

Name:

This I Believe

A JOURNEY THROUGH THE APOSTLE'S CREED

Week 10: I believe in the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Day One

Every religious tradition, every culture, every family, and every individual has some concept of hope. Of course, the object of hope can differ quite significantly from person to person, but everyone is hoping for something. For example, one of the main ideas of hope that has captured the minds and imaginations of our culture is the hope of progress. The promise of progress tells us things are constantly getting better; culture is making strides toward greater freedom, greater liberty, better health, greater medical advances, fewer problems, and more enjoyment. While these things might make our lives easier or more enjoyable, do these things actually make us better people? We may improve quality of life... maybe...but sin, brokenness, and death are still inescapable. We can't repair the fracture in our lives or in the world around us.

Christians, however, have real hope. As we've already studied, we're not immune to problems, and we're not perfect. We don't have a forced smile that's naïve to the pain and suffering in life. We don't think that a believe-it-to-achieve-it kind of positivity is going to make everything work out in the end. We know something much, much better. Something true. Something real. We know the end of the story, and death isn't the end.

READ ISAIAH 2 5:6-9

Describe the hope portrayed in this passage:

The Christian view of life after death, "life everlasting," as stated in the Apostles' Creed, is a world characterized by resurrection and eternal life.

READ 1 THESSALONIANS 4:13-14

How should the promise of bodily resurrection and everlasting life make it possible for us to mourn and hope at the same time?

Confessing, "I believe in ... the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting" is to place your hope in something very specific about your future and the future of all creation.

How does this confession challenge your fears and hopes about death?

How can the Christian belief in resurrection and eternal life encourage you to walk in greater obedience?

The Apostles' Creed ends on an incredibly positive note by proclaiming our common hope: resurrection and everlasting life. The eschatology of our culture is built on progress. The eschatology of Christianity is built on death and resurrection. Our hope isn't in human progress but in God's raising the dead.

Why do you think some people in our culture choose to hope in progress?

How Is the Christian hope of resurrection better than the hope of progress?

Prayer

Father in heaven, You're the Creator of all things, and You've seen fit to send Your Son to be born of a virgin, to die on my behalf, and to be buried for my sins. However, the grave could not hold Him. By Your Spirit He burst forth from the grave. He left death in the tomb. I give my Lord honor and praise as He intercedes for me at Your right hand. I know that it's good for Him to be with You in heaven and that it's good that He has poured His Spirit on me from on high. Yet I long for His return. I wait with great anticipation and hope because when He comes, He will make all things new, and death will be forever defeated. Your church awaits You, Lord Jesus. Come quickly.

Day Two

One error we need to avoid is the lie that because we have hope for eternal life, this earthly life doesn't matter. Even worse, it's easy to fall for the lie that anything physical or temporary is bad and only spiritual things are good.

What's the danger in dismissing anything in this world as insignificant?

Gnosticism was a heresy that plagued the early church. One of the main teachings of gnosticism was that all physical matter is evil, while all spiritual and immaterial things are good. Therefore, the gnostic view of life was that death would free people from the physical evil they couldn't escape. Gnostics taught that after death, humans left their earthly bodies behind and enjoyed an immortal, spiritual presence with God.

How does the resurrection of the body and everlasting life, as stated in the Apostles' Creed, contradict gnostic teaching about immortality?

Our hope doesn't lie in escape from this world but in the transformation of this world. For Christians, changed lives, resurrection, and eternal life aren't secondary issues related to salvation but are in themselves the ultimate hope of salvation.

READ ROMANS 8:18-25

What's the hope that saves believers? How did Paul instruct the Christian community to wait for it?

Describe in your own words what a world without futility, corruption, and bondage would be like. What characteristics might this kind of creation have?

READ REVELATION 21:1-8

What are you most looking forward to in this future home with God?

In what ways is the picture of humanity's relationship with God in the new heaven and earth similar to the way God created everything in the beginning?

The new heaven and earth described in Revelation 21-22 remind us of what Jesus instructed His disciples to pray for in the Lord's Prayer: "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10). Think carefully about Jesus' words. He didn't tell His disciples to curse or destroy the corrupt world. Rather, Jesus' disciples are to pray for God's kingdom to come and change the world.

How are Jesus' words to His disciples about praying for the new Kingdom similar to His promise to raise us from the dead?

Prayer

Father, I, along with all creation, am longing for the day when You'll make all things new. Even when it feels as if I'm surrounded by death and disease, I believe You, through the resurrection of Your Son, are already making all things new. Amen.

Day Three

Hope is vital, but misplaced hope is catastrophic. Why? Because you'll do anything for what you believe to be your ultimate hope. If your family is your hope, you'll compromise or sacrifice anything for your family. If your hope is in success, you'll do anything to succeed. But if your hope is in Christ and eternal life with Him, then you'll do anything for your King. There's nothing in this world that can destroy you or take your hope away. It's what you're hoping for and what you hope in that drives everything about the way you're living your life.

This is our hope. We have a God- Father, Son, and Spirit-who made us, loves us, saved us, and will resurrect us when He makes all things new (see Rev. 21:5). Paul wrote, "The last enemy to be destroyed is death" (1 Cor. 15:26). Jesus' resurrection is the firstfruits of His victory. Someday all believers will be raised from the dead to join Christ in His triumph over death-physically, bodily, and gloriously.

Let's look one last time at our theological grid to consider the implications of the awesome hope we have in a bodily resurrection and eternal life.

1. SYMMETRY

What are you putting your hope in? Where are you looking for satisfaction, meaning, joy, and security? Will the things you are putting your hope in deliver on these promises?

2. CLARITY

How does belief in a physical, bodily resurrection affect the way you view eternal life? How does it affect your view of this current life?

3. COMMUNITY

Everyone you meet is created by the same God who created you. They're eternal beings who need the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ.

**How does this fact change the way you relate to other people?
How does it affect your patience? Your eagerness to forgive?
Your desire to share the gospel? Your celebration in their joy?
Your burden in their suffering?**

4. COUNSEL

Because all souls are eternal and will exist forever, what will you do to be intentionally focused on your spiritual health and growth in maturity?

“The resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting”-this phrase is the foundation of Christian hope, Christian courage, and the ordering of the Christian life.

Review the Apostles’ Creed. Which doctrines do you now see as more important or applicable than you did before this study?

How would you summarize the importance of right Christian doctrine?

What would you tell someone who asked what you learned in this study?

Prayer

Thank God that you’re blessed to join the generations of saints who have come before you, who live around the world today, and who will come behind you. Praise Him for His grace in Jesus and His power in the Spirit. Pray that He will help you value the truth of His Word and the blessing of His church. Worship God now in light of your sure hope of eternal life with Him and His people in the new heaven and new earth.

NOTES FROM THE LESSON

NOVEMBER 19, 2017

What does the Bible teach about the resurrection of the body and life everlasting?

1. Just like Jesus will be resurrected, so _____
2. We will receive our glorified bodies when _____

3. We will live in a _____ place with a
_____ ruler & Jesus will make all things _____

Why can we believe this?

1. We see God keeping his promise of sending the

2. We see that Jesus _____, _____, and _____
again from the dead—there are even hundreds
of _____
3. Since God has kept his promises thus far, we
know he's going to _____
His promises

Things that don't happen after we die:

1. No _____
2. No " _____ "
3. No _____ before we see Jesus