

Day Five • Friday, May 8

That You May Grow Up Into Salvation

1 Corinthians 15:53–54 (ESV)

For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality... then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

Peter says we drink the spiritual milk so that “by it you may grow up into salvation.” That phrase deserves a long, slow look. We are used to the idea of growing up. We do not always notice in which direction we are growing.

When you reach a certain age — and most of us in Crawford County know this without being told — you start to feel the trajectory of your life bending toward the tombstone. Friends are buried. The body slows. You begin to read obituaries the way you used to read box scores. Without Christ, that is the truest thing about being a human being: you are growing up toward death.

But Peter says no. Because the tomb is empty, the trajectory has been bent the other way. The Christian is not growing up toward death. The Christian is growing up toward resurrection. Every time the Word feeds you, every time the Supper strengthens you, every time forgiveness makes you new again, you are not just being maintained. You are being grown — toward a body that will not break, toward a creation that will not groan, toward a life where there is no last page.

This is why our Lutheran fathers were so insistent that the Christian life is not first about what we do but about what God is doing in us through His means of grace. An infant does not grow by trying. An infant grows by being fed. The growth is the fruit of the food. So it is with you. Keep coming to the Word. Keep coming to the Table. The growth is His business. He has never failed to do it.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean to you that you are not growing up toward death, but toward resurrection life?
2. How is spiritual growth like — and unlike — physical growth?
3. Where have you seen real growth in your faith over the last year? Where do you long to grow?

CLOSING PRAYER

Risen Lord Jesus, You have changed the direction of my life. I am not walking toward the grave. I am walking toward You. Feed me with Your Word until I see You face to face. Amen.

Family Action Item

Take a walk together as a family this evening — even a short one around the block or down the lane. As you walk, take turns naming one way you have grown in the last year (a skill, a habit, a piece of wisdom) and one way you hope to grow in Christ this year. Save your prayer for the way home, and walk home in silence with God.