

# The Life Challenge

*"I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." John 10:10*

**Title:** Resurrection Hope  
**Speaker:** Matt Ewert  
**Text:** 1 Corinthians 15:3-58  
**Date:** April 1, 2018



## WARM-UP

- **"Hope" is really a big deal** – for us as Jesus followers, and for many others. Many may not be "religious," but consider themselves to be "spiritual," and they do yearn for hope.
- **Share with each other:** Have you been to a really sad funeral when someone has passed away? When they are not people of any particular faith, but they express some kind of hope, though its hazy, fuzzy and unsure. **How might they express their hope?**

**Here's an example of hope:**

**Fly: by Celine Dion**

Fly, fly little wing, Fly beyond imagining  
The softest cloud, the whitest dove  
Upon the wind of heaven's love, Past the planets and the stars  
Leave this lonely world of ours, Escape the sorrow and the pain  
And fly again

Fly, fly precious one, Your endless journey has begun  
Take your gentle happiness, Far too beautiful for this  
Cross over to the other shore, There is peace forevermore  
But hold this mem'ry bittersweet, Until we meet

Fly, fly do not fear, Don't waste a breath, don't shed a tear  
Your heart is pure, your soul is free, Be on your way, don't wait for me  
Above the universe you'll climb, On beyond the hands of time  
The moon will rise, the sun will set, But I won't forget

Fly, fly little wing, Fly where only angels sing  
Fly away, the time is right, Go now, find the light

**How would you describe this writer's hope?**

## DISCUSSION

**There are two goals of this Life Challenge:**

**Goal #1: To more fully anchor our knowing and understanding of what "resurrection hope" means for us as followers of Jesus.**

**A Quick Review: 1 Corinthians 15:3-58**

- **Significance of Firstfruits:**

⇒ Living in awe and wonder:

- \* In the Old Testament: Deuteronomy 26:5-11 (focus on verses 10-11)
- \* In the New Testament: Jesus as the firstfruits, the prototype of what is yet to come – 1 Corinthians 15:20-23
  - From condition negative to condition positive

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## DISCUSSION

- From darkness to light
- From death to life
- From slavery to freedom
- **Understanding the resurrection of the body:**
  - ⇒ Resurrection is not "bar-code faith" to "save my soul" where God scans us to see if we assent to certain beliefs. The payoff at the end is "going to heaven."
  - ⇒ Resurrection is about the whole body: Contrasts the "natural body" and the "spiritual body"
    - \* **True transformation:** I Corinthians 15:42-43
      - From perishable (wears out) to imperishable (incorruptible)
      - From shame (frailty, decay) to honor (splendid, new)
      - From weakness to power
  - ⇒ Resurrection into what?
    - \* II Corinthians 5:17 – I am a new creation
    - \* Continuity (what is now) and transformation (what we are becoming already)

**Goal #2: To be able share and clarify what this hope can mean for those who have only a fuzzy idea of hope. I Peter 3:15**

- What's the message for people with only a fuzzy hope?
  - ⇒ **Hope is for now and for ever:**
    - \* **New creation starts now:** "Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Matthew 6:9-10.
    - \* **We have purpose now:** "*The purpose of forgiving sin...is to enable people to become full-functioning, fully image-bearing human beings within God's world already now, completely in the age to come.*" (NT Wright). It's not an escape hatch to get away from this evil, nasty world.
    - \* **Death, our enemy**, has been defeated. None of us escape death. However, death's power has been destroyed by the power of the resurrected Jesus. (I Corinthians 15:24-26)

### Prayer Engagement:

- Pray for us that we would grow far beyond a "bar-code" faith to an understanding that we are living for the Kingdom of God, not for the kingdom of this world.
- Pray for sensitivity to see people who are lost and without hope. Give us ears to hear the cries of such people.

### Holy Spirit Empowerment:

- With great intentionality, let's invite the Holy Spirit so that we will live in the power of the resurrected Lord, not in our own power or our own wisdom.

### Difference-making Faith:

- Let's look for new opportunities to project hope, through action and words, to people who don't know what hope really is:
  - ⇒ Your family
  - ⇒ Your neighbor
  - ⇒ Your colleagues
  - ⇒ Your friends