

Sunday, February 20, 2022 – Easter Hill United Methodist Church

**Bible Study – 1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50
“Raised in Glory”**

Open with a word of prayer

Gathering Time (5-10 minutes) In groups of two or three, respond to the following, “When did you first begin to comprehend death? When do you feel most alive?”

1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50 Context. This chapter is the climax of Paul’s letter, and its theme is the core of the gospel: Resurrection. Resurrection was already a common belief among the Jews, but it was foreign to the pagan Corinthians, who were just getting used to the idea that the Emperor could become a god. He began his discussion by affirming the reality of the resurrection of Jesus, recounting how many had experienced the risen Christ. He then went on to insist with them that what happened to Jesus is not to be considered an isolated exception, but rather the ‘first fruits’ of a promise God has made to all who put their trust in God. In this week’s reading, he gives analogies, one from nature and one from Scripture, to give the Corinthians some idea of what he is talking about.

Read 1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50

What touches your heart, what do you hear in the scripture, what questions do you have, or what doesn’t make sense to you in the story?

Write down your thoughts or share your thoughts with the person or group you are with.

Read 1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50 again.

Some reflection questions – Write down your thoughts or share your thoughts with the person or group you are with.

- What question is Paul addressing in verse 35? What similar questions do you have or have you heard about the resurrection of the dead?
- How might Paul’s agricultural analogy of a seed “dying” help us understand how to envision how resurrection happens? [There is a transformational process that can be likened to re-creation or even a new creation.]
- The words “soul” and “spirit” can bring up a host of images and feelings. “Soul,” at least the way Paul understood it, would have been more of a force that animates us in the earthly sense; whereas, “spirit” is the image of God or spark within us. The soul was in contrast to the spirit. Spiritual disciplines, through God’s Spirit, enable us to learn to live more empowered by God’s grace than by our own selfish desires.

- How does Paul’s analogy of the first man, Adam, and the last Adam (Christ) help us understand resurrection from the dead? [The first shows our natural state and our default. The second shows not only what is to come, but what God is working within us currently.]
- How does Paul’s argument in verse 48 point out what God is working in us now?
- How does Paul’s promise in verse 49 give you hope?
- How might Paul’s emphasis on the importance of resurrection give us a vision for what is and what is to come?

Closing Reflection Question

How is this scripture calling you to change, to see, to be or what might it be calling you to do?

Prayer (10 minutes). Share prayer requests and respond appropriately.

Sending Forth (2 minutes). After all, have shared, pray the closing prayer. Ask for a volunteer to lead the group or read the following prayer in unison:

God of hope, we give you thanks that you are constantly at work in the world remaking us in your image. Help us to find true life in the new life you are working in and through us. Give us the eyes of faith to see where you are already working resurrection within us and within the world. **Amen.**

And now we pray The Lord’s Prayer....

Our Father who art in Heaven
hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in Heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power
and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.