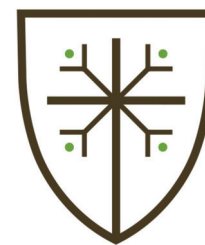


SERMON NOTES



New Creations

An Eastertide Sermon Series

artwork by Ty Nathan Clark

May 5, 2024

SERMON INFO

TITLE

"Of Good Courage"

PREACHER

Rev. Josh Keller

TEXTS

Isaiah 26:1-4, 19

2 Corinthians 5:1-10

John 17:13-19

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Which direction do you find yourself most often sliding in regards to our current bodies and future resurrection?
2. What kind of practices help to prepare us in this life for our future resurrected bodies? To live in light of where our hope is set?

SERMON IN SUMMARY

This week, as we near the end of our sermon series on 2 Corinthians, we returned once again to the topic of weakness and the question, "What gives hope in the midst of suffering?"

A Tent to a House

Paul compares our earthly body to a tent. Our bodies are often insufficient and weak. They groan, longing to be unburdened. And they were always meant to be temporary. We feel the deep inadequacies of our bodies and of our life. Like Paul, we long for something more, something better. But in the midst of this longing, Paul's hope (and our hope) is the resurrection. He doesn't see the resurrection as an escape from the body and this world, but an upgrade – something better, more permanent. Paul's Jewish listeners would've been familiar with the idea of a temporary tent being transformed (upgraded) to a more permanent tabernacle. And his Gentile listeners would've been able to relate to the Platonic idea of the earthly being a picture or shadow of a more real, permanent form. We long for bodies that are more real, not less. The bodily future resurrection enables Paul to be of good courage. Jesus' resurrection gave the church a prototype of our own resurrected bodies. It is fundamental to what God is doing in the world and our own lives.

When it comes to the bodily resurrection, we easily slide in one of two directions. One: we can forget about the future and live only for the present. The here and now becomes everything. Power becomes the ultimate virtue. We lose hope in the future. Or two: we can deny the bodily resurrection and live only for a sort of disembodied future. With this option, we lose purpose and all too easily disappear, escaping into another world. If we think our end is just to escape out of this world, what is the point of anything? Jesus' prayer is that we'd fall exactly in the middle of these two – in the world but not of the world. Our bodies are not insignificant. Using the common analogy of an acorn, it becomes an oak tree only after it falls into the ground and dies. But what comes out of it is not something that is not part of it.

Preparation

Through baptism in the Spirit, we have a guarantee that this resurrected, new body is our future set by him. He is already at work in us. We live in preparation for that moment. The Spirit transforms us, renewing us day by day to match our future resurrection bodies. And we are called to live in light of where our hope is set.