

Sermon to the Saints of God assembled at Topeka, KS: Sunday, September 27, 2026

Raised Incorruptible

As I look back on this past week that the Lord gave us, there are many verses that come to my mind, but one that keeps jumping back to the top of the heap is this:

Psalms 133 “1 « A Song of degrees of David. » Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! 2 It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron’s beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; 3 As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.”

This dwelling together in unity isn’t generic happiness amongst humans. That’s a real thing, but it isn’t this thing. This unity is the soul comfort of dwelling with those who have the hope of eternal life through Jesus, and who minister to one another in that hope, faith, and love – dwelling together in the unity of the Spirit, and glorifying God with one voice. For the past several weeks, our friend has been standing on the banks of the Jordan, struggling with the decay of his pain wracked body, and grappling with the weight of sin as he looked at the deep water and rolling waves before him. He knew that his crossing was near. That day will come for us all, as it is appointed unto men once to die, and then the judgment. (***Hebrews 9:27***) No humanistic platitudes can provide comfort at that time. There is only one salve, and that is Christ Jesus, and the wondrous salvation that He alone worked for us. Throughout these weeks it has been greatly comforting to see the gifts of the body abundantly brought to bear. I only know a tithe of what help was given, but even that small window was enough to see that every house was engaged in ministering in one way or another. While some help was necessarily, and faithfully organized and scheduled, the majority was organic and individual. Platitudes were not on the menu. This is deep water – spiritual matters that need spiritual helps. Spiritual friends need not dance around and avoid difficult matters – it is what we were born for! “A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.” (***Proverbs 17:17***) Fitly framed words of our savior and our hope flowed into the ears of our dear friend and his faithful wife. This is the work of the Holy Spirit, and it is evidence of His presence among us. Praise God for His mercy toward us worms.

Every human is capable of grit-your-teeth-and-bear-it, stoic endurance. Not so with the servants of God, as these are matters that must be grappled with in faith, and in view of the promises of our Lord. Our work is to help each other to remember what our Lord has done for us – freely – and to dwell on what He has promised us. Dwelling on the past – whether good or bad – provides no lasting hope or help to the dying soul. Jesus paid

the price for our sins. He is able. His sacrifice is sufficient. Our sins cannot undo us, if He died for us, likewise, our “good works” add nothing to His righteousness. To dwell on either is to rob Him of His glory. He alone is our hope, and He must be glorified in our death as much as our life. In these situations, we are brought to acutely focus on eternity. We do well to keep that focus before us as often as we are able, and to encourage each other to do so. Loosen your grip on this world and its sordid pleasures, and rather lay up your treasure in heaven. You cannot be double minded, or serve two masters. Remember that you are a pilgrim and sojourner here, and your citizenship is in heaven. Consider the inheritance that is laid up for you, and be truly ready to fly away, when the Lord requires your soul. If you die in Christ, then you will instantly and permanently be relieved of the crushing burden of sin, and the curse that flows from it, while being escorted by the angels of God into the presence of the Lamb. An abundant entrance into heavenly places will be ministered to you!

When a person is approaching, or even contemplating death, it's time for sober and scriptural words. No greeting-card-christianity. No empty promises. No glorying in the flesh. The enduring promises of God are the only solace and relief to the soul. Everything else is a deadly mirage. The world is FULL of false notions about death and heaven. Let's consider some of them, as well as the scriptural truth of the matter.

The popular notion of life to come is a vague, human centric heaven. The common picture is souls floating on clouds with angels wings, playing harps, wearing white robes in a misty sky. Heaven is just a big family reunion BBQ, where the chief joy is reuniting with loved ones and pets in a luxurious, sensuous, self-focused paradise; a VIP version of earthly self-indulgence. Heaven is a permanent vacation; endless leisure, hobbies, and rest from all work. St. Peter mans a gate with a naughty and nice list like a second rate Santa Claus. Jesus is just a kindly, dorky character devoid of His throne and holiness. Judgment is nowhere to be found, unless it is being wielded as a malicious personal weapon. Modern Christianity teaches this intoxicating brew of sentimental self service, while every form of entertainment and media skillfully pipes it into our eyes and ears.

My friends – this notion of heaven is completely unscriptural; it is humanistic and hopeless; further, it completely disregards the resurrection of the dead, the new heaven and earth, and the glorified bodies that are promised us. Most importantly, heaven is not about us - it is about the All Mighty God who created both it and us for His own good pleasure and purpose. Indeed we are promised unparalleled joy, but it is derivative of His glory. The heavenly host is not out golfing with their drinking buddies – they are ablaze with energetic praise to the King, who is the source of their life, drinking in His glory, and zealously rendering service in the administration of His kingdom. Now THAT is endless joy!

A quick word about communion between people in heaven. There is plenty of scripture that speaks generally to communion between the saints in glory. But the focus is always on Christ. If reuniting with loved ones is something that is your primary focus of how you view heaven, then I suggest that you do some study on what the scriptures do and don't say about that matter. Jesus has gone away to prepare mansions for us to dwell with HIM. He is the bridegroom. Remember his sharp rebuke: *"Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven."* (**Matthew 22:29,30**) Marriage is that closest of all human relations, and yet the marriage bond does not survive death. It is contained in the very vow that husbands and wives commit to – "as long as ye both shall live". That relationship is the shadow of things to come – it teaches the elect of God about their relation to Jesus, as His bride. Once the real thing has arrived – after the marriage supper of the Lamb - we have no more need of the shadow. I'm not remotely suggesting that there is anything less than flowing joy and love between glorified saints. God forbid! I am saying that we should be careful not to create doctrine, and wrap our hopes around something that is so human centric, and is not given to us in scripture. We don't want to limit something to our current, very limited perception, because the reality is more grand and joyful than we can currently contemplate.

Now we will consider what has actually been promised to those who die in Christ:

1Corinthians 2:9,10 *"9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. 10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."*

- We will be present with the Lord:
 - *"We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."* (**2 Corinthians 5:8**)
 - *"To day shalt thou be with me in paradise."* (**Luke 23:43**)
 - *"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."* (**John 17:3**)
- Death itself is not loss:
 - *"For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. ... having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better."* (**Philippians 1:21, 23**)
 - *"Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints."* (**Psalms 116:15**)
 - *"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."* (**Revelation 14:13**)

- Nothing severs us from Christ:
 - *“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.” (Romans 8:1)*
 - *“For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, ... shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:38–39)*
 - *“Them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.” (1 Thessalonians 4:14)*
- Christ has gone to receive His own:
 - *“In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. 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)*
 - *“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.” (John 6:39)*
 - *“And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.” (John 10:28)*
- Our inheritance is sure:
 - *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.” (1 Peter 1:3–4)*
 - *“Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.” (2 Timothy 4:8)*
- God will dwell with us; sorrow will end:
 - *“Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. 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.” (Revelation 21:3–4)*
- We shall see Him and serve Him:
 - *“Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.” (Revelation 7:15)*
 - *“And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. ... and they shall reign for ever and ever.” (Revelation 22:3–5)*
 - *“Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.” (Psalm 16:11)*

- *“Well done, thou good and faithful servant: ... enter thou into the joy of thy lord.” (Matthew 25:21)*
- *“And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.” (Revelation 5:11-14)*
- Our body will be resurrected and glorified:
 - *“It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: 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.” (1 Corinthians 15:42–44)*
 - *“Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.” (Philippians 3:21)*
 - *“The dead in Christ shall rise first: 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.” (1 Thessalonians 4:16–17)*

Now I am going to read through and discuss 1Corinthians chapter 15, relating to the scriptural promise that we will follow Christ in the bodily resurrection of the dead. The context of Paul's writing to the church at Corinth is that the church was divided into factions (**1Corinthians 1:12**), and one of the schismatic doctrines was the resurrection of the dead. The vain philosophies and religious notions of the Greeks were creeping into the church and defiling her members. The Greek notions of heaven and hell include this: when soul is separated from body, the spirit goes to Hades, where bad people are separated off to the fiery hell (Tartarus), and the good people are sent to the Elysian Fields, where their spirits eternally frolic in sunny fields with their earthly loved ones – the end. To rebrand that with a generic label of Christ is hopeless, and completely sets aside the bodily resurrection from the dead that Christ has promised us. Without it, our faith is void. *“25 For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: 26 And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: 27 Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.” (Job 19:25-27)*

1Corinthians 15:

- 1 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;
- 2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.
- 3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;
- 4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:
- 5 And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve:
- 6 After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.
- 7 After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles.
- 8 And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.
- 9 For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.
- 10 But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.
- 11 Therefore whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed.
- 12 Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?
- 13 But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen:
- 14 And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.
- 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.
- 16 For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised:
- 17 And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.
- 18 Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.
- 19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.
- 20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.
- 21 For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.
- 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.
- 23 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.
- 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.
- 25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.
- 26 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

- 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.
- 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.
- 29 Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?
- 30 And why stand we in jeopardy every hour?
- 31 I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.
- 32 If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die.
- 33 Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.
- 34 Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.
- 35 But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?
- 36 Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die:
- 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:
- 38 But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:
- 43 It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:
- 44 It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.
- 45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.
- 46 Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.
- 47 The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.
- 48 As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.
- 49 And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.
- 50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,
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.
53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.
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.
55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?
56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.
57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.
58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the
work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

I love you all. Amen.