

LIFE AFTER DEATH

(#9 in series on 1 Corinthians)

Introduction:

A man, his wife, and his cranky mother-in-law went on a vacation to the Holy Land. While they were there, the mother-in-law passed away.

The undertaker told them, “You can have her shipped home for \$5,000, or you can bury her here in the Holy Land for \$150.” The man thought about it for a moment, then told the undertaker he would just have her shipped home. The undertaker was taken aback. “Why... Why would you spend \$5,000 to ship your mother-in-law home when it would be wonderful to be buried her in the Holy Land for only \$150?”

The man replied, “A man died here about 2000 years ago. He was buried here, and three days later, he rose again. I just can’t take that chance.”

- Many believe in “something” after death
 - Do you believe in YOUR body being resurrected?
- There seems to be a disconnect in society
 - Many Aussies believe their loved one has “gone to a better place”, is now at peace, looking down on them.
 - That somehow, they still exist in some form
 - But they still question the resurrection.

1. Jesus and the Resurrection

- Was Jesus resurrected?
 - Is there any evidence?
- With the absence of a DNA test, eye-witness accounts are still the strongest evidence.
 - Let’s list the people who saw Jesus AFTER His resurrection:

1 Corinthians 15:3-8 *For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas [Peter], and then to the Twelve.*

After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep.

Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.

- That's over 513, not including women...

2. Christians and the Resurrection

- Some were saying there was no resurrection
 - Paul's answer:

1 Corinthians 15: 16-17 *For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins.*

- If Christ was not raised, you are still in your sins
 - Those loved are lost (v18)
- If Christ can only help us in this life, then we are to be pitied (v19)
- What is the answer?

1 Corinthians 15:22-23 *For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. But each in turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him.*

- Adam brought sin and death; Christ brought life
- First fruits – first part of the harvest.

1 Corinthians 15: 25-26 *For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death.*

3. Heaven – Now or Later?

- What happens when I die?
- Two main views:
 - Soul and spirit shut down until the resurrection
 - Soul and spirit go to Heaven until resurrection
- Reasons: Parable of Lazarus and Richman in Luke 16:19-31
 - Parable where Jesus illustrates a spiritual truth
 - Lazarus and the rich man are both aware of what is going on after they had died physically.
- Paul's teaching:

Philippians 1:23-24 *I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body.*

2 Corinthians 5:1 *For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands.*

Revelation 6:9 *When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained.*

Hebrews 12:22-24 *But you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the Judge of all, to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.*

- Heavenly Jerusalem (city of God)
- Thousands of angels
- Church of the first born
- God the Judge
- Spirits of righteous men made perfect
- Jesus the mediator of the New covenant.
- When I die, my spirit and soul are safe in heaven.
 - My body awaits resurrection because every part of me is important to God

4. What Will I Look Like?

1 Corinthians 15:36-37a *How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but just a seed....*

- Illustration of seed:
 - Seed dies to produce life
 - New life is different, but recognisable as “same”.

1 Corinthians 15:42-44 *So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.*

- Perishable – imperishable
- Dishonour – glory
- Weakness – power
- Natural - spiritual
- BUT WAIT! THERE’S MORE!

1 Corinthians 15:51-52 *Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed— in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.*

- There is a generation that will see the coming of Jesus
- We have hope for today and tomorrow!

1 Corinthians 15:58 *Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labour in the Lord is not in vain.*