

The Creed
May 23-29, 2010

“...the resurrection of the body... and the life everlasting”

Sunday

Read: 1 Corinthians 2:9

Observations and Questions

- What do you think Paul was referencing in this quotation from the Old Testament book of Isaiah?

Key Concept:

- God’s plan for those who love Him is mysterious...beyond fully knowing or understanding...and it is good.

Questions to Ponder:

- When you think of the concept of bodily resurrection and life everlasting, how do you envision it will be? Are you at peace with thinking about life after your mortal death? What are you most looking forward to? What, if anything, are you anxious about?

Pray

- Placing your trust fully in God’s eternal plan for your body and soul, spend time thanking Him that He has worked out all the details and that He will continue to provide blessings for you even after your physical death. Confess any anxieties to God and ask Him to remove them from your spirit.

Monday

Read: Isaiah 26:19; John 11: 21-27

Observations and Questions

- What is in common between these Old and New Testament passages? What was Jesus trying to teach Mary (vss. 25 & 26) about the resurrection? What did she proclaim?

Key Concept:

- Our bodies, as well as our souls, will be resurrected to immortality. Belief in Christ is key to our immortal lives.

Questions to Ponder:

- Have you thought much about what your resurrected body will be like? Will it have any apparent age? Will it look the same as your present body? Will it have any imperfections that carry over from your present life?

Pray

- Consider what life would be like if you were detached from a physical body, lacking the senses of sight, touch, smell, hearing, and taste. Consider how much pleasure you get from these senses. Thank God that, in His great love for you, His plan is for your body to be resurrected and will be a part of your eternal existence.

Tuesday

Read: Hebrews 9: 27-28; John 5: 24-30

Observations and Questions

- In this passage from John, what does Jesus say is the key to whether we will be condemned or not? Is the resurrection to happen for just the righteous, or is it for all people regardless of how they lived?

Key Concept:

- God will call all who have died to their resurrection, after which there will be judgment. Through our faith in Christ, by God's grace, we do not need to fear condemnation (See Romans 8:1).

Questions to Ponder:

- Why do you think that God resurrects the bodies of both the good and the bad people....why not just let the bad stay in the grave? What do you think it will be like to experience the time between your mortal death and your bodily resurrection? Will it be like you are sleeping?

Pray

- God's ways and thoughts are higher than ours. Much of our understanding of Him and His plan is shrouded in mystery. Through faith we accept that His plan is perfect and good. Spend time today thanking God for mystery, which makes our thoughts of the unknown future imperfect...yet filled with anticipation.

Wednesday

Read: 1 Thessalonians 4: 13-18

Observations and Questions

- What is Paul describing regarding the timing of the resurrection? When will all of this take place? Is there a sequence of events to what will happen?

Key Concept:

- The resurrection will occur at the second coming of our Lord.

Questions to Ponder:

- People have pondered the 2nd coming of Christ ever since His ascension back to heaven. It has been wrongly forecast time and again. What do you think about this? Do you think it is possible that it will happen during your lifetime? Would you rather be among the dead who will rise first, or among the living who will follow? Is this passage an encouragement to you as it was meant to be (vs. 18)?

Pray

- Envision the triumphal return of Christ as pictured in today's passage from Thessalonians and spend time worshipping an overcoming God. A God who has overcome death and evil to provide the promise of peace and life-everlasting with Him. Present to Him the challenges and troubles in your own life and ask Him to help you overcome these through Christ's presence living in you. Listen with your spirit to anything that the Holy Spirit may tell you needs to be done as a part of this overcoming process.

Thursday

Read: 2 Thessalonians 1: 5-10; John 5:24

Observations and Questions

- What does the passage in Thessalonians say about God's justice? What will happen to those who are living apart from God? Who is speaking in the passage from John? What does He promise?

Key Concept:

- God's justice will be perfect in the long run. It is crucially important that we understand the Gospel message and have our faith fully placed in Jesus Christ to assure our salvation.

Questions to Ponder:

- What do you think about the statement that "all roads lead to God"...or "all religions are basically the same"...or that Christianity is a bigoted and intolerant faith? What does John 14:6 tell us that is helpful here?

Pray

- God's word at times is very blunt, and can appear mean-spirited to those who don't know the love of Christ – who has willingly died for us so that we can rest assured in our salvation. Take time today to pray for all your family and friends who have not yet trusted in Christ as their Lord and Savior....ask God to help get through to them with His message of grace.

Friday

Read: Rev. 7:16; Rev. 22:1-6

Observations and Questions

- Picture the events and situations of these passages in your own mind. How are they similar to your own vision of heaven? How are they different?

Key Concept:

- Everlasting life in heaven will be beautiful, bountiful, and lacking anything negative which we experience in our mortal lives.

Questions to Ponder:

- What are the things you most hope will be a part of your immortal life in heaven? Do you think God will provide this for you...or will there be things even better than this in store? What aspects of life are you most looking to *not* having to deal with (physical problems, relational hurts, etc.)? Are you looking forward to God wiping your tears away?

Pray

- Know that what God has in store for those who have placed their trust in Christ is so much more than we can even imagine. Pray that God will help you live a life in response to the love He has shown us and the future He has promised us. Ask Him to help you know how best to live your lives here on earth, being a blessing to others in all you say and do, as a reflection of God's love for them.

Saturday

Read: Matthew 6: 19-23; 2 John 1:8; Rev. 22:12; Heb. 6:10; 1 Corinthians 15:58;
1 Corinthians 3: 10-15

Observations and Questions

- What theme runs through all of these passages?

Key Concept:

- Apart and beyond our salvation, there is a reward in heaven for how we live our lives on earth.

Questions to Ponder:

- If God is a just God, which we believe Him to be...how do you think He will reward you in heaven for how you have lived on earth to this point? If you have regrets for how you have lived to this point, what changes can you make at this time that will help you to lay up treasures in heaven? What kinds of things do you think are important to God in how we live our lives that will make a difference both here and now as well as in our eternal life in heaven?

Pray

- Our relationship with God has a number of phases. Trusting in Christ as our **Savior** is the key to our salvation and determines *where we will spend eternity*. Allowing Jesus to be our **Lord**...directing how we live and what we do with our time, talent, and resources...has a direct impact on *how God will reward us in heaven*. Our future rewards should not be the focus of our works...but a byproduct of our desire to honor God with our life. Continue to pray as we started on Friday, seeking God's direction for your life. Ask Him to provide you with opportunity to honor Him...and then listen to the Holy Spirit and watch for opportunities to do so.