

# week 7

## the creed: i believe in the resurrection of the body & the life everlasting



- Welcome (5-10 minutes)

Play a version of 'Kim's game'.

- Worship (10-15 minutes)



pray

### KALAN PORTER - I CAN ONLY IMAGINE

*I can only imagine what it will be like, when I walk by your side...  
I can only imagine, what my eyes will see, when Your face is before me.*

*I can only imagine.*

*Surrounded by your glory, what will my heart feel?  
Will I dance for you, Jesus? Or in awe of you, be still?  
Will I stand in your presence, or to my knees will I fall?  
Will I sing 'Hallelujah!?' Will I be able to speak at all?  
I can only imagine! I can only imagine!*

*I can only imagine, when that day comes, when I find myself standing in  
the Sun.*

*I can only imagine, when all I will do, is forever, forever worship you!*

- Word (50 minutes)

The afterlife does not feature so heavily in the preacher's message as it did in former years of poor hygiene and scant medical care! Happily, for many of us, a long life can be expected ... Sadly, this has reduced the excitement that was once felt for heaven in all its glory and wonder. However, having a resurrection body is part of our Christian belief & inheritance and we can look forward to it!

Read the Apostles' Creed together.

*I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.*

*I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our  
Lord.*

*He was conceived by the power of the  
Holy Spirit*

*and born of the Virgin Mary.*

*He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.*

*He descended to the dead.*

*On the third day he rose again.*

*He ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of the  
Father...*

*...He will come again to judge the living  
and the dead.*

*I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
**the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting.***



- **Talk about your ideas of heaven: what you might look like, how things might appear, how you might feel. How right do you expect that you are in these matters? Does this bother you?**
- **Are you someone who likes to work out what is in your Christmas presents before they are unwrapped? Why do you do this and how do you feel when you are right or wrong?**

**Read the passage:**

***What Kind of Body Will We Have?***

35 But someone may ask, "How are the dead raised? What kind of body will they have?"<sup>36</sup> Foolish person! When you sow a seed, it must die in the ground before it can live and grow.<sup>37</sup> And when you sow it, it does not have the same "body" it will have later. What you sow is only a bare seed, maybe wheat or something else.<sup>38</sup> But God gives it a body that he has planned for it, and God gives each kind of seed its own body.<sup>39</sup> All things made of flesh are not the same: People have one kind of flesh, animals have another, birds have another,



and fish have another.<sup>40</sup> Also there are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies. But the beauty of the heavenly bodies is one kind, and the beauty of the earthly bodies is another.<sup>41</sup> The sun has one kind of beauty, the moon has another beauty, and the stars have another. And each star is different in its beauty.

<sup>42</sup> It is the same with the dead who are raised to life. The body that is "planted" will ruin and decay, but it is raised to a life that cannot be destroyed.<sup>43</sup> When the body is "planted," it is without honour, but it is raised in glory. When the body is "planted," it is weak, but when it is raised, it is powerful.<sup>44</sup> The body that is "planted" is a physical body. When it is raised, it is a spiritual body. There is a physical body, and there is also a spiritual body.<sup>45</sup> It is written in the Scriptures: "The first man, Adam, became a living person." But the last Adam became a spirit that gives life.<sup>46</sup> The spiritual did not come first, but the physical and then the spiritual.<sup>47</sup> The first man came from the dust of the earth. The second man came from heaven.

<sup>48</sup> People who belong to the earth are like the first man of earth. But those people who belong to heaven are like the man of heaven. <sup>49</sup> Just as we were made like the man of earth, so we will also be made like the man of heaven. <sup>50</sup> I tell you this, brothers and sisters: Flesh and blood cannot have a part in the kingdom of God. Something that will ruin cannot have a part in something that never ruins.<sup>51</sup> But look! I tell you this secret: We will not all sleep in death, but we will all be changed.<sup>52</sup> It will take only a second—as quickly as an eye blinks—when the last trumpet sounds. The trumpet will sound, and those who have died will be raised to live forever, and we will all be changed.<sup>53</sup> This body that can be destroyed must clothe itself with something that can never be destroyed. And this body that dies must clothe itself with something that can never die. <sup>54</sup> So this body that can be destroyed will clothe itself with that which can never be destroyed, and this body that dies will clothe itself with that which can never die. When this happens, this Scripture will be made true:

"Death is destroyed forever in victory." — Isaiah 25:8

<sup>55</sup> "Death, where is your victory?

Death, where is your pain?" — Hosea 13:14

<sup>56</sup> Death's power to hurt is sin, and the power of sin is the law. <sup>57</sup> But we thank God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.



<sup>58</sup> So my dear brothers and sisters, stand strong. Do not let anything move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your work in the Lord is never wasted. **1 Corinthians 15 (NCV)**

### 3

There is a sense of urgency for the Gospel in this passage. We will change in an instant from our earthly creation to our heavenly one. There will be no long period of mutation or gradual, incremental change; rather it will be 'in the blink of an eye'.

- We are poor at embracing 'change', yet this one is compulsory or else we perish for all eternity! On the 'change scale' below, mark changes you have made recently according to the difficulty you had in making them! (Eg: chose new stair carpet ... 8/10) Think of at least 5 things, some of which should be concerning your faith!

1---easy-----2-----3-----4-----5-----  
6-----7-----8-----9-----really tough-----10

- Look at some seeds and their eventual fruit. What does it mean to you that God sees the fruit when we often see the unpromising seed. Spend some time sharing the promise that the group members see in each other. Write some encouraging words about yourself!



We often see ourselves as 'fixed' in this world. We have all sorts of possessions and qualifications that point to our permanence in the world ... job prospects ... good home ... pension ... investments.

- How does this passage challenge you to view your life? In what areas of your life could you be challenged to live differently, or to choose alternative routes to those expected of you?

#### Bill Hybels writes:

*I was sitting in a meeting one time when the speaker suddenly unfurled a roll of stickers in his hand. "There is something we must all understand," he said as he walked across the front of the room. Periodically, he would stop and put a red sticker on a tiny replica of a house, and a red sticker on a Hot Wheels car, and a red sticker on a dollhouse sized desk that represented our vocational lives. "You may not be able to tell from where you're sitting, but each red sticker has a single word on it," he said. "The word is 'temporary'. And these things I'm putting them on are all temporary. They will fade away, turning cartwheels like leaves in the wind when this world ends. If you are living for these things, then you are living a life of temporary pleasure, temporary satisfaction and temporary fulfilment." He continued walking round the room, now silent as he labelled everything in sight with red stickers. I watched his hands declare the fate of the best this world has to offer as those stickers made their way to the goods in front of us.*

*Temporary. Temporary. Temporary. Temporary. Temporary. Temporary. Temporary.*

*"There is only one thing in this room that is not temporary," he continued. "There is only one thing you can take with you into the next world." He called someone up to join him on the stage, and placed a blue sticker on*

her lapel. "When you get to the end of your life and take in your last breath", he said, "What do you want your life to have been about?" My heart stilled as one thought stemmed all others in my mind.

It really is all about people.

No earthly commodity is going to make it from this world into the next. Not land, not homes, not bank accounts, not titles, not achievements. Only souls... Jesus Christ taught that every human being would be resurrected to spend eternity in community with God in heaven or in isolation from God in hell. And because Jesus understood these eternal realities and believed them to the core of his being, he focussed his attention on the only entity that would extend into the next reality: people. (p186&7 Hybels)

**Hybels challenges us to make our life count for real permanence ... to have eternal significance.**

**pray**

- In a few quiet moments, list 6 - 10 things of most importance in your life. Decide whether they are of temporary or permanent significance. Could any change category with some effort from you? Ask God to help you to give proper order to your life.



- **Witness (20 – 25 minutes)**

*58 So my dear brothers and sisters, stand strong. Do not let anything move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your work in the Lord is never wasted.*

**Our witness to Jesus' saving love is so important. Who we are and how we live should reflect His love for all people.**

- Share stories about how the seemingly random thing that some Christian person has done or said, that has made a lasting impression on you and your faith. (Not famous Christians, mainly people you've encountered.)

**pray**

Pray for your life to be about 'people.' About helping others to see Jesus and find salvation.

- **Time for refreshments, you've earned them!**



Bibliography

Bill Hybels, *Just Walk Across the Room*, Zondervan, 2006

Nigel Watson, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, Epworth Commentaries, 1992

## 5

Dear Leaders

Welcome to week 7 of the Apostle's Creed!

*You will need a prayer-focus. Lou Fellingham's "There is a day" would be an excellent song to play in the background or for the worship.*

*You will also need some seeds and their fruit, or pictures of this; although the real thing would help make a powerful prayer-focus.*

*Kims game: Suggest the 'look at 20 items for 30 seconds, cover with tea-towel, then write as many as you can in 2 minutes' version ...*

Housegroups' Party is on 12<sup>th</sup> December ... please start to think about who you can invite and who will bring what food! You won't need games this year, but your group will need a prize to put in the 'prize fund' (we'll make a hamper-style prize for the winning table)

**Also, please remind group members about the reading rota at church which is now on a 'sign-up' basis. New voices would be much appreciated!**

Have a great time and enjoy your group this week

Every Blessing

catherine