



New Geneva

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY



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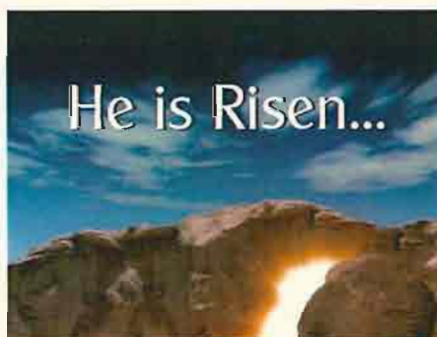
Hope: Being United to the Resurrection Life of Christ

John Murray observes: "It is not simply the resurrection as an event that is in view.... Paul does not say, we shall be saved by his resurrection, but 'by his life,' and therefore it is the exalted life of the Redeemer that is intended. The resurrection is in the background as conditioning the exaltation life."

In what sense, then, are we saved by the resurrection life of the Son?.... The resurrection life of Christ is the guarantee of the resurrection life of all united to him in the same way the full harvest is united to the firstfruits. The life of Christ consisting in his royal eschatological enthronement beyond the reach of the grave in the incorruptibility of the Spirit guarantees the kingdom life of all believers who will share in his reign (Rom. 5:17) and inheritance (Rom. 8:17). Murray drives the point home well: "The *a fortiori* (strongest) argument of the apostle is thus apparent. It is to the effect that if, when we were in a state of alienation from God, God showed his love to such an extent that he reconciled us to himself and instated us in his favour through the death of his own Son, how much more, when this alienation is removed and we are instated in his favour, shall the exaltation life of Christ insure our being saved to the uttermost...." This argument also shows the indissoluble connection that there is between the death and resurrection of Christ, and that since these may never be disassociated, so the benefits accruing from the one may never be severed from those accruing from the other.... Hence those who are the beneficiaries of Jesus' death must also be the beneficiaries of all that is entailed in his resurrection life.

The eschatological (the full present and future) life of the believer can never be separated from the resurrection life of Christ. This royal life of the Son in the incorruptible power and glory of the Spirit is the guarantee of the full possession of life for all who believe. Furthermore, as Paul will go on to demonstrate, the only other alternative to life in Christ is death in Adam (Rom. 5:12-20)—in these two public persons is the whole of humanity subsumed. The path of life from the mode of the flesh, which is subject to death, to the mode of the Spirit, which is characterized by power, glory, and life, is exclusively found in the resurrection life of Jesus Christ our Lord. The gospel, of which the death and resurrection of the Son is the central subject matter (Rom. 1:3), is the power of the risen Lord to bring all who receive it by faith into this kingdom life.

Lastly, Paul's connection between reconciliation and life in this passage highlights the God-centered nature of this life, which has been evident since the beginning. There is no life post-fall apart from reconciliation between God and the sinner. This life in Christ can only be considered true life if it is enjoyed in the presence of the living God with all elements of enmity and separation caused by sin blotted out, removed as far as the east is from the west, cast forevermore into the depths of the sea—here legally, as to justification, and later as to sin's power in sanctification (Rom. 6). — *Daniel Ragusa*



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Thank you for your regular support to help us provide the highest quality Christ-centered education for our students. Because of the generosity of individuals like you, you are making a difference in the lives of students as they prepare to serve in vocational ministry and church leadership here and around the world. Contact us for more information at 719-573-5395.

Dr. Aquila Teaching at New Geneva's Egypt Extension, March 22-29

Dr. Aquila will be teaching at our New Geneva Seminary Extension in Egypt from March 22-29. The courses are taught at the conference center of the Presbyterian Church of Egypt. We expect seventy students to be enrolled for the three courses being offered. Please pray for his ministry there.

Spring Semester Underway

Continue to pray for our students as they are engaged in their Spring Semester courses. Your regular support encourages our students.

What Should I Do When I'm Bearing Unbearable Suffering?

The Prospect of Lifelong Pain

I've had a few seasons of intense suffering. One time I was teaching a seminary class in South Asia and I tripped over a hole in the street, which was terrible for me—with a nerve disorder—when my full weight landed on my left hand and on my right elbow.

I'd fallen a few times in my life, but this was the worst. All I could do in that moment when my nerve was struck was to get up and begin running down the street. I was in shock. My colleague and I changed our dinner plans, went back to the hotel room, I ordered a pizza that was hardly better than the microwave variety, and I laid in my bed in despair.

I reminded myself that God is my refuge and strength, a very-present help in trouble.

All I could think about was that I would probably have intensified pain for days or even weeks. Perhaps my fall had caused further disability and permanent pain that would never go away this side of heaven.

What we should do is what Martyn Lloyd Jones encourages us to do: *Preach truth to ourselves rather than listening to the lies in our own heads.* That night, I had to preach to my own soul to remind myself that God is with me. I turned to the truth in God's Word, and flipped to my favorite psalm: Psalm 46. — *Dave Furman*

The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. (1 Cor. 15:42 NKJV)

What will happen when we die? In bodily terms, the Apostle Paul says we will be “sown in corruption.” The word “corruption” refers to destruction or decay.

Dr. Trisha MacNair, writing for the BBC, provides a graphic description of the process of bodily decomposition after death:

When someone’s heart stops pumping blood around their body, the tissues and cells are deprived of oxygen and rapidly begin to die. But different cells die at different rates, so for example brain cells die within 3-7 minutes.... From this point on nature is very efficient at breaking down human corpses, and decomposition is well under way by the time that burial or cremation occurs.... The body undergoes its own intrinsic breakdown under the action of enzymes and other chemicals which have been released by the dead cells.... The front of the body swells, the tongue may protrude and fluid from the lungs oozes out of the mouth and nostrils.... hair, nails and teeth become detached within a few weeks and after a month or so the tissues become liquefied, and the main body cavities burst open... within a year all that is usually left is the skeleton and teeth, with traces of the tissues on them.

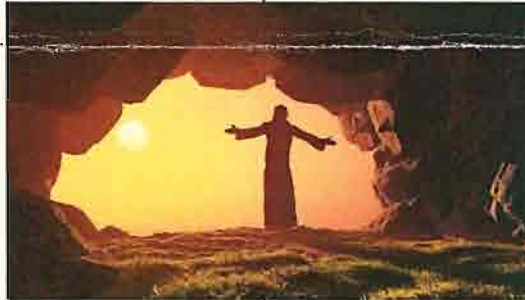
Not a pretty picture! Our bodies were not built to last. They are *corruptible*. And that corruption is inescapable. In Rom. 8:21, the apostle Paul calls it “the slavery of corruption,” which the entire creation is subject to.

The Egyptians and other ancient peoples went to great lengths to preserve the bodies of people who had died through the process of mummification. Their belief was that if you could preserve the body, somehow you would be doing something that could last for eternity. Notwithstanding the extreme efforts of these ancient peoples, no matter what we do, or how much we spend, we can’t stop the corruption of these physical bodies.

But for the believer in Jesus Christ there is good news. Paul says that the resurrection of Jesus is the *firstfruit*, and that everyone who is united to Christ by faith faces an incorruptible future. Paul says that though our bodies are “sown in corruption,” they will be “raised in incorruption.”

An incorruptible body seems incredible because we’ve never experienced anything like it. But an incorruptible body is exactly what Jesus had after his resurrection.

His disciples were some of the biggest skeptics around. I won’t believe, said Thomas, unless I personally put my fingers in those wounds and verify that it is really Jesus, in the flesh, and not some ghost. After Jesus showed up and Thomas had a chance to verify that his Lord wasn’t a spirit but had a real body, he fell on his face and worshipped the risen Christ.



The body Thomas touched was an incorruptible body. The only reason that body still had wounds was for living proof that this was the same person who had previously been crucified. Those wounds are still with him today in heaven as an eternal reminder

and perpetual proof that he gave himself to redeem lost people living in dying bodies.

What will our incorruptible body be like? We learn from Jesus’ resurrection that his body was in some ways the same and in some ways very different. Jesus still, to some extent, looked like Jesus, although it was hard for some of the disciples to recognize him. (The problem may have had more to do with their unbelief than because of anything drastically different in him.)

He wasn’t physically bound the way our bodies are bound. He could suddenly appear inside a closed-up room. He could disappear suddenly and reappear somewhere else. He could return to heaven as his disciples watched him ascend.

Beyond that, there’s a lot of mystery. The best we can say is that he was living in a body *designed for eternity*, yet it was still a real body—the body he had on earth, only transformed.

Though we understand our future resurrection imperfectly, we know enough from Christ’s resurrection to be look forward to that glorious day with great anticipation. Though we live in corruptible bodies now, the great day of resurrection is coming. And what a day that will be!

Dr. Mark House