

SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR ALL SAINTS SMALL GROUPS

“The Death of Death” | Rev. Greg Grooms. | April 15, 2018

Isaiah 25:6-9 (ESV)

⁶ On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined.

⁷ And he will swallow up on this mountain the covering that is cast over all peoples,

the veil that is spread over all nations.

⁸ He will swallow up death forever; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces,

and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the Lord has spoken.

⁹ It will be said on that day,

“Behold, this is our God; we have waited for him, that he might save us.

This is the Lord; we have waited for him; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.”

1 Corinthians 15:35-41 (ESV)

³⁵ But someone will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?”³⁶ You foolish person! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. ³⁷ And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain.³⁸ But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. ³⁹ For not all flesh is the same, but there is one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish. ⁴⁰ There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is of one kind, and the glory of the earthly is of another. ⁴¹ There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory.

Intro Question

Greg opened with a quote from Will Willimon a modern theologian at Duke Divinity School who said. “I’m not optimistic, but I have hope.” What is the difference between optimism and hope?

Background

This Eastertide we have been discussing the significance of the Resurrection –what it means to live in light of the truth of the Resurrection and all its implications. On Sunday Greg highlighted the truth that hope –practically understood –is simple. Hope makes it possible to acknowledge a fallen reality as well as live and rejoice in the face of death itself. Christ has defeated death, therefore death is swallowed up in victory. Just as Christ was resurrected, so will we be, with new, imperishable bodies.

Read Sunday’s scripture aloud. Here are links to the JRR Tolkien passage, the Hamlet speech, and the George Herbert poem cited in the homily if you’d like to read or refer to them as well.

Tolkien: <https://tinyurl.com/y9smlnaz>

Hamlet: <https://tinyurl.com/y7llrwc>

Herbert: <https://tinyurl.com/y99llux9>

Discuss:

- 1.) Do you hold on to a certainty that changes you and your view of the world? Do the people around you?
- 2.) How would it look like to live with the certainty that Jesus is coming back to make all things new, spiritually AND physically? Would and how could this affect your view of and interactions with the world?
- 3.) Once Tolkien’s Sam Gamgee “put aside all fear,” he was “cast into a deep, untroubled sleep.” Tolkien thereby correlates hope and rest. What’s the connection between hope and rest? Do you see this at work in your own life?
- 4.) Greg said, “It’s irrational not to fear death if the gospel isn’t true.” Discuss what this means and then how you see this affliction in the modern world.
- 5.) Sam also observed, “in the end the Shadow was only a small and passing thing: there was light and high beauty for ever beyond its reach.” Do you readily see the troubles of this world as small and passing shadows? How can we better equip ourselves to live with assurance such as this?

Conclusion/Application

Lord, fill our souls, minds and bodies with hope so that we may live for your glory. Show us how to drive with windows in a world of windowless vehicles.