INTRODUCTION:

Read text: 1 Cor 15:45-49 (NLT), The Scriptures tell us, “The first man, Adam, became a living person.” But the last Adam—that is, Christ—is a life-giving Spirit. What came first was the natural body, then the spiritual body comes later. Adam, the first man, was made from the dust of the earth, while Christ, the second man, came from heaven. Every human being has an earthly body just like Adam’s, but our heavenly bodies will be just like Christ’s. Just as we are now like Adam, the man of the earth, so we will someday be like Christ, the man from heaven.

Christian hope has many dimensions, as many dimensions as there are troubles and disappointments in life. BUT in the face of death, our Christian hope is clearly a resurrection hope (title). HOM.idea.

God, by putting His image in physical bodies, created something unique in all the universe. He called it not just “good,” but “very good.” The human body wasn’t just a temporary idea but an eternal plan! Deep in our heart, we long for this to be so, but this text promises that it is so, and it explains why. The biblical record tells us that...

I. Adam Ate from a Tree That Brought Death

A. God had warned him in Gen 2:17, “you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.”

B. That’s very “good news!” (and I’ll tell you why). This warning means that this “death-and-decay” experience that we’ve inherited in the human condition, is not God’s original design!

TRANS: Human death is not a divine plan. In fact, God wants to free us from it. And that’s where “the man from heaven” comes in....

II. Christ Provided a Tree That Brings Life

A. God, personally entered this deadly human condition—John 1:1-14a.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. / The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. (His Advent [coming] brought the Incarnation: “God with us” in human flesh!)

B. Jesus gave us another tree to feed from—John 6:51, “I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.”

1. On that tree, the Cross, Christ’s fleshy body received our death-curse—Gal 3:13, Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.”

2. By His Resurrection in a glorified body, He is now “a life-giving Spirit,” offering us His life, as we receive Him into our own lives.

TRANS: Holy Communion is a memorial where believers gather at the Table of Christ’s death, to feed upon His life. Similarly, God gathers us when our dear ones die, to feed our minds on their lives. In that sense...

III. A Christian’s Memorial Is Also a Tree to Feed Upon

A. God’s picture for believers is a life of growth—Psa 1:3, “He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.” (Death seems to end growth and fruitfulness, but Christ makes them our eternal destiny!)

B. Death again has gathered us to contemplate... to feed our minds on a marvelous, fruitful life. (BUT it was a life lived out under the constraints and limitations of “an earthly body just like Adam’s.”)

C. Resurrection hope anticipates enjoying an afterlife lived out in “our heavenly bodies” which “will be just like Christ’s” body, glorified... free from disease and decay... built to last forever!

CONCLUSION:

This was the resurrection hope of She/He has left behind the body she/he inherited as a child of the old humanity. Once, as a born-again child of the new humanity, she/he held these Scripture promises by faith. Now she/he enjoys them by direct experience in the presence of Jesus. Her/His faith has become sight.

If ____________ could communicate with us, I believe she/he would want all of us here at this memorial to know what she/he knows right now. She/he would be inviting everyone to join her/him in this faith—a faith that connects them forever to the One whose sacrificial death on the Cross purchased this hope, and whose resurrected life now in heaven guarantees humanity’s eternal destiny.