

Death Declared, Defied, and Destroyed

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”
Romans 6:23

“O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?”
I Corinthians 15:55

“I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.”
Revelation 1:18

“But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.”
II Timothy 1:10

Introduction:

1. Without the knowledge of the Bible, you were hopelessly given life without approval and face certain death.
2. But with the knowledge of the Bible, we have glorious hope in victory over all aspects of death. Give glory!
3. Remember! Only Bible believers know the origin of death and why our species did not evolve it away!
4. There are three deaths: but we want to focus the most on the middle death, the death of our physical bodies.
 - a. There is the state of spiritual death into which we are born – death toward God by a depraved heart.
 - b. There is physical death, when the spirit leaves our body and returns to its Creator for judgment.
 - c. There is eternal death, when the reunited body and spirit are formally sentenced to eternal judgment.
 - d. The blessed Lord Jesus Christ has delivered His elect from all three kinds of death. Give Him glory!
5. The universal fear of death is the meal ticket for religious hucksters and their heresies (Hebrews 2:15).
6. To make death tolerable for the wicked, there are many heresies that attempt to take away its awful sting.
 - a. Annihilation is a heresy that denies any existence after death, so why practice any godly self-denial?
 - b. Reincarnation is a heresy that proposes recycling as something else, so we get to die repeatedly.
 - c. Universalism is a heresy that claims that all men go to heaven and God could not have a literal hell.
 - d. These heresies are rampant today, but the Sadducees denied the spirit and the resurrection (Acts 23:8).
 - e. And the apostle warned against others who taught the resurrection was past (I Cor 15:12; II Tim 2:18).
7. A mark of true Christians is the comfort and hope they have in the face of death (I Thess 4:18; 5:9-11).
8. How can David call death precious (Ps 116:15) and Solomon say there can be hope (Pr 14:32)?
9. The gospel of Jesus Christ, our faith and our hope, is built solidly on the resurrection and eternal life.
10. We know the future, and we have confident hope surrounding it, which others do not have at all!
11. We meet on Sunday, for it is the Lord’s Day – the day on which our Lord appeared after His resurrection.
12. It is your duty to be grounded in the victory obtained by Jesus Christ over death before you face it yourself.

Death Declared

- A. Adam was told clearly and severely that death was the consequence of eating the fruit Gen 2:17).
- B. His judgment was repeated after the fact, when he was told he would return to dust (Gen 3:19).
- C. The law of God is simple and horrible – the soul that sinneth, it shall die (Ezekiel 18:4,20).
- D. Adam condemned our race, for he was its legal representative (Romans 5:12-14; I Cor 15:21-22).
- E. The wages of sin is death, and the holy and just God of heaven will pay the wages (Rom 6:23).
- F. The whole creation is groaning due to this curse of sin and death put on everything (Rom 8:20-23).
- G. The second death (in a sense it is the third) will be an eternity in the lake of fire (Rev 20:14; 21:8).
- H. There is no discharge from this war – no patient waiting to be sent home free from fear (Eccl 8:8)
- I. It is an appointment you cannot avoid; every man will face it and judgment to follow (Heb 9:27)
- J. The foolish wicked just cannot learn, though every generation dies in full sight (Ps 49:6-14,16-20).
- K. Our whole race dreads this curse of death, trying to ignore it, postpone it, freeze it, or choose it!
- L. We were created very good and put in a paradise with the Tree of Life, but we chose sin and death.
- M. Hospitals and funerals are very profitable places to go, for it is the future of all men (Eccl 7:2).

Death Defied

- A. Here follows indications and defiant statements and actions that show God's power over death.
- B. Enoch the seventh from Adam did not die – for God took him without death (Genesis 5:21-24)!
- C. God said to Moses, "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham" (Ex 3:6; Matt 22:31-33)!
- D. Balaam, by inspiration of God, described the great blessedness of saints dying (Numbers 23:10).
- E. The blessed God said, "For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever" (Deut 32:40)!
- F. David knew he would go see his son, though his son was not coming back to him (II Sam 12:23).
- G. The prophets of God had enormous power over death (I Kings 17:17-23; II Kings 2:9-12; 13:21).
- H. The prophets of God had a message over death, which is hid from the view of others (Is 57:1-2).
- I. Job declared, "I know that my Redeemer liveth ... and in my flesh shall I see God" (Job 19:25-27).
- J. David prophesied boldly that His future Son would not see corruption in the grave (Ps 16:8-11).
- K. The psalmist declared, "But God shall deliver my soul from the power of the grave" (Ps 49:5,15).
- L. David recorded God's promise that the death of saints is a precious thing in His sight (Ps 116:15).
- M. Solomon said there was hope in the death of the righteous, which the wicked have not (Pr 14:32).
- N. Jesus declared the doctrine of the resurrection from God's words to Moses (Matthew 22:31-33).
- O. Simeon was not afraid to die: he told the Lord he was ready to die after seeing Jesus (Luke 2:29).
- P. Jesus raised the dead, and mocked the crying mourners who lamented death (Luke 7:11-18; 8:52).
- Q. Jesus was confident of eternal life: He said that today's deeds are rewarded then (Luke 14:12-14).
- R. Jesus defied death on the cross, and one of the thieves rejoiced that He did (Luke 23:43)!
- S. Jesus said, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (Jn 2:18-22)! Give Him glory!
- T. Jesus was given the power of life and the judgment to grant it at the resurrection (John 5:26-29).
- U. Jesus said death was mere sleeping (John 11:11-15), He was the resurrection and life (11:21-27), and called Lazarus forth from the grave after four days with the words, "Come forth" (11:39-44).
- V. Jesus defied death, so much so, that the Jews hated Him for his speech about it (John 8:51-52).
- W. When appearing to John many years after His resurrection, Jesus said, I am alive forevermore! Amen! I have the keys of hell and of death (Revelation 1:18)! Give Him glory, reader!
- X. The apostles were chosen witnesses of the resurrection of Jesus Christ (Acts 1:22; 2:24; 4:33).
- Y. Stephen was not afraid to die; he knelt down and confidently prayed for his attackers (Ac 7:54-60).
- Z. The apostles raised the dead (Acts 9:36-42)! There was power, reader! Power from Jesus Christ!
- AA. Paul was bold in the learned city of Athens to confront them with the resurrection (Acts 17:18,32).
- BB. Baptism is the defiant act of confidence in the resurrection (Romans 6:3-5; I Cor 15:29; I Pet 3:21)
- CC. Paul was persuaded neither death ... nor anything else can separate us from God (Rom 8:38-39).
- DD. Paul once left this body and life to view heaven and returned (Acts 14:19-20; II Cor 12:1-4).
- EE. Paul was ready to depart and be with Christ, which was far better (Phil 1:20-23; II Timothy 4:6).
- FF. Paul was confident, very confident, and willing rather to die and be with Christ (II Cor 5:1-9).
- GG. Peter was ready to depart as well and put of this tabernacle – this body of flesh (II Pet 1:13-15).
- HH. So comfortable is the death of the righteous and the certainty of their resurrection, we may call death "sleeping in Jesus" (John 11:11-14; Act 7:60; I Cor 11:30; 15:18,20,51; I Thess 4:13-14).
- II. God gave John a great message for us: "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord" (Rev 14:13).
- JJ. The martyrs have defied death from the very beginning, for they knew they would live forever in Christ Jesus their Lord (I Cor 4:9; II Cor 1:7-11; 4:11; Phil 1:20; Rev 2:10; 12:11)!
- KK. Listen to the defiant taunt of sin, death, and the grave through Jesus our Lord (I Cor 15:55-57).
- LL. Our children love "Up from the Grave He Arose," and for good reason. Our blessed Lord conquered death.
- MM. The Negroes in the early history of our country sang with our same hope, "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot." Amen! Give God the glory! They saw Elijah and Lazarus going to heaven the same way.
- NN. We are members of the family of God, made up of those in heaven (after death) and those on earth (before death), which was adopted by God through the death of Christ (Ep 3:14-15; Heb 12:22-24).
- OO. Only the ignorant sorrow deeply for the dead, for they have no hope. We have hope (I Thess 4:13)!
- PP. Catholics are so ignorant of truth they pray to Mary for help at death in their "Hail Mary" prayer.

Death Destroyed

- A. When all the powers of death and hell thought they had our Lord, He broke the chains forever!
- B. He was declared to be the Son of God with power by His resurrection from the dead (Rom 1:4).
- C. Many of the saints come out of the graves and went into the city after His resurrection (Matthew 27:53).
- D. The gospel brings the news of life and immortality to light (II Timothy 1:9-10; Hebrews 6:2; I Peter 1:3).
- E. Jesus tasted physical death in a full sense and destroyed the devil's claim against us (Heb 2:14; I John 3:8).
- F. He tasted death for every man, so that we hardly taste it at all; we pass straight to heaven (Heb 2:9).
- G. There shall be a resurrection of the death, both the just and the unjust; this is certain (Acts 24:15).
- H. Sin and death were once reigning, but now life reigns through Jesus Christ our Lord (Romans 5:12-21).
- I. Death hath no more dominion over him, that is, Christ Jesus; and we are also free in Him (Romans 6:9).
- J. Sin, condemnation, and death have been destroyed by the law of life in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1-2).
- K. The doctrine of the resurrection is essentially key to the gospel of Jesus Christ (I Cor 15:1-8,12-23).
- L. The last enemy to be destroyed is death, when even the death of our physical carcasses will end.
- M. Paul faced death often, but he was not afraid of it, for he knew whom he believed (II Cor 1:8-11).
- N. Believest thou this? Can you commit your spirit into the hands of your Father (Luke 23:46)?
- O. There is a huge assembly waiting for us; they made it easily; we can follow them (Heb 12:22-24).
- P. Death is a blessing for several reasons that are readily apparent to the man or woman of faith.
 - 1. You get to escape the flesh, which brings us into the temptation and bondage of sin.
 - 2. You get out of your sin-cursed body that gives you more and more problems with age.
 - 3. You get to be in heaven with Jesus, Who should be the grandest Person in your life.
 - 4. You get to leave all the problems, vanity, and vexation of spirit in this world behind.
 - 5. You travel to Paradise, which exceeds the things on earth by a margin too great to tell.
- Q. Paul described his life as dedicated to Christ and his death as gain and far better (Phil 1:20-23).
- R. So comfortable is the death of the righteous and the certainty of their resurrection, we may call death "sleeping in Jesus" (John 11:11-14; Act 7:60; I Cor 11:30; 15:18,20,51; I Thess 4:13-14).
- S. We walk by faith, not sight; and we see the great blessings of heaven waiting (II Cor 4:17-18; 5:7).
- T. The tree of life is now in Heaven reserved for His glorious bride to eat of it (Gen 3:22-24; Re 2:7; 22:2,14).
- U. There is no more death for those in Christ Jesus, for death and all the pain of sin will pass away (Rev 21:4).

Conclusion:

- 1. Men have been willing to do or pay most anything to preserve life or postpone death. What will you do for the blessed Lord, Who has delivered you from death into the glorious liberty of the sons of God?
- 2. We do not merely have hope in this life through Christ: we also have hope in a glorious future (I Cor 15:19).
- 3. Our labor is not in vain in the Lord, for our whole future is yet before us in heaven (I Cor 15:58; Gal 6:9).
- 4. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and the Father that sent Him: you are passed from death to life (John 5:24).
- 5. Our degree of confidence and hope and boldness in death is based on our practical diligence.
 - a. Peter described potential confidence of heaven's entrance, if we are diligent in few things (II Pet 1:5-15).
 - b. Paul counted all things loss and dung in hope of achieving a blessed death (Philippians 3:8-11).
 - c. Given our knowledge of life and death, we should apply our hearts unto wisdom (Psalm 90:12).
 - d. The blessedness of death is for the righteous only, so take heed (Num 23:10; Isaiah 57:1-2; Rev 14:13).
 - e. The martyrs gave their lives unto the death for Him; He asks us for a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1-2).
 - f. Paul's life purpose was to labor to be accepted of him, whether he was here or there (II Cor 5:9).
- 6. Believest thou this?!

For further reading or study:

- A sermon outline entitled "The Death of the Righteous"
- A sermon outline entitled "The Resurrection Chapter"