

MECHANICS OF THE RESURRECTION

1 CORINTHIANS 15:35-58

Once, a backwoods, hillbilly family - who had lived-off-the-grid their whole lives - came to the big city.

After checking into a swanky hotel, they picked up their bags and followed their fellow guests to the elevators. Pa and the kids, had never seen an elevator.

They had no idea *what it was* or *what it did*. They just stared at the contraption, scratching their heads.

Pa was standing there when an elderly lady walked up to this medal box and pushed a button... the doors opened... she walked inside... seconds later, the doors opened... and out walked a beautiful young woman.

The hillbilly man was amazed. Without missing a beat, he turned to his son, and shouted, “Quick boy, go get your Ma, and let’s run her through that thing!”

The old man thought that elevator was a way to reverse the effects of aging and transform these old, worn-out bodies into new and ageless bodies...

Of course, that hillbilly father isn’t the only one with such a dream. I read an article recently, “Billionaires will disrupt death if it’s the last thing they do.”

It discusses the efforts of four ultra-billionaires and their attempts to defeat death. The article calls these men “immortality financiers.” They’ve given millions of dollars to bio-tech companies trying to expand human lifespans and eventually eliminate death altogether.

Perhaps the most passionate of these death-defying entrepreneurs is the founder of Oracle, Larry Ellison.

Ellison was quoted as saying, “Death makes me very angry. It doesn't make any sense to me. Death has never made any sense to me. How can a person be there and then just vanish, just not be there?”

And it's a good question... Death doesn't make sense. Why shouldn't the human body live forever?

Theoretically, our bodies ought to rejuvenate indefinitely. That's what we do until around the age of 25, when *suddenly, inexplicably* we start to deteriorate.

Some scientists theorize solar radiation sends a false signal to our DNA that triggers aging. That's a theory. The reason we die is still a mystery to science.

We have to go to Scripture to get the real scoop on death. The Bible speaks of “*the law of sin and death.*” Any attempt to defeat death without considering that law is futile. *It's sin that causes our bodies to die.*

And since only Jesus has the ability to forgive sin, He alone holds the keys to death and resurrection.

Here in 1 Corinthians 15 the Apostle Paul looks at death and resurrection the way that hillbilly Pa looked at the elevator. A Christian enters the door of death a rotting corpse - then we exit a glorified, heavenly body.

In this morning's text, Paul shows us why there is no longer any reason for us to fear death. The *undertaker* is now our *upper taker!* Death has gone from a *lily pad where we croak*, to a *launching pad where we shine!*

Paul begins this section of Chapter 15, in verse 35, with a question, “**But someone will say, ‘How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?’**”

Paul has been discussing the importance of **the resurrection of our bodies**. He’s reasoned, *if the human body isn’t resurrected - and since Jesus had a human body - then Jesus never rose from the dead...*

And if Jesus didn’t rise from the dead; He has no power to forgive, which makes our faith worthless, and the gospel we preach a lie. Without the resurrection of the dead, Christianity falls apart like a house of cards...

That’s why Paul declares the truth in verse 20, “**But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.**” Jesus overcame death, and paved the way for us to follow! He’s the first. We’re the gleanings yet to be harvested.

Now in verse 35 Paul shifts gears - from **the importance of the resurrection** to **the mechanics of the resurrection**. *How does this resurrection happen?*

And Paul begins by rebuking them for having to address what’s so obvious, “**Foolish one, what you sow is not made alive unless it dies.**” Paul saw the principle of resurrection taught all around him, even in nature.

In fact, in the next couple of verses Paul resorts to some *biology* in order to teach a little *theology*. The resurrection is seen in both *botany* and the *Bible*.

Here's the first principle on *resurrection mechanics*: **death precedes resurrection**. Before a fruit sprouts, a seed has to be buried. Resurrection requires a death.

This principle applied to Jesus' own resurrection.

In John 12:24 Jesus spoke of His death as a seed buried in the soil, "Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain." A seed in essence dies. It's nestled in the soil and is buried, in order to yield its fruit.

And like a seed, the body of Jesus was buried in the Earth to be resurrected, and bring many souls with Him.

A seed is a hard shell, protecting a living embryo. The shell of the seed feeds and protects the living tissue inside. It absorbs water. It stores carbohydrates and fats.

And when conditions are right, the seed breaks open.

The shell dies. It literally, sacrifices itself. It gets used up by the living tissue, and becomes a new plant.

The embryo uses the energy that was stored in the shell to get started... *to send down a root to get water - to send up a sprout to get light*. A new plant emerges.

And this is how the resurrection of the body occurs.

These old bodies we carry around are like the shell of a seed. Inside every Christian is *living tissue*. God's Spirit births *new life, eternal life* inside us. Currently, that spiritual life is housed inside this crusty shell of a body.

But when we die - we're like the shell being planted beneath the soil. Eventually that old shell that grew weak and tired, and

was tempted, and let us down in so many ways, will be transformed... My body will be changed by God to conform to the life inside me. I'll have a new body! **You can call it, a “body by God.”** It'll be heavenly.

Paul continues his description, verse 37, **“And what you sow, you do not sow that body that shall be, but mere grain - perhaps wheat or some other grain. But God gives it a body as He pleases, and to each seed its own body.”** Here's a second principle, **what goes in the ground isn't exactly what comes out of the ground.**

As Paul puts it, **“you do not sow that body that shall be.”** What shall **“be”** is not just the **“seed.”** God takes the seed, but that's just His starting place. He transforms what was a corruptible seed into an incorruptible body.

Often the idea of resurrection is mocked by the cynics and its doubters... They say, *okay a Christian dies and gets buried. His decaying body returns to the dust.*

Over time, that dust blends into the soil - the soil that sprouts a blade of grass - which is eaten by a hungry cow - which is slaughtered by the steakhouse - and cooked in a restaurant - then eaten by your friend...

Now you're not just you, *you are also your friend!* You are two! *God resurrects molecules to reproduce who?*

But this idea is silly. Today, we know that God doesn't need all the cells of our body to reproduce us. All He needs is a single cell, and from that cell He can extract our DNA - with which He can clone our entire body.

The Creator can start with your DNA, and transform it into something very different than what it was before.

Understand, just as an oak tree isn't the composition or size of an acorn - a daffodil doesn't look at all like the dirty, gnarly bulb you planted - and a stalk of corn bears little resemblance to the kernel from which it originated...

Our resurrected bodies will be different in appearance and in composition from the bodies we inhabit now.

A caterpillar eats and eats, until it grows too big for its own skin. It then forms a chrysalis, or cocoon. Inside, its organs break down and are reconstructed.

A metamorphosis takes place. Finally, the insect emerges no longer a caterpillar, but a beautiful butterfly.

This is a picture of resurrection. You are a crawling caterpillar. Death will be your cocoon. But one day you'll emerge a beautiful butterfly - a testimony to God's glory!

This is why the three people Jesus brought back from the dead were not technically resurrected. [Lazarus](#), [the boy from Nain](#), and [Jairus daughter](#) were raised from the dead, but they came back exactly as they were before.

They were alive, but they had the same corruptible body. In fact, all three of them had to die twice. In contrast, resurrection is receiving a body that never dies!

Remember Jesus after His resurrection, there was no doubt His body was the same body that was crucified.

His scars dispelled all doubt. Thomas even touched His scars. Yes, His body was the same body, but it was different in appearance and composition. Jesus passed through solid walls and traveled instantaneously.

And here Paul is saying the same thing about our future bodies... *It will be like and unlike our current body.*

John Philips comments, "Paul avoids two pitfalls. He does not teach that the body raised is the exact corpse that was buried - although identity (does) survive.... And he avoids the other pitfall, for he does not say that the resurrection body is a different body altogether... There is a mysterious blending of the old and the new."

Paul further explains in verse 39, "*All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of animals, another of fish, and another of birds.*" At creation, God fashioned different body types for the varied environments He created. Birds had to be *aerodynamic*. Fish had to be *aqua-dynamic*.

We all need a body type suitable to our environment.

Paul continues, "*There are also celestial bodies and terrestrial bodies; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.*" "*Celestial*" means "heavenly" - while "*terrestrial*" means "earthly."

Just as there are many different bodies on earth - *the carcasses of men, and beasts, and fish, and fowl* - there're also *earthly* bodies and *heavenly* bodies.

Currently, **you and I** inhabit earthly bodies. **The angels** have heavenly bodies. And a body made for an earthly

environment won't function in heaven any more than a body made for the sky will operate in the sea.

Drop a parakeet into a bathtub - or a catfish from a treetop - *and it'll be ugly* - the parakeet will drown in the water, and a catfish will splatter when hits the ground.

And this is one of the reasons God doesn't whisk a Christian off to heaven the moment they're saved...

If you in your earthly body were dropped into the environment of heaven you'd drown like a parakeet in the sea, or splatter like a catfish dropped out of a tree.

Our earthly bodies weren't built to handle God's glory and holiness. Human bodies are **earth to earth, dust to dust, ashes to ashes**. They would disintegrate in glory.

Paul writes in verse 41, **"There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory."**

Each star has its own mass, and luminosity, and density. Heavenly bodies have unique characteristics...

"So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body."

Resurrection works off death.

Remember the first principle we mentioned regarding the mechanics of resurrection - **death precedes resurrection**. New life springs from old life, *but only when the old life ceases*. Death is a necessary evil.

Bodies only change in character after they die.

Resurrection kicks in only after death. One day our human bodies will go *from rotting and decaying to incorruptible and indestructible... from shameful to glorious... from frail to strong... from natural to spiritual.*

Notice, Paul doesn't use the term "death" here, instead He writes "**sown.**" *This is truly wonderful.* He means death, but for a Christian he uses softer words like "**sown**" or "**sleep.**" *Death for us is like a seed sown.*

Surgeon once said, "**A farmer never weeps when he sows a seed.**" *Why?* Because he plants that seed fully expecting it to sprout and produce some delicious fruit. *Why cry when what comes after the sowing is better?*

For a believer Paul sees death as a weary laborer who's relieved to finally get a little sleep. He plops his head on a pillow, having every confidence he'll wake up in a few hours just as he's done his whole life long.

Elsewhere, Paul is clear about the destiny of our spirit after death. In 2 Corinthians 5:8 he writes of a deceased Christian, he's "**absent from the body and present with the Lord.**" That means the instant our body expires, our spirit enters the presence of Jesus.

In the meantime, these decaying, dishonored, frail bodies are asleep until that future wake-up call!

They're being sown, until the day when they sprout again incorruptible, and in glory, and in power...

I'll never forget visiting a man on his death bed. He was in terrible pain. Mike had cancer. But he gave his life to Jesus. I baptized him in his hospital bed.

And I remember asking him, "Mike, is there anything I can do for you?" He said sort of bluntly, "No, unless you can get me another body." I told him, "Well, I can't, but I have good news, I know someone who can!"

One day Mike will get his new body - a sickness-free, pain-free, cancer-free body. In fact, everybody who trusts in Jesus will one day receive a body by God!

This morning, what if I had some marigold seeds, but when I went to plant those seeds I discovered they were scared... *Imagine, seeds talking to their planter...*

What if they were to say to me, "We don't want to get planted. Who wants to get dirty? It's nice and clean in your pocket." And I would replied, "*But it's your job to get dirty. Seeds go into the soil.*" "But we're going on strike!"

What's the problem with you seeds, do you guys think I'm going to hurt you?... "Of course we do. We're afraid. We don't want to get buried. We don't want to die."

That's it? You're afraid to die? "Yes. It's happens to our friends. They get buried, and we never see them again."

But you do see them again. Your friends are those gorgeous flowers that sprout up. "It sure doesn't look like them?" That's because, like Jesus, the old body gets buried, but they rise with a transformed, glorious body.

Finally, my seeds conclude, "Wow, do we get to do that, too? ..." And like the seeds, **we get to do that too!**

Nature teaches us that before we enjoy *the new life of spring* we first have to go through *the death of winter*.

For three months, all the greenery, the life, is buried underground. *In the cold of January, do we believe in the warmth of March? Or do we doubt that flowers will ever bloom again?* I'm sure you have faith. You endure...

Spring is coming! And this is the hope we should have when the last spade of dirt is thrown on the body of a brother in Christ. We'll meet again. Resurrection is real.

Paul writes in verse 44, "There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit." However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual. The first man (or Adam) was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man (that is, Jesus) is the Lord from heaven."

Adam was earthy. In Hebrew the name "*Adam*" sounds like the word "*earth*." *Earthy Adam* came first.

Whereas Jesus was heavenly. He came from heaven. He took orders from heaven. He was spoken to from heaven. He even ascended back to heaven.

And Paul speaks of God's order - *the earthly comes first; then the heavenly*. The same is true of us... We're born the first time of our father, Adam. And receive the same kind of a earthly body he had. But we're born again into Christ. He promises us a spiritual body.

But the natural comes first. When a butterfly lays an egg it doesn't hatch as a butterfly. It's a caterpillar *first*.

The same is true of us. One day we'll be free and colorful butterflies, but first comes the caterpillar stage.

We get a bod from the sod, before the bod from God.

Think of it this way, I believe every teenager ought to drive a beater before they graduate to a nice car. All four of my kids drove high-mileage, rusted jalopies.

Driving a jalopy for a few years insures that you'll appreciate finally being able to afford a newer model.

And this is God's strategy. Right now we're in the beater. This body is a jalopy. It's got some nicks. It sputters and breaks down. But one day we'll get *a brand new model, fresh off the lot*. We'll have bodies with no dents - that always runs at peak performance.

Sniff... and your body will have the new car smell!

During the seven weeks after His resurrection, Jesus displayed the capabilities of our future bodies. He took His heavenly body out on a forty-day test drive.

The risen Christ was unhindered by time and space.

Remember, Jesus appeared to the disciples on the Road to Emmaus, then disappeared as they were breaking bread... When He appeared to the disciples they were behind closed doors. He came through the wall. His body dematerialized - then rematerialized. We're talking Star Trek stuff - *"beam me up Scottie."*

And yet His body was made of flesh and bone. It was a real body. Thomas touched Him. Jesus ate food.

Light travels at 186,000 miles per second. The speed of light is fast. But there's something faster - *the speed of thought*. Jesus traveled at *the speed of desire*.

He wasn't bound by time or space. And when we're fitted with our resurrection bodies we won't be either.

Here's how this might work... *Lock your keys in the car?* No biggie, you can just transport yourself through the door panel... *Yet who'll need a car? Want to take a jaunt around the world?* Think it and you're there.

Our resurrection bodies will be *out-of-this-world!*

Verse 48, “As was the man of dust, so also are those who are made of dust; and as is the heavenly Man, so also are those who are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man.” Our natural body is like Adam, thus the resurrected model will be like Jesus. 1 John 3:2 becomes a window into our destiny, “Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him...”

In his book “*The Great Divorce*,” theologian CS Lewis imagined what heavenly bodies might look like...

“I saw people coming to meet us. Because they were bright I saw them while they were still very distant, and at first I did not know that they were people at all... The earth shook under their tread as their strong feet sank into the wet turf... Some were naked, some robed. But the naked ones did not seem less adorned, and the robes did not disguise in those who wore them the massive grandeur of muscle and the

radiant smoothness of flesh. Some were bearded, but no one... struck me as being of any particular age.” Sum it up, they were *shining, strong, unblemished, smooth-skinned, ageless*. A heavenly man is a sight to behold!

Lewis says in another place, “A regenerate man in glory would be something we in our ignorance might be tempted to worship.” If, through these eyes we saw a believer in his or her glorified body, we might mistake the human for divine... *Heavenly bodies are heavenly!*

Verse 50 tells us, “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption.” In Luke 24:39 when the risen Christ appeared to His disciples in the upper room, He challenged them, “Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have.”

Jesus referred to Himself as “flesh and bones,” not “*flesh and blood*.” His blood had been shed for us. His resurrection body had no blood - just flesh and bones.

Apparently, like a gallon of milk “*flesh and blood*” has a shelf life. It’s corruptible. Though it’s not stamped on us, our bodies have an expiration date. That means they can’t inherit eternal life and the kingdom of God.

When man walked on the moon, NASA knew a human body could never survive on the lunar surface.

Earthly bodies aren’t fit for lunar life. That’s why NASA designed a life-support suit for moon walks.

And likewise, the mortal bodies we currently inhabit aren't suited to survive the physical presence of God.

If we entered pure, un-bridled holiness wearing “flesh and blood” we'd melt faster than ice cream on a hot July day. To enter God's throne room we'll have to shed our earth-suits, and suit up in a spiritual body.

But remember the question the Corinthians asked in verse 35 was two-fold. Not only “*with what body do they come?*” - which Paul has been answering. But they also ask, “*How are the dead raised up?*” And in the next few verses Paul gives us a play by play...

If you're a Christian what the apostle is about to describe can be entitled, “**The greatest day of your life!**”

Right now, with where you're at in life, what would you describe as your greatest day - *your wedding day? your graduation day? the day you retire? the day your baby is born? the day you make your final mortgage payment on the house? the day your probation ends?*

No, if you're a believer in Jesus the greatest day in your life will be the day Jesus snatches up His Church.

Here's what'll happen, verse 51, “**Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed...**”

By the way, we once had a sign hanging on the wall in the church nursery that quoted verse 51, “*We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed...*”

But Paul is writing about another “**changing day...**”

Whether you're alive at the time or you've occupied a grave for a thousand years, God has a day circled on His calendar when our corruptible bodies will change.

Our *natural, earthly, weak, dishonorable decomposing* bodies will be transformed into *spiritual, heavenly, powerful, glorified, incorruptible* bodies.

And it'll happen, **"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet."** You'd think a transformation *from earthly to heavenly* would take at least hours - if not days or years - *even for the Great Physician*.

But Jesus plans to give you and I a new body - not in a blink of an eye, but in a twinkle. It takes 1/3 of a second for your eye to blink. A twinkle is even faster!

Some people try to identify the last trumpet here with the seventh trumpet in Revelation 11, which puts the Church in the Great Tribulation. That's naive.

In the OT God had Moses make two silver trumpets which were used for a multitude of purposes. In the Bible, God uses many trumpets for various reasons.

This **"last trumpet"** is just the last call for the Church. It's the last signal from our Lord before He returns.

"For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

"The dead" are the Christians of all ages who died previously. The **"we"** *that will be changed* is the Church at the time of the last trumpet blast. This event is what Paul refers to in 1 Thessalonians 4 as **the rapture**.

Paul tells the Thessalonians on *that day* “the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God!

“And the dead in Christ will rise first.” Their bodies will be reunited with their spirits who are with Jesus.

They go first since they have six feet further to travel.

“Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.” Our bodies will be changed instantly, and we’ll be snatched away. *Here one second, gone the next.*

It’s the exception to resurrection mechanics. For one Christian generation **death won’t precede resurrection.**

Verse 53, **“For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.”**

Bodies designed for time aren’t capable of occupying eternity. We’ll need bodies redesigned for heaven.

“This corruptible *must* put on incorruption” *It must!*

I heard of a tombstone with the following inscription, **“Budded on earth to bloom in heaven.”** 1 Corinthians 15 teaches that is the destiny of all believers in Jesus.

“So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.” Here Paul quotes Isaiah 25:8.

And I love this truth. Our Lord Jesus won't be satisfied until He has reversed every trace of sin and its painful consequences, including our enemy, death.

Death will be “*swallowed up*” or totally vanquished.

Realize, death is the only pest that stings before it bites. It's frustrating. The worse feature of death is not that it *ends life*, but that it *spoils life* before you die.

Pleasures are not as pleasurable, knowing one day they'll be over... Valuables are not as valued... honor is not quite as honorable... knowing that one day it will all be left in the grave. Death takes the edge off living.

It steals away the joys of life.

It snuffs out relationships. It separates wives from husbands - parents from children - friends from close friends. Even when life is at its best, death stands in the shadows taunting... knowing it'll get the last laugh. Death stings! It produces a deep, dark frustration.

Once, a missionary visited a village deep in the jungle. The whole tribe suffered a dreaded disease.

The missionary identified the illness as an infection easily treated with the proper antibiotic. And there were doctors in a nearby village who could administer the life-saving drug - but the tribesmen refused to travel...

The problem was *the river*.

Superstition said that river was the home of demons, and death, and evil spirits. All their lives the tribesmen had seen the river as an enemy. They feared the river.

No villager had ever been to the other side.

Witchdoctors said it was futile to try and cross the waters. The desperate tribe was trapped by the river.

That's why the missionary knew what he needed to do to save the tribe... He led them to the river's edge, then waded into the water. The villagers begged their friend not to risk his life. They were sure the river would swallow him up. Imagine, their elation when he surfaced on the other side *alive and well!* The river had not swallowed the missionary. He'd won the victory.

And this is what Paul means when he writes, "*Death is swallowed up in victory.*" On the day Jesus was crucified, the disciples saw Him plunge into the murky river called *death!* All their lives long they had believed no one could cross that river, and live to tell about it...

How surprised they were when three days later Jesus reappear on the opposite shore. He'd braved the waters of death, and overcome. *He was alive and well!*

When the missionary climbed from the river, onto the opposite bank, the villagers saw that the river wasn't as sinister as they thought. *It was really nothing to fear.*

And Jesus' resurrection teaches us the same lesson about death. Follow Jesus and we no longer have to fear the river! Jesus has conquered the villain of death.

In fact, Paul taunts what he once feared, "*O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?*"

Death and Hades no longer have a hold on the Christian. Jesus has sprung the lock and set us free.

Verse 56 tells us, “**The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.**” The Law defined sin. *Hey, without a speed limit how do you know you’re speeding?* This is what the Law did. It exposed our sin.

But what *defined sin* also *incited it...* Have you notice that *the surest way to get a teenager to do something is to tell him or her not to do it?* That was the Hebrew’s reaction to the Law. Tell a sinner not to *do this* or *go there*, and the mere suggestion enticed him to disobey.

This is why the Law was no help in our struggle with sin. And that’s why Paul praises *the Lord* not *the Law*. Praise erupts in verse 57, “**But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.**”

And how should we now live in light of that victory?

He tells us in verse 58, “**Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.**” If this life were all there is; why not be selfish or greedy - *just live for numero uno...*

But because Jesus lives we’ll give an account of our lives to Him. What’s done in this life really will matter.

Our work and labor for the Lord is not in vain.

This is why Paul says, “***be steadfast*** (never give up), ***immovable*** (never give in), ***always abounding*** (never give out) ***in the work of the Lord...***” Here’s how to live in light of the resurrection... **Never give up** your principles and convictions and faith... **Never give into** temptation and the pressures of

this world... And **never give out** of zeal for God. He'll make you strong!

Never give up, never give in, never give out...

What you do for Jesus does matter!

As the old saying goes, "Only one life will soon be past, and only what's done for Christ will last."

Let me close with a story. Once a little boy was allergic to bee stings. He and his father were in the car headed to a ball game. Suddenly, they noticed a bee.

The little boy panicked. His dad reached up, and grabbed the bee in his hand. His son was relieved. But after a few seconds he released his fist, *let the bee go!*

Again the boy was hysterical, "Dad, I'm allergic! Why did you turn loose of the bee?" That's when the dad opened his fist, and revealed the stinger in his palm.

And this is what Jesus has done for us! He's taken the sting out out of death! *The stinger is now in the nail-scarred hands of Jesus.* Our Lord Jesus is risen from the dead... *and we have nothing left to fear!*