

Sermon #82 — *Isaiah Series*

Title: **THE HOPE OF THE RESURRECTION**

Text: Isaiah 26:19

Subject: *The Resurrection of God's Elect*
 In, By, and With Christ

Date: Sunday Morning — April 21, 2019

Reading: *Ezekiel 37:1-14 or Revelation 20:1-15*

Introduction:

As God the Holy Ghost will enable me, I want to preach to you this morning about — **THE HOPE OF THE RESURRECTION**. You will find my text in Isaiah 26:19. — **THE HOPE OF THE RESURRECTION** (Isaiah 26:19).

God's saints in the Old Testament lived in hope of the resurrection just like we do. Here, in Isaiah 26, God's prophet is encouraging God's saints in the midst of great trial with a word of comfort and hope. Our text is addressed to God's church in a time of...

- Terrible Spiritual Darkness.
- Great Apostacy.
- Great Wickedness.
- Political Unrest.
- Relentless War.

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Ungodliness ruled the day! God's Israel was greatly diminished in number and in strength. God's church was languishing. In the midst of great sorrow, in helpless despair, God's church cries out to her God...

(Isaiah 26:17-18) “Like as a woman with child, *that* draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, *and* crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O LORD. (18) We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth; neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen.”

CHRIST SPEAKS

Now, read my text with me. The Lord God our Savior turns the eyes of his people away from themselves, away from the world around them, and away from their present sorrow to himself and to **THE HOPE OF THE RESURRECTION**. — Here, I repeat, the Lord God, our Savior, turns our eyes away from

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ourselves, away from the world around us, and away from our present sorrow to himself and to **THE HOPE OF THE RESURRECTION**. These are the sweet, comforting, assuring, encouraging words of our Lord Jesus Christ to his disconsolate church in this dark, dark world of pain and sorrow.

(Isaiah 26:19) “Thy dead *men* shall live, *together with* my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew *is as* the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.”

THY DEAD MEN

The Savior says to you and me, “*Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise!*” — I take those words as the words of our Covenant Surety to his Father and our Father. And I take them as his words to his church.

- God’s elect, like all others, are by nature dead in trespasses and in sin.

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- They all shall be made to live by the power, by the virtue, of his death in their stead. — They are redeemed. And they must live!
- They shall live together with his body that was dead, that was crucified, that now lives forever!
- And, in the last day, all who have been given life by his grace, shall be raised up from the grave to live forever with the Lord Jesus Christ in heavenly glory.
- That is **THE HOPE OF THE RESURRECTION.**

Then, upon the basis of this blessed promise of resurrection glory, he calls for us to awake and sing in **THE HOPE OF THE RESURRECTION.** —
“Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead!”

BLESSED HOPE

The hope of the resurrection is what Paul calls “*the blessed hope*” of God’s people. There is no aspect of

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gospel doctrine that is more important than the resurrection. It is a gospel revelation that is full of comfort and one that inspires devotion. — I live in hope of the resurrection. — Do you?

I live in hope of the resurrection. With Paul, I say, “**If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable**” (1 Corinthians 15:19). In making that statement **Paul does not mean that...**

- the believer’s life in this world is a sad, morbid existence.
- it is really more delightful and pleasurable to live in this world without faith.
- were it not for the hope of eternal glory, the people of God would prefer not to live as they do in obedience and submission to our heavenly Father. — **We do not serve God for gain!**

When Paul says, “*If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable,*” he simply means this: — **If there were no eternal life in Christ, no eternal bliss of life with Christ in glory,**

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and no resurrection, then the believer would be the most miserably frustrated person in the world.

- We would never have that which we most earnestly desire.
- We would never see the end of our hope.
- We would never embrace Christ or be embraced by him.
- We would never see our Redeemer.

Such thoughts are unbearable! I cannot imagine anything more distressing than to be without Christ! Nothing could be more cruel and miserable than to live in hope of seeing Christ, being like Christ, and spending eternity with Christ, only to die like a dog! — *“If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.”* — What a horrible thought! What a tormenting supposition! But, bless God, it is not so!

HOPE OF RESURRECTION

I live in hope of the resurrection; and my hope is both sure and steadfast (Job 19:25-27).

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(Job 19:25-27) “I know *that* my redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter *day* upon the earth: (26) And *though* after my skin *worms* destroy this *body*, yet in my flesh shall I see God: (27) Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; *though* my reins be consumed within me.”

- **In sickness I am calm**, because I live in hope of the resurrection.
- **In sorrow I am peaceful**, because I live in hope of the resurrection.
- **In trial and affliction I am at ease**, because I live in hope of the resurrection.
- **In bereavement I am confident**, because I live in hope of the resurrection.
- And **I hope to die in confidence and joy**, because I live in hope of the resurrection.

Our assurance of the resurrection is much more than belief in a point of theological orthodoxy. **It is a very personal thing, the most personal thing in the**

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world. In fact, when I talk about the resurrection, I'm not really talking about a doctrine, but about a person. When I think about the resurrection, I'm thinking about a person. — Christ himself is the Resurrection! The Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, our glorious Mediator, our blessed Redeemer is the Resurrection.

The blessed hope of the resurrection is not some fool's philosophy. It is not a mere religious tranquilizer by which I am able to cope with the trials of life. **This is the calm, confident assurance of my heart. It is the necessary, inevitable result of faith in Christ** (John 11:25-26).

“Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: 26 And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?” (John 11:25-26)

Proposition: The Lord Jesus Christ is the resurrection and the life of all who trust him; and all

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who trust him shall be resurrected from the dead with him in the last day.

(Isaiah 26:19) “Thy dead *men* shall live, *together with* my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew *is as* the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.”

Divisions: I live in hope of the resurrection for three reasons...

1. I have been resurrected with Christ representatively.
2. I have experienced the resurrection of Christ in regeneration.
3. I believe God’s revelation concerning the resurrection.

REPRESENTATIVE RESURRECTION

1st — I live in hope of the resurrection, because **I have been resurrected in union with the Lord Jesus Christ representatively** (Ephesians 2:5-6).

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- While he lived on this earth in obedience to God as my Representative, I lived in him.
- When Christ died, I died in him.
- And when he arose from the dead, taking his seat in heaven, I arose with him, and have been seated with him in glory.

(Ephesians 2:4-6) “But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,
5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6 And hath raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus.”

Hail! Sacred union, firm and strong,
How great the grace, how sweet the song!
One in the tomb, one when He rose,
One when He triumphed o’er His foes,
One when in heaven He took His seat,
While seraphs sang all hell’s defeat.

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Nothing in all the world is more wondrous, more profound, and more comforting than the teaching of Holy Scripture about our union with Christ.

Union with Christ is the very heart of salvation. Union with Christ is central to everything revealed in Scripture. Without this union of our souls with Christ and the union of Christ with our souls, there is no salvation.

Our union with Christ is **an eternal union**, secret and unknown to us until it is brought to light by the gospel (Romans 8:28-30; Ephesians 1:3-6; 2 Timothy 1:9-11).

(Romans 8:28-30) “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose. (29) For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. (30) Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he

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called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.”

(Ephesians 1:3-6) “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: (4) According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: (5) Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, (6) To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.”

(2 Timothy 1:9-11) God “hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, (10) But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: (11)

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Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.”

Our union with Christ is a **legal, representative union** (Romans 5:12, 18-21). — Our union with Christ is **a living, vital union**, a union made manifest when Christ is formed in us in the new birth (Colossians 1:27). — And our union with Christ is **an everlasting union** of life and grace (John 17:22-26).

(John 17:22-23) “And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: (23) I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.”

(John 17:24-26) “Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. (25) O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have

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known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. (26) And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare *it*: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

When the Lord Jesus Christ arose from the grave, he arose as our Representative. All that he has done and all that he has experienced, all of God’s elect have done and experienced in him, by virtue of our representative union with him. — **His obedience to the law was our obedience** (Romans 5:12, 18-21).

(Romans 5:12-21) “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (13) (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. (14) Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. (15) But not as the offence, so also *is* the free gift. For if

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through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, *which is* by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. (16) And not as *it was* by one that sinned, *so is* the gift: for the judgment *was* by one to condemnation, but the free gift *is* of many offences unto justification. (17) For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) (18) Therefore as by the offence of one *judgment came* upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one *the free gift came* upon all men unto justification of life. (19) For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. (20) Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: (21) That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.”

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His death as a penal sacrifice for sin was our death (Romans 6:6-7, 9-11; 7:4; Galatians 2:20). —

This is our atonement!

(Romans 6:6-7) “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. (7) For he that is dead is freed from sin.”

(Romans 6:9-11) “Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. (10) For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. (11) Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

(Romans 7:4) “Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.”

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(Galatians 2:20) “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”

Our Lord’s resurrection was our resurrection. — This is our life! — Listen. This is important. — **The resurrection of Christ is an indisputable fact of revelation and of history upon which we rest our souls** (1 Corinthians 15:1-8). Disprove the resurrection and you disprove the gospel — “*If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins*” (1 Corinthians 15:17).

(1 Corinthians 15:1-8) “Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; 2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. 3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received,

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how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: 5 And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: 6 After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. 7 After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. 8 And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.”

Paul here mentions six distinct appearances of the Lord Jesus. In all, the Scriptures record twelve separate times that the risen Lord appeared to his own. There may have been more appearances (Acts 1:3); but these twelve are recorded.

1. To Mary Magdalene (John 20:11-18).
2. To the Women (Matthew 28:9-10).
3. To Cleopas and His Companion (Luke 24:13-35).
4. To Simon (Luke 24:34; 1 Corinthians 15:5).

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5. To the Disciples, Thomas Being Absent (John 20:19-23).
6. To the Disciples, Thomas Being Present (John 20:24-29).
7. To The Seven at the Sea of Galilee (John 21:1-14).
8. To The Disciples on the Mountain in Galilee (Matthew 28:16-20).
9. To The Five Hundred (1 Corinthians 15:6).
10. To James, the Lord's Brother (1 Corinthians 15:7).
11. To the Eleven Disciples on Olivet, Near Jerusalem (Acts 1:4-11; Luke 24:50-51).
12. To Paul on the Road to Damascus (Acts 9:3-7).

The bodily, physical resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ necessitates the resurrection of all who are in Christ. — Five arguments

1. That which has been done for us mystically and representatively must be experienced by us personally.

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2. We are members of Christ's mystical body, the church. — If one member of the body was lost, the body would be maimed (1 Corinthians 12:12, 27). — If one member of the body was lost, the Head would not be complete (Ephesians 1:22-23). — These bodies of ours must be fashioned like unto his glorious body (Philippians 3:21; John 17:24).
3. The Lord Jesus was raised as the firstfruits of them that sleep (1 Corinthians 15:20). — The full harvest must follow!
4. Christ is the last Adam. — As we have born the image of our first covenant head, we must bear the image of the second (1 Corinthians 15:21-23, 47-49).
5. Our Redeemer, the Captain of our Salvation, has obtained the victory over all that could hinder the glorious resurrection of his people — Sin — Death — Hell — The Grave — The Devil (Colossians 2:13-15; Hebrews 2:14-15).

(Hebrews 2:14-15) “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also

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himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.”

(Colossians 2:13-15) “And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he **quicken** **together** **with** **him**, having forgiven you all trespasses; 14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; 15 *And* having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.”

Above all else, the covenant engagements of Christ as the Surety of God’s elect will not be complete until the hour of our resurrection (John 6:37-40).

“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast

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out. 38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

39 **And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.** 40 And this is the will of

him that sent me, that everyone which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: **and I will raise him up at the last day.**”

(John 6:37-40)

- *“Holy and unblameable.”*
- *“Lo, I and the children thou hast given me.”*
- *“There shall be one fold and one Shepherd.”*

SPIRITUAL RESURRECTION

2nd — I live in hope of the resurrection, *first*, because I was resurrected with Christ and in Christ representatively, when he arose from the dead. — *Second*, I live in hope of the resurrection because **I have experienced the resurrection of Christ in regeneration.** I know that Christ is the Resurrection

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and the Life, because I've been raised from the dead.
— Christ lives in me. And I live in Christ.

The new birth is nothing less than a resurrection from the dead. To be born again by the Spirit of God is the first resurrection (Revelation 20:6; John 5:25; 11:25-26; Ephesians 2:1-10; Colossians 2:9-15; 3:1-3).

(Revelation 20:6) “Blessed and holy *is* he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.”

(John 5:25) “Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.”

(John 11:25-26) “Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: 26 And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never

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die. Believest thou this?”

(Ephesians 2:1-10) “And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins; 2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. 4 ¶ But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath **quickened us together** with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6 And hath **raised us up together**, and **made us sit together** in heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus: 7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in *his* kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. 8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

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10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

(Colossians 2:9-11) “For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. 10 And ye are **complete in him**, which is the head of all principality and power: 11 In whom also ye are **circumcised with the circumcision made without hands**, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:”

(Colossians 3:1-3) “If ye then be **risen with Christ**, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. 2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For ye are dead, and **your life is hid with Christ in God**.”

Illustrations: Ezekiel’s Infant (Ezekiel 16) —
The Valley of Dry Bones (Ezekiel 37) —
Lazarus (John 11).

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- Lazarus' Condition — Lazarus was dead (v. 14) — “*For the glory of God*” (v. 4).
- Lazarus' Calling (v. 43). — Personal — Irresistible — Effectual
- Lazarus' Conversion (v. 44). — The grave clothes that bound him must be taken away. — Ignorance — Superstition — Tradition — Fear
- Lazarus' Communion (12:2).
- Lazarus' Conflict (12:10-11).

RESURRECTION HOPE

3rd — I live in hope of the resurrection because I was resurrected with Christ representatively. — *Second*, I live in hope of the resurrection because I have been raised from death to life in Christ spiritually, because I've experienced the resurrection. — And, *third*, I live in hope of the resurrection because **I believe the revelation of God concerning the resurrection** (John 5:28-29). — “*Whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die.*” God's elect never die! There is a day coming in the which all that are in the grave

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shall be raised by the voice of the Son of God. And for you who believe, it shall be a resurrection of life.

(John 5:28-29) “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, 29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”

There shall be a resurrection of life at the second coming of Christ (1 Corinthians 15:35-44, 51-59; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; Philippians 3:21). I am not talking about some secret rapture, but a glorious resurrection, a resurrection with and by our Lord Jesus Christ.

(Philippians 3:21) “Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.”

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(2 Thessalonians 1:7-10) “And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, 8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: 9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; 10 When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.”

Soon must this body die,
This mortal frame decay;
And, yes, my body must return
To ashes, air, and clay!

Corruption, earth, and worms
Shall but refine this flesh,
Till my triumphant spirit comes
To put it on afresh.

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God my Redeemer lives! —
My Savior from the skies
Looks down and watches all my dust,
Till He shall bid it rise.

Arrayed in glorious grace
My body then shall shine,
(United body, spirit, soul!),
In life by pow'r divine.

This blessed hope I owe
To Jesus' dying love.
My Life and Resurrection, too, —
I'll live with Christ above.

Dear Lord, accept the praise
Of this poor, mortal's song,
Till tunes of nobler sound I raise
With an immortal tongue!

Let us comfort one another with these words. —
*“Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body
shall they arise!”*

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- To you who are sick and suffering, the Savior says. — *“Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise!”*
- To you who fear death, the Lord Jesus says, — *“Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise!”*
- To you who are bereaved, the Son of God says, — *“Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise!”*

And let us be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. — Our labor is not in vain in the Lord! — *“Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out her dead.”*

- In the New Birth!
- In the Resurrection!

Now, hear me a moment or two more. — **There shall also be a resurrection of damnation** (John 5:29). The wicked and unbelieving shall be raised by the power of Christ, in order to be judged and condemned. The believer shall be raised by virtue of

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his union with Christ, in order to be judged worthy of and rewarded with everlasting glory. The wicked shall be raised in wrath. The believing shall be raised in love. The wicked shall be raised for execution. The righteous shall be raised for a wedding. — “**Prepare to meet thy God!**” Soon you and I will stand before the living God in judgment (2 Corinthians 5:10-11).

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad. 11 Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.” (2 Corinthians 5:10-11)

Illustration: *Rowland Hill's Dream*

Amen.