

Questions for reflection, application, and discussion

1. The Apostle's Creed ends with the declaration that we believe "*in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting.*" The Apostle's Creed was written as a summation of the foundational teachings of the Bible and the defining beliefs of the church. How is our belief in the resurrection of the body and in the life everlasting foundational to our faith?
2. When many Christians think of their resurrected body, they think only of a body that is restored to its height of earthly strength and health. But when Paul describes our resurrection body in 1st Corinthians 15 he describes a body that is significantly different-and much better than a restored earthly body.
 - a. Do you agree that most people have a low view of the resurrection? If so, why do you think this is?
 - b. Why is this important? Remember, the Bible is always practical. What possible practical difference could it make in our lives if we understand the incredible nature of our resurrection body, and what harm can come from a belief that our resurrected bodies are only restored human bodies?
3. Revelation 21 uses incredible and even strange imagery to describe our future hope of heaven and life everlasting. Why do you think God chose to use such confusing imagery? Did you learn anything about the meaning of that imagery from Pastor Mike's message? If so, what did you learn, and what practical impact on your life should this truth have?
4. When the Bible speaks of our belief in the resurrection of the dead and the life everlasting, it describes this as our hope. This concept of our hope in Christ is taught throughout the New Testament as a defining element of the life and faith of a follower of Christ.
 - a. What do you think is the Biblical meaning of the word hope? How does the Biblical meaning of this word differ from our common use?
 - b. 1st Corinthians 13:13 reads, "*So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.*" We all know that faith and love are important, but why is hope just as important? Why do you think that we pay so much attention to faith and love, and so little attention to hope?
 - c. Numerous passages combine faith, hope, and love as three defining elements of the Christian faith (see Romans 5:1-5, Galatians 5:5-6, Colossians 1:3-5, 1st Thessalonians 1:3 and 5:8, Hebrews 10:22-23, and 1st Peter 1:21-22). What is the relationship between faith, hope, and love? How does a lack of hope impact the other two?
5. The Bible is clear; as followers of Christ, it is our hope that should be our motivation to Godly living. If we are not sold out for Christ and his kingdom, it is because we do not have a clear view of our Biblical hope.
 - a. Is this an overstatement? Is a lack of commitment to Christ and his kingdom always the result of an inadequate view of our Biblical hope? Will someone who has a right understanding of their Biblical hope always be passionately sold out for Christ and his kingdom? Explain your answer.
 - b. How clear is your vision of your Biblical hope? How does your Biblical hope impact your life? What does the testimony of your life say about the importance of hope in your motivation?