

Let's Get Physical

"Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe." —Thomas. (John 20:25)

I want to address one of the most common errors people make when thinking about the resurrection of Jesus. People don't accept the plain evidence given by eyewitnesses of the resurrected Jesus. Instead they believe some silly myth they've heard. Or they make up their own ideas. They say, 'it is only symbolic, new life follows sad death, that's all'. No.

The resurrection of Jesus is the most confronting matter in human history. Dead men don't climb out of, or extricate themselves from tombs, or graves. They just don't. So, it is not surprising that people don't believe the first hand, eyewitnesses. Nor is it surprising that they disbelieve me, a Christian preacher. Many people think that we preachers just retail in '*nice stories*'. Fiction. People have heard someone say that the New Testament is unreliable. Many prefer to settle for that piece of fake news. Rather, than let the truth confront them.

On the first Sunday, of the resurrection, the Risen Jesus ate a piece of *fish* in the presence of more than 14 people (Luke 24:39-43), revealing to them that he alive, but is not a *ghost*. One week later the crucified Jesus, now risen, appeared to Thomas (John 20:27), offering him his nail marked hands and spear-wounded side, for a closer inspection. As with each of us, Thomas's entire framework of thought had to adjust.

Some years later, the apostle Paul wrote to the people in Corinth, to clarify some of their confused thinking about Jesus' resurrection body. He gave a mini biology, and astronomy lesson in substances. He used a seed of grain to illustrate his point. The soft, bendable, green leafy wheat plant, for example—that grows above the soil—is quite a different texture and substance to the very hard wheat seed, that is planted in the soil, to sprout and grow.

Paul then begins to further illustrate, using types of meat. '*Not all flesh is alike*' (1Corinthians 15:39a). *Human beings* have human flesh. *Animals* have animal flesh, often it is red meat. *Birds* are different again. Some bird meat is white—tastes like chicken. Some is dark. Mutton birds are tough flesh. Then, there's *fish*—which is softer; rock cod can be quite mushy.

'There are both heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is one thing, and that of the earthly is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; indeed star differs from star in glory' (1Corinthians 15:40-41).

Next in 1Cor. 15, we read of a '*psychikon*' (*Gk.*) body and a '*pneumatikon*' body.

The *psychikon* body is perishable. It belongs to the first Adam's frail humanity.

The *pneumatikon* body is imperishable. It is Jesus Christ's new humanity—the Last Adam.

The reality then, is the opposite of what we think. Our logic gets faulty when we revert to faithless thinking. Friends, a new spiritual body is *more substantial* than our present one.

The application: our future resurrection bodies will have magnificent, truly human, glorified physicality—not a *ghostly* quality. We are designed for physical inter-action. We are designed to touch, see, feel, swim, jump, ski, play, hug and do somersaults. That is one reason why the current *Covid-19* isolation, is so unreal. Human touch, is essential to our sanity.

O God of all grace, thank you for the human body that you have created us to be—to serve with—and to enjoy. We especially give thanks for the hope of a glorious resurrection body, like yours! Help us to believe the gospel and to anticipate the grand future. Trevor