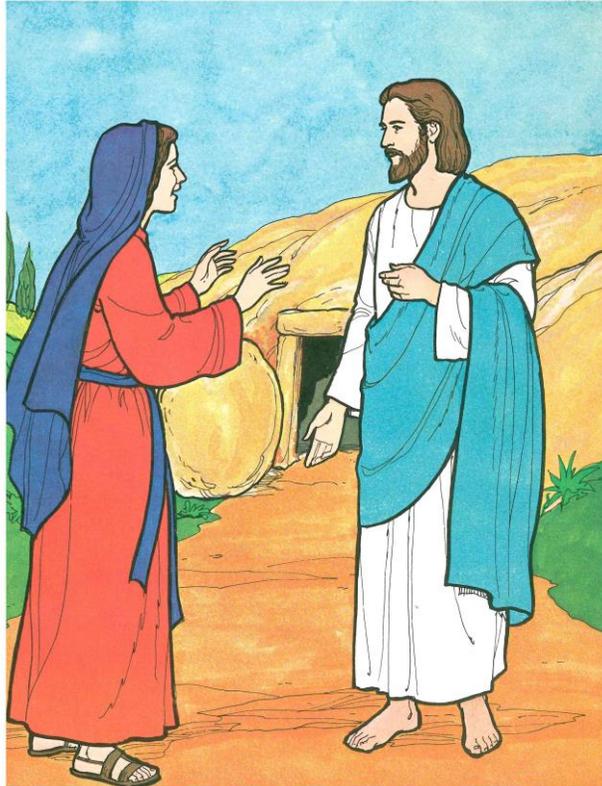


Series on Worship, Week 7

Resurrection



Jesus says to her, Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou? She, thinking it was the gardener, says to Him, Lord, if thou hast carried Him away from here, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away. Jesus says to her, Mary. She, turning, says to Him, Rabboni, which is to say, Teacher. (John 20:15-16)

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1. What are our customs around the disposition of the body?

At an interment, a hymn may be sung. The priest reads selections from the Word. All say the Lord's Prayer. The coffin or urn is lowered into the grave. The priest says a few words about committing the natural body to nature while the spiritual body is released and lifted up. "He is not here; he is risen." The priest reads a few more selections from the Word and gives a benediction.

And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace, and shalt be buried in a good old age.
Genesis 15:5

"Coming to one's fathers" is passing over from the life of the body into the life of the spirit, or from the world into the next life. "In peace" means that he will have lost nothing, and thus that nothing will suffer harm, for when a person passes into the next life he does not lose any of the things that he possesses as a person. He retains and has with him every single thing except the body, which has hampered the interior exercise of his capabilities.

AC 1853

They who know the internal sense, know that they shall come into the other life with a body, but a purer one. For in the other life there are purer bodies, for they see each other, converse together, and enjoy every sense as in the present body, but in a more exquisite degree. The body which a man carries around there on earth is for uses on earth, and therefore consists of bones and flesh; and the body which the spirit carries about in the other life is designed for uses in that life, and does not consist of bones and flesh, but of things which correspond to them.

AC 3813:5

Whoever duly considers the subject can know that the body does not think, because it is material, but that the soul, which is spiritual, does. The soul of a person, upon the immortality of which many have written, is his spirit, for this as to everything belonging to it is immortal. This also is what thinks in the body, for it is spiritual, and what is spiritual receives what is spiritual and lives spiritually, which is to think and to will. Therefore, all rational life that appears in the body belongs to the soul; nothing of it belongs to the body. The body is material, and the material substance of the body is added to the spirit, or one might say, is almost joined to it, in order that the human spirit can live and be useful in the natural world. Things of the natural world are material, and possess no life in themselves.

HH 432

The material form that is added and put on over [the spiritual] in the world is not a human form by itself, but only by virtue of the spiritual form, to which it is added and put on so that a person may be enabled to perform uses in the natural world, and also to draw to himself out of the purer substances of the world a fixed containant of spiritual things, and thus continue and perpetuate life.

DLW 388

A person cannot live with the body in the presence of the Divine. Those who do live are encompassed by an angelic column, which moderates the Divine influx, for the body of everyone is non-receptive of the Divine; consequently it dies and is cast off. AE 78

In the internal sense of the Word, 'a grave' means life, which is heaven.... The reason it means life or heaven is that angels, who possess the internal sense of the Word, have no other concept of a grave, because they have no other concept of death. Consequently instead of a grave they perceive nothing else than the continuation of life, and so resurrection. For a person rises again as to the spirit and is buried as to the body (see no. 1854). Now because 'burial' means resurrection, it also means regeneration, since regeneration is the primary resurrection of a person, for when regenerated he dies as regards his former self and rises again as regards the new. It is through regeneration that from being a dead person he becomes a living person, and it is from this that the meaning of 'a grave' is derived in the internal sense. AC 2916

Questions and Comments

1. What good or bad experiences have you had with interments? Do you have ideas about what would make an interment ceremony work better?
2. Have you noticed the natural body being a hindrance to the exercise of your interior capabilities, such as good judgment, mercy, and humility?
3. Is it helpful to think that you are "carrying around" a natural body, designed for uses in this world, but a burden in the long run? Does it help you to distinguish yourself from your natural body?
4. Does it make sense that the natural body has no life or thought or feeling of its own, but that all life is from the spirit within the body? When does it feel most like the body itself is living? When does it feel most like the body is simply a tool?
5. Why do we need to draw out of the purer substances of this world a fixed containant of spiritual things? How do we do this?
6. Why do we have to die? Why do we have to die in regard to our former self in order to receive eternal life?

2. Grief and Comfort

In the evening, weeping may pass the night,
But in the morning, there is singing aloud.
To Thee, O Jehovah did I call;
And unto Jehovah I made supplication.
Hear, O Jehovah, and be gracious to me;
O Jehovah, be Thou a helper for me.
Thou hast turned for me my wailing to dancing;
Thou hast loosed my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness,
So that glory may sing Thee psalms, and not be still;
O Jehovah, my God, to eternity I will confess Thee. Psalm 30:5, 8, 10-12

Weeping belongs to sorrow, and also to love, and is the highest degree of each of them. AC 3801

“Weeping” signifies the last farewell, and therefore it was customary to weep for the dead when they were buried, although it was known that only the dead body was rejected by burial, and that they who had been in the body were alive in respect to their interiors. AC 4565

In both weeping and in the shedding of tears, water comes forth which is bitter and astringent, and this occurs through an influx into a person’s grief from the spiritual world, where bitter water corresponds to the lack of truth because of falsities, and to consequent grief.... AE 484:3

Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, and believe in Me. In My Father’s house are many abodes; and if *it were* not *so*, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know. John 14:1-4

Fear of Dying

The LORD is my light and my salvation;
Whom shall I fear?
The LORD is the strength of my life;
Of whom shall I be afraid?
One thing I have desired from the LORD;
That will I seek:
That I may dwell in the house of the LORD
All the days of my life,
To behold the beauty of the LORD,
And to visit in His temple in the morning. Psalm 27:1, 4, 5

On that earth [*Jupiter*] they do not fear death, except on account of leaving their consort, their children, or their parents; for they know that they will live after death, and that they do not go out of life, because they go into heaven; and therefore they do not speak of dying, but of being heaven-made.

AC 8850

To be unwilling to die for the sake of one's children is natural both with the good and the evil....

SD 1236

Whatever a person loves, that he fears to lose, and therefore in disease when death is imminent, it can especially be known what he has loved, or what have been his ends during his life. Thus, if he sought after honors and placed his delight in them, he then very greatly fears death, and on his death-bed he also speaks of the things from which he had delight, so that he does not abstain from these affairs, being still devoted to himself.... Whereas he who cares nothing about such matters and regards them as of no account thinks only of eternal salvation, and esteems other things as utterly valueless and thus not worthy of mention, even though they be the whole world.

SD 1235

Comments and Questions

1. Is it helpful to know that even the wise ancients, who knew well that a person is still alive when the body dies, still had the custom of weeping, as "a last farewell"?
2. AE 484 indicates that grief comes, at least partly, due to falsities causing a lack of truth, and this is what produces tears. What might be some falsities that would cause such grief and bitter tears?
3. John 14 is part of the Lord's farewell to His disciples on the eve of His arrest and crucifixion. We see the purpose for which He came and for which He was willing to lay down His life so beautifully expressed here. Does thinking about the Lord's own willingness to lay down His life help us contemplate our own passing?
4. Would it be useful for us, too, to use the language of the people of Jupiter, and speak of people being "heaven-made" instead of "dying"?
5. SD 1235 indicates some qualities that make someone more or less afraid of death. These qualities are cultivated all through life. Can we prepare ourselves for a peaceful, "good death"?

3. The Purpose of Creation

Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices;
Yea, my flesh shall dwell securely.
For Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell;
Thou wilt not give over Thy merciful one to see corruption.
Thou wilt show me the path of life;
In Thy presence is *the* satisfaction of gladness;
In Thy right hand
There are pleasant things perpetually.

Psalm 16:9-11

The Divine Providence of the Lord has for its end a heaven from the human race. By long continued conversation with angels and spirits it has been made known to me and proved that heaven is not from any angels created such from the beginning, and that hell is not from any devil created an angel of light and cast down from heaven, but that both heaven and hell are from the human race— heaven from those who are in the love of good and thence in the understanding of truth, and hell from those who are in the love of evil and thence in the understanding of falsity....

[2] Now since heaven is from the human race, and heaven is an abiding with the Lord to eternity, it follows that this was the Lord's end in creation; and since this was the end in creation, it is also the end of His Divine Providence. The Lord did not create the universe for His own sake, but for the sake of those with whom He will be in heaven. For spiritual love is such that it wishes to give what is its own to another; and so far as it can do this, it is in its being, in its peace, and in its blessedness. Spiritual love derives this property from the Lord's Divine Love, which is such in an infinite degree. From this it follows that the Divine Love, and consequently the Divine Providence, has for its end a heaven which should consist of people who have become, and who are becoming angels, upon whom the Lord can bestow all the blessings and felicities that belong to love and wisdom, and bestow these from Himself in them.

DP 27

It is the dictate of sound reason that all are predestined to heaven, and no one to hell; for all are born human beings, and consequently the image of God is in them.

DP 322

But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?"
God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

Matthew 22:31, 32

A person has common sense, and this is one with that influx from heaven into the interiors of his mind from which, inwardly in himself, he perceives truths and sees them, as it were; and especially this truth, that he lives as a human being after death, happy if he has lived well, unhappy if he has lived ill. For who does not think this, when he elevates his mind a little above the thought next to his senses, as is the case when... he lies upon his bed about to die and awaits the end; likewise when he hears about the deceased and their lot.... Everyone perceives within himself that he lives as a man after death. What man who has loved his wife and his infants and

children, if in thought he is elevated above the sensual things of the body, does not say within himself when they are dying or have died, that they are in God's hand, and that he will see them again after his own death, and will again be conjoined with them in a life of love and joy?

CL 28

It has been observed that when a person is in what is sensuous, and is not elevated from it, he thinks of nothing else than what is of the body and of the world, and then does not want to know anything about what belongs to eternal life, and is even averse to hearing of that life. That I might know that this is the case, I have sometimes been let down into what is sensuous, and then such things instantly presented themselves, and then also the spirits who were in that grosser sphere poured in base and scandalous things. But as soon as I was withdrawn from what is sensuous, such things were dissipated.... In order for a person to be uplifted from these spirits, he must think about eternal life.

AC 6201

Comments and Questions

1. How does it change your life to know that the purpose of the Lord's creation of you and everything else is so that you may have eternal happiness?
2. In what ways can we practice spiritual love for the happiness of others, in the image and likeness of the Lord's Divine Love?
3. How can there be so much chaos and hell in people's lives if all are predestined to heaven?
4. How wonderful to know that the Creator of the universe is not a god of death, as blind, random nature, but a God of the living!
5. Everyone can perceive within himself that he lives as a man after death. Why, then, do some people deny this?
6. Can it be a useful tool, when we feel we are getting into the grip of sensuous spirits or a sensual state, to think about eternal life?

4. Divine Providence in the Time of Death

Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven. Matthew 18:10

CONCERNING THE DURATIONS OF THE LIFE OF MEN: WHY SOME LIVE LONG, AND SOME NOT LONG. The life of every man is foreseen by the Lord, as to how long he will live, and in what manner; wherefore he is directed from earliest infancy with a regard to a life to eternity. The Lord's Providence, therefore, commences from earliest infancy. SD 5002

The reasons why some die boys, some youths, some adults, some old men, are:

1st, on account of use in the world to men;

2nd, on account of use, while he is in the world, to spirits and angels; for man, as to his interiors, is with spirits; and he is there as long as he is in the world, in which all things in the spiritual world terminate;

3rd, on account of use to himself in the world, either that he may be regenerated, or that he may be let into his evils lest they lie dormant and afterwards break out, which would result in his eternal ruin;

4th, therefore, on account of use afterwards in the other life, after death, to eternity; for everyone who will be in heaven has his place in the Grand Man, or, on the other hand, he has his place in hell. Wherever forces fail they are balanced, and, of the Providence of the Lord, men are brought there. Thus also, the kingdom of the Lord is cared for, the welfare of which is universal Providence. SD 5003

THE RAISING OF LITTLE CHILDREN [in heaven]. (1) They are with nurses whom they call their mothers. (2) They read [or say] the Lord's Prayer, and learn prayers from the nurses, by means of influx out of heaven. (3) There are preachers for them. (4) Intelligence, and wisdom too, inflows, which excels the intelligence of the learned in the world, although they have only a childish idea about those things. (5) There are with them representations out of heaven. (6) They are dressed according to their industriousness, especially with flowers and garlands. (7) They are led into paradises. (8) They are tempted. (9) They grow in accordance with the state of reception. (10) They are of diverse dispositions. (11) Nurses are appointed for them who have loved infants in the world, who also are like mothers; and there is granted them a perception as though they were their own babies; but this is not granted to others than those who are in good, and are able to receive influx out of heaven. (12) Those infants who have been brought up there do not know otherwise than that they were born in the other life. (13) They do not know what time is, what space is, and such terrestrial matters. (14) Within a month, they speak the angelic tongue. SE 5668

And it came to pass that Isaac was old. ...In the Word "old age" means both the putting off of a former state, and the putting on of a new one. And this is for the reason that old age is the last of age, when bodily things begin to be put off, and with them the loves of the preceding age, and thus when the interiors begin to be enlightened, for these are enlightened when bodily things are

removed; and also because the angels, who perceive in a spiritual manner the things that are in the Word, no longer have an idea of any old age, but instead of it an idea of new life....

AC 3492

“Old age” in the internal sense does not signify old age, because the internal man, or the man’s spirit, does not know what old age is; but as the body or external person grows old, the internal passes into newness of life, the man’s spirit being perfected by age as his bodily powers diminish. This is still more so in the other life, where those who are in heaven are continually brought by the Lord into more perfect life, and at last into the bloom of youth, even those who have died in a good old age.

AC 4676

A person is so created that when he grows old and becomes like a little child, the innocence of wisdom conjoins itself with the innocence of ignorance which he had in infancy, and so he passes into the other life as a true infant.

AC 5608e

Comments and Questions

1. The time of our death is governed by the Lord according to uses, to others and to ourselves. The first three are uses of our life in this world, and the last is our use in the spiritual world. A question could be, if each of these uses was put on a scale of 1-10, would all four be 10’s at the time of our death, or would some uses be very urgent, necessitating that other uses not be at best possible time? (This is probably an earth-bound question!)
2. In the description of how little children are raised, what jumps out at you?
3. Can you imagine your interiors becoming more enlightened as body loves begin to be put off? Could this feel like a good thing?
4. Our spirit does not know what old age is. Have you ever been surprised to notice your body aging, because in spirit you don’t feel old?

5. Suicide

And Saul said to his armor-bearer, Draw thy sword and thrust me through with it, lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through and abuse me. But his armor-bearer was not willing, for he feared exceedingly; and Saul took his sword and fell upon it.

1 Samuel 31:4

No one is reformed in a state of mental disorder (*animus*), because disease of the mind takes away rationality, and consequently freedom of acting according to reason. For the mind (*mens*) is sick and unsound, and a sound mind is rational but not a sick one. Such disorders of the mind are melancholy, spurious and false remorse of conscience, hallucinations of various kinds, grief of mind (*animus*) arising from misfortunes, anxieties and mental anguish from a vitiated condition of the body. These are sometimes regarded as temptations, but they are not; for genuine temptations have as their objects spiritual things, and in them the mind is wise; but these states have as their objects natural things, and in them the mind is unsound.

DP 141

No one is reformed in a state bodily disease, because the reason is then not in a free state, for the state of the mind depends upon the state of the body. When the body is sick the mind also is sick, because of its separation from the world—if for no other reason....

DP 142

It was told me [these spirits] were such as had formerly slaughtered whole armies, as is recorded in the Scripture histories [e.g., Judges 7, 2 Kings 19 at the end], having induced insanities upon them, for they rushed into the chambers of their brain, and then inspired such terror that one slew another. That they were able to strike such terror I was assured, but it is seldom done at the present day. It is extremely rare that the bonds are loosened to any of them at this day, and only takes place in the case of someone who is of such a quality that it were better that he should be permitted to perish as to his body than as to his soul, and in regard to whom, unless he perished bodily in this manner, by means of insanity and suicide, he could not well be prevented from perishing to eternity.

SD 1783

CONCERNING ONE WHO HAD KILLED HIMSELF. A certain one in the life of the body had committed suicide by stabbing himself with a knife, having been driven to desperation through melancholia, to which he had been driven by diabolical spirits. He came to me complaining that he was being miserably treated by evil spirits, and said that he was among the furies who were continually provoking him. The place where he was, was in the lower earth, a little to the left. He also seemed to me to have a knife in his hand which he wanted to drive into his breast; he labored hard with that knife, wanting to cast it away from him but in vain.

SD 1336

OF WHAT QUALITY THEY ARE WITH MAN WHO CHERISH HATRED TOWARDS ANYONE. There was a certain female who inwardly cherished such a hatred towards her parents at home that she thought of taking them off by poison. And as she imagined that I was willing to marry her, and deceived herself with the phantasy of being married to the man [of her choice], she was at length [upon finding herself disappointed] seized with such a hatred that she thought of murdering me, had it been possible (Sara Hesselia). She having died not long after, and before the faculty of

speaking with spirits was opened with me, it happened that I was impelled to put an end to my life with a knife, and this impulse so grew upon me, that I was forced to hide the knife in my desk, and thus to remove it out of my sight. I have now discovered that that woman was the spirit who prompted the impulse, she having become excited as often as I saw the knife, and, from the enmity which she had conceived against me, having held the object fixedly in my mind. From this it may appear that men may be unconsciously infested by the dead, who have cherished hatred towards them.

SD 4530

Comments and Questions

1. Saul was often troubled by evil spirits. He had alienated himself from Jehovah by disobedience, and had even consulted a witch to find out what was going to happen in the battle with the Philistines. The suicide was another in a series of losses to the evil spirits. Meanwhile his son Jonathan died in the same battle, bravely fighting for his country.
2. Are all suicides due to mental illness?
3. If in rare occasions the Lord permits evil spirits to inspire suicide because it is better for someone to perish as to their body than as to their soul, does this imply that suicide per se does not condemn someone?
4. Have you had an experience of needing to put something out of sight so you would not be forced to dwell on it? Have you felt an urge to jump off a high place?
5. Because of spirits like those mentioned in the last two passages, knives are rarely mentioned in the Word, but instead, swords.

6. Eternal Happiness

His lord said to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord."

Matthew 25:21

As regards the happiness of eternal life: during his life in the world the man who is in the affection of good and truth cannot perceive it, but a certain delight in its stead. The reason for this is that while in the body he is in worldly cares and consequent anxieties that prevent the happiness of eternal life (which is deep within him) from then being manifested in any other way. For when this happiness inflows from within into the cares and anxieties that are with the person outwardly, it sinks down among the cares and anxieties there, and becomes a kind of obscure delight; but still it is a delight within which there is blessedness, and within this happiness. Such is the happiness of being content in God. But when a person is divested of his body, and at the same time of these worldly cares and anxieties, the happiness which had lain hidden in obscurity within his interior man comes forth and reveals itself.

AC 3938:7

Eternal rest is not idleness, for from idleness come languor, sluggishness, stupor and drowsiness of the mind and so of the whole body. These are death not life, still less the eternal life in which are the angels of heaven. Eternal rest, therefore, is a rest which dispels [languor and drowsiness] and makes a person live. Such rest can be nothing else than something which elevates the mind, and therefore some study and work by which the mind is aroused, given life and delighted, being thus affected according to the use from which, in which, and for which the work is done. Hence it is that the whole of heaven is regarded by the Lord as a containant of uses, and every angel is an angel according to his use. The delight of use carries him along as a favoring current carries a ship, and causes him to be in eternal peace and in the rest that belongs to peace. This is what is meant by eternal rest from labors.

CL 207:7

Those who are in heaven are continually advancing towards the springtime of life, with a greater advance towards a more joyful and happy spring the more thousands of years they live; and this to eternity, with increase according to the growth and degree of their love, charity, and faith. Women who have died old and worn out with age, if they have lived in faith in the Lord, in charity to the neighbor, and in happy conjugal love with a husband, advance with the succession of years more and more into the flower of youth and early womanhood, and into a beauty that transcends every conception of any such beauty as is seen on earth. Goodness and charity is what gives this form and thus manifests its own likeness, causing the joy and beauty of charity to shine forth from every least particular of the face.... Some who beheld this were struck with amazement.... In a word, to grow old in heaven is to grow young. Such forms or such beauties do those who have lived in love to the Lord and in charity towards the neighbor become in the other life.

HH 414

Death itself is a continuation of life, but in another world, which is invisible to the eyes of the earthly body.... As I know this from the living experience of so many years, which is still

continued, I solemnly declare it. I still speak, and I have spoken, with almost all whom I had known in the world and who are dead, with some after two or three days from their decease. Very many of them were exceedingly indignant that they had not believed at all in a life which was to continue after death... And it has also been given me to see their states of life in succession, or in progress, either to hell or to heaven. Wherefore let him who wishes to be eternally happy know and believe that he will live after death. Let him think of this and keep it in mind, for it is the truth. Let him also know and believe that the Word is the only doctrine which teaches how a man must live in the world in order to be happy to eternity.

AC 8939:3

Comments and Questions

1. Is it helpful to understand why life in this world is not nearly as happy as life after death?
2. How can we cultivate being content in God?
3. Some people do not much enjoy their work in this world. Is it hard to picture having useful work to do in heaven that is delightful, and carries us along in peace?
4. Does the promise of growing young in heaven make it easier to cope with the difficulties of growing old in this world?
5. Can we do a better job of thinking regularly about eternal life and keeping it in mind? Can we help our children do this? How can we do this without becoming other-worldly, disconnected from and irresponsible about uses and needs in this world?