not in a quandary between either fifteen more years of service or fifteen extra years of unconsciousness. Paul was torn between either fifteen years of service for Christ or fifteen years of enjoying paradise with Christ. There is no doubt that the fifteen years with Christ would have been far better. Yet Paul sensed that his work here was not through. He had a deep sense of desire to remain in this world just a little longer so he could continue to serve his Christ. Paul was not a lazy man. If the other option instead of working for Christ had been ‘soul sleep’, then Paul would have never considered death the better option. If Paul had not anticipated a conscious togetherness with Christ, then I believe that he would want to be still alive today continuing to serve Christ.

It certainly seems that Jesus believed in consciousness after death. In His account of the rich man and Lazarus, the two men were conscious of their situations. According to Jesus’ description, Lazarus *is comforted*, while the rich man is *tormented*. Surely Lazarus was aware of his comfort. The rich man was fully aware of *being in torments*. He begged for water. He spoke the words: *I am tormented in this flame*. His conversation with Abraham was not him talking in his sleep. The two men had died, and both were fully aware of their surroundings. Perhaps the most important part of the account is that the world was still in existence when all this took place. The setting is not eternity future after the age of ‘soul sleep’ has passed. The rich man still had five brothers alive on the earth. The world was still here when all this took place. There is no such thing as ‘soul sleep’. When we leave this world, we immediately awake to begin experiencing the next.

Though I readily admit that I do not understand exactly what the following passage is all about, I can at least see that it is a record of a conversation that occurs in heaven while men are still living on the earth. Thus we again see that the state of existence between death and the final resurrection involves a state of clear consciousness, as opposed to a state of unconscious sleep.

Rev 6:9 And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:

Rev 6:10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?

Rev 6:11 And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.

The following verses speak of the body and the soul after death.

Isa 57:1 The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come.

Isa 57:2 He shall enter into peace: they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness.

The righteous man that God has graciously taken is spared from any future evil that would have come upon him in this world. At the time of his parting from this world this righteous man is said to *enter into peace*. Then there is a more detailed statement that explains what happens to the body and to the soul. The bodies *rest in their beds*. They are perhaps laid out in funeral homes awaiting their burials. Yet at the same time that these men are said to be *resting in their beds*, it is also said that each of them is *walking in his righteousness*. While the body rests in sleep, the soul walks in the eternal righteousness that is given by Christ. Not sleep walking, but walking in paradise.

Jesus said to the thief, *Today thou shalt be with me in paradise*. And so he is, and so it is.

Will we know each other in heaven?

Our earthly reasoning is probably of little use when we begin to ponder about heaven. Men have varying opinions as to what heaven will be like and seem to think that they can defend their positions with earthly logic. Some say that we will remember nothing from our days upon earth. They reason, "Heaven will not be heaven if we are able to remember the sin and misery of this world." Others rationalize, "What will be the point of singing praises to the One who saved us from our sins, if we cannot remember that we were sinners?" Regretfully, the earthly logic sometimes continues to its logical conclusion of a refusal to believe in a heaven that cannot be explained. Perhaps the Sadducees had come to this point. They did not believe in life after this world, and they thought that they could prove the absolute impossibility of such a preposterous idea. They came to the One who had come from heaven with their logic. They presented to Jesus a story of a woman whose first husband had died. According to their account, this woman then married her first husband's brother. Well this second husband died, and she again married another brother. The sequence continued through seven different brothers, and after the death of the seventh husband, the woman finally died. They had set their stage. They thought they had Jesus backed into a corner. I can almost see their arrogant sneers when their spokesman asked the impossible-to-answer question:

Mat 22:28 Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her.

Jesus responded,

Mat 22:29 ...Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.

Mat 22:30 For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.

I am truly glad that Jesus stopped the mouths of the Sadducees and put them in their place, but I must admit that His answer is somewhat troubling to me. No such thing as marriage in heaven? You see, I have been married to my high school sweetheart for forty years. She was my first date and my only love. How can heaven be heaven, if she is not my wife? So I do not claim to be able to answer all the questions about heaven, in that I have my own questions, yet I am sure of one thing in particular. When we get to heaven, we will be happy with what we find. In this world the best that we can strive for is to try to be contented with our circumstances, but I suppose that there are always things that we would change if we could. When we get to heaven, we will not want to change a thing. We will finally be totally satisfied. What a blissful thought!

Psa 17:15 As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.

Jesus' statements about marriage prove that at least some relationships will be different in heaven. The former relationships of marriage will not exist in heaven (or at least will not exist in the same way that they existed in the earth), but will all former relationships cease to be? Will all memories of earthly relationships be wiped out forever? The age old question: 'Will we know each other in heaven?'

The patent answer from those who believe that we will know each other in heaven lies in the words of the Apostle Paul: "*but then shall I know even as also I am known.*" (1Co 13:12) Yet if we honestly look at the context of Paul's statement, it is hard to be certain that he was addressing the question of whether or not we will know each other in heaven.

On the other hand, the context of David's statement, which he made at the time of the death of his son, leaves little doubt but that David thought that we would know each other in heaven.

2Sa 12:22 And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether GOD will be gracious to me, that the child may live?

2Sa 12:23 But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.

David had fasted, wept and prayed for days that his infant son might not die. Yet the child died. At that point David arose from his weeping and fasting. He washed himself, changed his clothes, and went to the house of God to worship. David faced his situation knowing two things. First of all he knew the dreadful reality: *he shall not return to me*. Yet he also knew the glorious truth: *I shall go to him*. David had great anticipation of seeing his son again in heaven. Surely David was not disappointed when he got to heaven. Surely David did not find that he could not figure out which one was his son. I believe that David saw his son again, and I believe that he knew his son when he saw him.

On the Mount of Transfiguration it seems that Peter, James and John immediately recognized Moses and Elijah.

Mat 17:3 And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.

Mat 17:4 Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

Though Moses and Elias had been dead for centuries, there is no record that Jesus had to introduce Peter, James and John to Moses and Elias. When the ones from heaven appeared, the ones on earth recognized them. If men who are still on the earth are able to recognize men who have come from heaven, then surely men who have gotten to heaven will be able to recognize men who are in heaven. Do you suppose we will be less able to know things of heaven once we get there? No! Surely our vision will be greatly improved beyond seeing through a glass darkly. Surely our understanding will be greatly increased from the fog we now experience. Surely whatever we know here, will be greatly known there. I believe that we will know each other in heaven.

From hell the rich man looked up into heaven and recognized Abraham and Lazarus.

Luk 16:23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

Surely if a man in hell can look up and recognize those who are in heaven, then a man in heaven will be able to look around and recognize those who are in heaven. I believe we will know each other in heaven. I look forward to seeing several old friends. I look forward to putting faces with the names of lots of dear old friends, like a man named Paul. I look forward to talking to my Dad. I look forward to holding my little Ellierose. Most of all I look forward to seeing my Jesus, and I believe that I will know Him at first sight. Wow! To be able put a face with that Name!!

The resurrection of our bodies

It is a glorious thought to anticipate that our spirits, even our very lives, will be in heaven with Jesus forever. To think that we have lives that do not end in death, but immediately go to be with Him would seem to be a sufficient eternal outcome. Yet truly the most glorious part is yet to come. Jesus is coming back to resurrect our bodies from the graves. What a day that will be!

We have a wonderful and certain hope that Jesus will someday return. Forty days after Jesus' resurrection His closest followers watched Him ascend back into the heavens from whence He had come.

Act 1:9 And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

As if the ascension of Jesus was not enough astonishment for one day, while Jesus' disciples were staring in amazement at His going up, they perhaps had not noticed that two angels had come down.

Act 1:10 And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;

To add even more marvel to the moment, the angels broke into their wonder with the most wonderful words of hope that have ever been spoken.

Act 1:11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

This same Jesus is coming back! Surely it was with a great sense of awe that Jesus' friends watched Him rise from the earth and disappear through a cloud. Surely it brought a great sense of joy to hear the words that He was coming back. If not for the angels' words, Jesus' departure might have been a scene of sorrow. Yet instead of being filled with sorrow, His friends were filled with joy—filled with hope. Jesus is coming back. Jesus will return in the clouds one day with a purpose. Paul spoke of the return of Jesus for the purpose of raising the dead.

1Th 4:16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

1Th 4:17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

1Th 4:18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

Resurrection is the centerpiece of all that Christians believe. Christianity hinges upon the reality of resurrection. A resurrected Christ is the only hope of our salvation. Yet from early times some have scoffed at the idea of a resurrection of the body. Paul asked the church at Corinth, *How say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?* (1Co 15:12)

Paul answered the idea that there is no such thing as resurrection with these words:

1Co 15:13 But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen:

1Co 15:14 And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.

1Co 15:15 Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.

1Co 15:16 For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised:

1Co 15:17 And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.

1Co 15:18 Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.

1Co 15:19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

Paul said that if there is no such thing as a resurrection of the body, then Christ is not resurrected. If Christ is not resurrected, then all that Christians preach or believe amounts to nothing. If there is no such thing as the resurrection of the body, then all Christian preachers are liars. If Christ is not raised from the dead, then our belief is in nothing. If Christ is not raised from the dead, then all men are yet in their sins and will perish. If the Christian hope is in a dead Christ, then the Christian is the most miserable of all men.

Yet Paul declares that the Christian hope is not in a dead Christ, for Christ is resurrected from the grave. Moreover the Christian hope goes beyond a one time resurrection of Christ. Christ was the first to be resurrected. Some day Christ will shout and all His childrens' bodies will come forth to forever be with Him in glory.

1Co 15:20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.

1Co 15:21 For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

1Co 15:22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

1Co 15:23 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

1Co 15:24 Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

1Co 15:25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

1Co 15:26 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

1Co 15:27 For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him.

1Co 15:28 And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

The scoffer will ask how such a thing can be done.

1Co 15:35 But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?

The same God, which repeatedly brings stalks of corn from dead seed, can bring a new body from a dead one.

1Co 15:36 Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die:

1Co 15:37 And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain:

1Co 15:38 But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.

The same God that has made all manners of natural bodies can make spiritual bodies.

1Co 15:39 All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds.

The same God who has made the bodies of the universe can make spiritual bodies.

1Co 15:40 There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.

1Co 15:41 There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory.

The same body that is buried in the grave is coming out of the grave. God is not going to create new bodies. He is going to resurrect our bodies. Natural bodies are buried in corruption, in dishonor and in weakness. Yet those same bodies will be resurrected in incorruption, in glory and in power. The "it" that gets planted in the ground is the "it" that comes out.

1Co 15:42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:

1Co 15:43 It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:

1Co 15:44 It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

Jesus is the life-giving power behind the glory of resurrection.

1Co 15:45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.

1Co 15:46 Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.

1Co 15:47 The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.

1Co 15:48 As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.

1Co 15:49 And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

1Co 15:50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

1Co 15:51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

1Co 15:52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

1Co 15:53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

1Co 15:54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

1Co 15:55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

1Co 15:56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

1Co 15:57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

We are promised that these mortal bodies will rise again, that the mortal shall put on immortality, and that even the death of the body is swallowed up in victory. Jesus paid for body, soul and spirit at the cross. Yes, the spirit goes home immediately, but the day will come when Jesus will come back, and shout, and our bodies will rise and be reunited with our spirits. What a Savior!! What a victory!!

Listen to Jesus' words:

Joh 6:38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

Joh 6:39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

What a plan of salvation! Before time began the will of God gave a vast host of people to Jesus. At God's appointed time Jesus gave His life for the people in that vast host. At the time of His pleasing, Jesus speaks the spiritual life of the new birth into each person of that vast host. Jesus' final accomplishment in salvation is yet to come! At the last day Jesus will shout from the clouds, and of all that were given to Jesus, nothing will be lost. Each and every one will be gloriously raised up the last day. All that the Father willed to Jesus, Jesus will resurrect. To the praise of the Savior, none will be missing. To the honor of His integrity, none will be lost. To the glory of Jesus, resurrection is coming. What election determined before time began, resurrection will obtain when time is no more! From start to finish salvation is of the Lord. What a plan! What a Savior!

Conclusion

And Lord haste the day when the faith shall be sight,

The clouds be rolled back as a scroll,

The trump shall resound and the Lord shall descend,

"Even so", it is well with my soul

Horatio G. Spafford

The coming down of the Lord Omnipotent Savior King—the voice of the archangel—the blast of the trumpet—the dead alive again—resurrection morning! Wow!

Oh, *when the faith shall be sight!* I will be changed. No more doubts, no more fears, no more battle with the sinful flesh. No more looking through a glass darkly. Yet best of all, the clouds are rolled back, all barriers removed, the door of heaven opened, nothing between Jesus and me! I will no longer have to envision a make-believe face and try to imagine what my Savior looks like. I shall see Him as He is. I shall behold His glory. I shall finally be able to glorify Him with perfect untainted praise. I shall at last be totally satisfied. Oh, I do think that that will be well with my soul, and with my mind, and with my heart, and with my resurrected body. Lord, indeed, haste the day. Come quickly.

To know that something better is waiting surely helps us get through the anguish of the day. We read of a day when all troubles will be gone. *And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.* (Revelation 21:4) When I go to the nursing homes and try to preach the gospel to those lonely dying mortals, I often see tears of sorrow. Those imprisoned souls long for something better. They know crying. They have pain. They shed tears of despair. Yet when I preach of the hope of the resurrection, smiles replace the tears. When we sing together of heaven, joy comes alive. Oh, some day soon there will be ultimate endless peace.

To have the hope of eternal life delivers us from the despair of today. To know that our vile bodies will be fashioned like unto His glorious body cheers the sinner's soul. To know that we will be conformed to the image of Jesus lifts the heart to heights of joy. To know that some day we will be like Jesus gives peace to the weary. *Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.* (1 John 3:2)

Job certainly knew troubles, but he hoped for the ultimate peace. *For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another.* (Job 19:25-27)

Paul compared this world to the next and put things into perspective with these words. *For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.* (Romans 8:18)

David declared that he would be finally satisfied when he awoke to see his God, and to even be in the likeness of His God. *As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.* (Psalm 17:15) It is doubtful whether we are ever totally satisfied in this world. Even in our most peaceful moments there are still things in the backs of our minds that try to haunt us. Yet some day those haunts will be gone. Some day we will be satisfied. The hope of eternal life! A time of timeless endless perfect peace is a few days away!

*There is coming a day when no heartaches shall come,
No more clouds in the sky, no more tears to dim the eye;
All is peace forevermore on that happy golden shore,
What a day, glorious day that will be!*

Jim Hill

What did that say? All is what? All is peace. All is peace. Everything peace. Everywhere peace. All-the-time peace. Peace without end. Forevermore peace. Ultimate peace! A life forever, and ever, and ever, and ever, where all is peace! What a day! What a glorious day! What an eternity! What a glorious eternity! All by a man named Jesus! What a Savior! What a God!

Resurrection is the only thing that really matters.

Resurrection is everything that really matters.

Resurrection is worth getting excited about!