

Title: We Will Change

Let us pray.

Most holy, Lord God, we gather this afternoon to remember and celebrate the life of Frank Klith. May he be an example to us of how we can use our God given gifts to help and aid others. Let Frank and those we no longer see, but will see again, break trails for us to follow in Jesus' name in whom we pray. Amen.

Now, I want you to think of a pizza pie. The crust is done just right. The sauce and cheeses are all melded together. And on top of that is you favorite topping or toppings. Or maybe it is just right without the toppings. For you cheese pizza aficionados, toppings just spoil the greatness.

There is some work to making a pizza pie. Each ingredient and step are crucial to making a good pie. The dough must be good and, of course, round, though some have tried other shapes as gimmicks, probably because their pizzas didn't taste very good. Round makes the cooking process better.

Then there is the sauce. A bad sauce will kill your pizza business. To me, cheese is cheese. There isn't much anyone can do to make cheese good or bad, because pizza is intolerant of fancy cheeses. The cheese should not overpower the sauce or the toppings.

Last there is the toppings. Now people have gotten a little crazy with toppings. I, for one, do not understand pineapple on a pizza. It's as bad as putting brie on a pizza. It overpowers the good stuff.

To me, a pizza is not a pizza unless it has pepperoni. Other stuff can be good, but pepperoni is non-negotiable. If someone offers me a pizza without pepperoni, I will gratefully accept, but I will be disappointed.

The pizza pie is a thing of beauty. But there is a problem. When it comes to you piping hot, and if you're like me, you just stare at it. You know that if you take a bite, the hot cheese is going to burn your mouth. But why wait? It is just too good to wait. The pain is worth it.

Frank Klith did a lot of things in his life, but how could he lose by selling pizzas? As much of no-brainer that that is, if you don't make good tasting pizzas, you are not going to stay in business. Frank had to open three pizza parlors to meet the ravenous appetites of the people of Amador County.

Frank did a lot of things, a lot of occupations in his life. I'm told he was a rigid, sometimes a mean man. He was a twenty-year veteran and served in the Korean War. But like a fine wine, Frank got better with age. He was more tolerant, more affable. To be in any business that caters to the public, it helps to be a people person, which is what Frank grew into.

Frank was one of those spiritual, not religious sorts. He was a millennial before his time. Prayer and a belief in God were very important to him. For not being religious, he was more religious than a lot of religious people.

In our reading from 1 Corinthians, we heard St. Paul's take on the resurrection. That is what we are here for. We are here to remember Frank and we believe that Frank's absence from us is temporary.

Jesus broke the bonds of sin and death. The last barrier between us and God was death. Jesus did away with that.

Paul then asks and answers the question of how the dead are raised and what body they will have. Paul thinks these are stupid questions. Life can only happen after death. Dough is raised by using yeast. Leavened bread can only happen if those little yeasties die. Then there is something new – say, a pie, maybe a pizza pie.

The dough comes from wheat. The wheat plant is made a plant by a seed that appears dead. Then it grows into a beautiful wheat stock. The pizza sauce is mainly tomatoes. Tomatoes also come from seeds. Those tomatoes are transformed into something amazing, a glorious sauce! The seed must be sown to have new life. These two types of seeds come together to make a glorious pizza pie!

We are sown in death to receive a new life. So, according to Paul, this is what the resurrection is like: our physical bodies are sown and will die. Our resurrection bodies come from our physical bodies and never die. Our ugly, weak physical bodies rise into beautiful, strong resurrected bodies.

We are sown as physical bodies. We rise from death into spiritual bodies. So, if there is a physical body, then there is a spiritual body. Our perishable bodies transform into imperishable bodies. Our mortal bodies transform into immortal bodies. Our weak bodies will die. Even in this weakness, they will be changed into bodies that are eternal.

Just as the scriptures say (Hosea 13:14), “Death is swallowed up in victory.” Paul adds, “Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?” The sting of death is powered by sin and sin is powered by the Law of Moses. We give God thanks and praise for letting Christ give us the victory. It is through Christ that the law is broken and we live in grace and that grace leads to eternal life.

Grace is free, but it carries responsibilities. The responsibility is love. Once Frank retired and no longer had the burden of working every day, he took his energy to help others. He may not have gone to church, but he lived out Jesus’ commandment to love. Frank took it so seriously, he even took in stray cats, of all things. I don’t have that much love.

Frank was serious about prayer. He prayed several times a day and made his kids pray. So, it only fitting that I conclude in prayer.

Precious God, we give you thanks for the gift of eternal life, your presence here among us, and the unimaginable joy and love we will experience in the next life. Welcome Frank and all who have gone before us, where we will one day be. We ask in Jesus’ name. Amen.

Text: 1 Corinthians 15:20–26,35-8,42-44,53-58 (NRSV)

²⁰ But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died.^f ²¹ For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being;²² for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ. ²³ But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. ²⁴ Then comes the end,^g when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, after he has destroyed every ruler and every authority and power. ²⁵ For he must

^f Gk *fallen asleep*#

^g Or *Then come the rest*

reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶ The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

³⁵ But someone will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?” ³⁶ Fool! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. ³⁷ And as for what you sow, you do not sow the body that is to be, but a bare seed, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. ³⁸ But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body.

⁴² So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. ⁴³ It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. ⁴⁴ It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body.

⁵³ For this perishable body must put on imperishability, and this mortal body must put on immortality. ⁵⁴ When this perishable body puts on imperishability, and this mortal body puts on immortality, then the saying that is written will be fulfilled:

“Death has been swallowed up in victory.”

⁵⁵ “Where, O death, is your victory?

Where, O death, is your sting?”

⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁵⁸ Therefore, my beloved,ⁿ be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

ⁿ Gk *beloved brothers*

¹ [*The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version*](#). (1989). (1 Co 15:20–26, 1 Co 15:35–38, 1 Co 15:42–44, 1 Co 15:53–58). Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers.