

Till Death Do Us Part

Introduction:

1. I have been preaching a series of messages about the glory of Christ, “He Is Altogether Lovely.”
2. It is important for us, in light of my mother’s funeral today, to consider our lives in their entirety.

Death – the King of Terrors

- A. Adam brought death on all by rejecting God’s sure word for Satan’s lie (Ro 5:12-21).
- B. Do not blame him above you, for you had done worse, and you have (Ro 3:23; 6:23).
- C. Read Job 18:11-21 and consider the King of Terrors as he seeks the death of all men.
- D. Death is certain, destructive, final, horrible, initiates eternity, and is fully unavoidable!
- E. Our marital relationships, and all relationships, have a certain destructive end – death!
- F. What will Jesus do? His Father arranged for Him to marry death-cursed creatures!
- G. For more about death, see the sermon: <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/sermons/pdf/eternal-life-is-a-gift.pdf>.

Death Is a Certainty

- A. You are appointed once to die, and there is no discharge in this war (He 9:27; Ec 8:8).
- B. Your earthly marriage and every other relationship, no matter how tender, will end!

Death Is Feared

- A. The fear of death is a universal phenomenon that is grounded in guilt and superstition.
- B. The wicked rightly fear death, for their judgment will be with great terror and trouble.
- C. Fear of death is the meal ticket for religious hucksters and their heresies (Heb 2:15).
- D. To make death tolerable, there are many heresies that attempt to take away its sting.
 1. Annihilation denies any existence after death to eliminate fear about the last breath.
 2. Reincarnation proposes recycling as something else, so you get to die repeatedly.
 3. Universalism claims that all men go to heaven, because there reject a literal hell.
- E. One of the greatest gifts our Husband Christ gave us is deliverance from fear of death.

The Nature of Earthly Life

- A. Man has a physical body and a spirit/soul that occupies the body and gives it life.
 1. This earthly human existence was initiated by the Creator in Eden (Genesis 2:7).
 2. If the spirit/soul leaves the body, it immediately dies, but the spirit lives (Jas 2:26).
 3. We reject the Sadducees, for Abraham still existed in Moses’ day (Matt 22:23-33).
 4. We deny annihilation or soul sleep as inventions of Russellites and SDA heretics.
- B. Physical death, or death of the body, is the departure or leaving of the soul/spirit.
 1. Death is giving up the ghost, the soul/spirit that animates the body (Gen 25:8,17; 35:29; 49:33; Job 3:11; 10:18; 11:20; 14:10; Acts 5:5; 12:23).
 2. Rachel’s soul left her body at death: it did not die or disappear (Genesis 35:16-20).
 3. Simeon was ready for his soul to depart his body after seeing baby Jesus (Lu 2:29).
 4. Stephen requested that Jesus receive his spirit when his body died (Acts 7:59-60).
- C. Resurrection returns the soul to the body and animates it once again (I Kgs 17:17-23).

The Nature of Earthly Things

- A. When spirits leave the body, unlike dogs, they go to God for direction (Ec 3:21; 12:7).
- B. Clearly, our earthly lives last only as long as we are on earth, and then they are over.
 - 1. Job philosophized of life and death – that it ends everything (Job 7:8-10; 14:7-12).
 - 2. As certain as you arrived with nothing, you shall leave with nothing (I Tim 6:7).
 - 3. While alive we know we must be engaged in activity, for death ends all (Ec 9:5-6).
 - 4. For this reason, we are to live life with passionate zeal and diligence (Eccl 9:10).
 - 5. Youth should be zealous for Christ, before evil days and death come (Ec 12:1-8).

The Nature of Earthly Relationships

- A. We are to live joyfully with our spouses while in this life and under the sun (Eccl 9:9).
- B. There is no marriage in heaven: it lasts only as long as life lasts (Mat 22:29; Rom 7:2).
- C. David with son or sons ... relationship ended ... he cannot come to me ... Absalom!

TILL DEATH DO US PART

- A. Regardless of a man's virtues or love, which we have been exploring extensively and comparing to our Lord Jesus Christ, an earthly husband is of no value after death.
- B. The greatest man on earth is reduced by death to be equal to the least man on earth.
- C. No matter how much lovers desire and enjoy each other – death ends the relationship!
- D. They can promise eternal devotion and love to each other all they want – it is all a lie!
- E. Though love covers all other circumstances at weddings, death ends all commitments!
- F. The words, “**Till death do us part,**” show marriage hopeless to even the best spouse!
- G. No matter how much you give or take – death will reduce your marriage to nothing.

BUT CHRIST IS NOT SO!

- A. Our relationship with Jesus Christ truly gets going much better at the time of death.
- B. Instead of being ended by death, our marriage to Jesus Christ is enhanced by death.
- C. What can we say to such truth? The thing feared most is the best event with Him!
- D. Paul knew Jesus on earth better than us, but he said of death ... *far better* (Phil 1:23)!
- C. Some suggest, “Till death do us start,” as rightly describing our heavenly relationship.

Compare Marriage Relationships

- A. The earthly *face to face* pleasure of husband and wife ends – that with Christ begins!
- C. *Sorrow and crying* for spouses occurs at death, but are all gone after death (Rev 21:4)!
- B. *Dinners for two* will end on earth, but the marriage supper of the Lamb is after death!
- D. *Sin's pleasures* are but for a season, but those with God forever (He 11:25; Ps 16:11)!
- E. *The fear and pain* of losing an earthly spouse to death brings anxiety and worry, but the relationship becomes much more personal with Jesus Christ at the time of death!
- F. Age, disease, and certain death are constantly sucking the life and pleasure out of an earthly marriage, but the life and pleasures of heaven with Christ are perpetual.

Our Husband Has Made Death Good

- A. David wrote that God counts the death of His saints to be a precious thing (Ps 116:15).
1. Consider – these words are from the Father of the Son to Whom we betrothed!
 2. The text does not say, Precious in the sight of the LORD is the life of His saints!
 3. Grasp this truth! The God and Christ of heaven cannot deceive, exaggerate, or err.
 4. What does precious mean? Costly, valuable, important, rare.
 5. What is precious? The death event when it occurs to a true believer in Jesus Christ!
 6. How is it precious? He gives rest and peace to the weary and troubled (Is 57:1-2).
 7. How is it precious? It is the end and intent of creation and redemption (Rom 9:23).
 8. How is it precious? He saves us from our flesh, the devil, sin, the world, etc., etc.!
 9. How is it precious? It will never occur until everything is perfect for Him and you!
- B. Solomon wrote there is hope, improvement, in the death of the righteous (Prov 14:32)!
- C. Consider some aspects of death that make it a good thing – in fact, a very good thing!
1. You will escape the flesh, which brings us into the temptation and bondage of sin.
 2. You will get out of your sin-cursed body that gives you more problems with age.
 3. You will get to be in heaven with Jesus, Who should be the grandest Person in life.
 4. You will leave all the problems, vanity, and vexation of spirit of this world behind.
 5. You travel to Paradise, which exceeds earth's things by a margin too great to tell.
- D. Paul described his life serving Christ and death as *gain* and *far better* (Phil 1:21-23).
- E. So comfortable is the death of the righteous and the certainty of resurrection, death is “sleeping in Jesus” (Jn 11:11-14; Acts 7:60; I Cor 1:30; 15:18,20,51; I Thes 4:13-14).
- F. God gave a message for you: Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord (Rev 14:13).
- G. Balaam by God's inspiration described the blessedness of saints dying (Num 23:10).
- J. Isaiah spoke of mercy we may miss by not considering when righteous die (Is 57:1-2).
1. Men do not consider that the righteous are often saved from judgment by death.
 2. A righteous man finds peace, rest, and righteousness in death regardless of trouble.
 3. Jesus gives legal and reveals practical righteousness (Matt 25:34-40; II Cor 5:21).
 4. You will be clothed in special clothing of righteousness (Rev 19:8; Ps 45:13-14).
- K. Paul was confident when teaching about the nature and effect of death (II Cor 5:1-9).
1. There is no distress of a righteous man's soul at death when believing this gospel.
 2. We can prepare to follow those that went before by giving up the ghost willingly.
- L. The tree of life is now in heaven reserved and free for His bride (Rev 2:7; 22:2,14).
- M. No wonder Solomon said the day of your death is better of your birth (Eccl 7:1).

Death Is Necessary

- A. Seeds are planted and die for a new plant – our body for a new one (I Cor 15:36-37).
- B. We cannot inherit Christ's kingdom like this, so we must get rid of corruption (15:50).
- C. You should worry about fitness for the perfect Man Christ Jesus ... death will bring it!

What Is Death to Christ's Bride?

- A. Paul described our death as leaving an earthly house to be with Christ (II Cor 5:1-9).
1. He described our physical bodies as earthly houses of this tabernacle that dissolve.

2. There awaits the righteous an eternal house (or body) built by God for our spirits.
 3. The soul is naked and unclothed without a body, but God will clothe it again.
 4. Paul spoke of his soul being at home in the body but absent from Jesus Christ.
 5. Observe that when Paul dealt with this subject he reminds us of faith versus sight.
 6. Observe Paul's confidence and willingness expressed about his own bodily death.
- B. Paul viewed death as a departure from place to a better place (Phil 1:23; II Tim 4:6).
1. How could death be "gain" and "far better" if annihilation or soul sleep were true?
 2. Life to Paul was remaining in the flesh, and death was departing to another place.
- C. Peter similarly described death as leaving the tabernacle of his body (II Pet 1:13-15).
1. Observe the distinction Peter drew between himself ("I") and his tabernacle body.
 2. A tabernacle is a temporary and moveable house like a tent e.g. Moses' tabernacle.
 3. Death according to this text is discarding the temporary tabernacle and departing.
- D. Death accesses the free ticket purchased by Christ for your travels to a better place!

Going to Meet the Bridegroom

- A. Paul knew if his spirit left his body, he would be instantly with Christ (II Cor 5:5-8).
1. Animal spirits also depart at death, but they end existence in the dirt (Ec 3:19-21).
 2. A righteous man's spirit departs his body at death and is immediately with Christ.
- B. When our Lord's spirit left His body, it went then to heaven to be in God's presence.
1. He gave up the ghost (or spirit/soul) as did other men when they died (Mk 15:37).
 2. He committed His spirit into the hands of God, where it was headed (Luke 23:46).
 3. He told the beloved thief he would join Him that day in Paradise (Luke 23:43).
- C. Paradise is heaven where Jesus sits on the throne of His father David beside God.
1. Paul was mysteriously and graciously allowed to visit it once (II Cor 12:1-4).
 2. He called this place the third heaven to distinguish it from the sky and outer space.
- D. Your soul/spirit will be transported to heaven by the angels of God in a chariot of fire.
1. This is how Elijah went to heaven, and Elisha witnessed the event (II Kgs 2:9-12).
 2. Elisha knew these chariots and horsemen were all about him (II Kings 6:15-17).
 3. These are similar to creatures Ezekiel saw in a vision of God's glory (Ezekiel 1).
 4. They carried Lazarus the beggar from the rich man's gate to heaven (Luke 16:22).
 - a. Abraham's bosom is where Abraham is – Paradise and Heaven (Heb 12:23).
 - b. Regardless of his poverty, poor Lazarus had a royal chariot with servants!
 - c. Christ the great Bridegroom sends His servants to take care of His bride.
 - d. "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" is a rather Scriptural song of a Christian's hope.
 5. The angels are fiery spirits created for a wedding present to serve (Heb 1:7,14).
- E. The last day you get a glorified body, immortal and incorruptible (I Cor 15:35-57).
1. It will be the body you had on earth – but altered by resurrection and glorification.
 2. Job knew he would get his flesh and eyes back in the resurrection (Job 19:25-27).
 3. Both righteous and wicked receive their bodies back for the duration of eternity.
- F. Death is described as being gathered to your fathers or people – a family reunion!
1. Consider great saints who were gathered at death (Gen 15:15; 25:8; 35:29; 49:33).
 2. The gathering is clearly distinct from their bodies being buried far from relatives.

3. Consider similar language of our Lord gathering His saints together (II Thess 2:1).
 4. The wicked are gathered to their fathers – final blackness (Ps 49:19; II Pet 2:17).
 5. These are not figurative words, for heaven has the elect's spirits (Heb 12:22-24).
 6. David was confident he would go to see his son that the Lord killed (II Sam 12:23).
- G. This incredible blessing is by appointment of your Husband's Father (I Thess 5:9-11).

Christ's Gift Changes Things

- A. Paul warned we walk by faith and not by sight and the superiority of eternal things.
1. When considering the blessed reality of death, he warned us to walk by faith.
 2. When weighing life's troubles, he said eternal things are superior (II Cor 4:17-18).
- B. If we think our marriage to Christ is only here, we are most miserable (I Cor 15:19).
- C. We face death with hope and comfort rather than hopeless sorrow (I Thess 4:13-18).
- D. Our degree of confidence and hope and boldness in death is based on faithfulness.
1. Peter described an abundant entrance to heaven for diligent elect (II Pet 1:5-11).
 2. Paul counted all things loss and dung in hope of a blessed death (Phil 3:8-11).
 3. Given our knowledge of death, we should apply our hearts to wisdom (Ps 90:12).
 4. A blessed death is only for saints (Num 23:10; Ps 116:15; Is 57:1-2; Rev 14:13).
 5. Paul's life purpose was to labor to be accepted of him here or there (II Cor 5:9).

Conclusion:

1. The blessings, promises, pleasures, and rewards are only for those with the fruit of righteousness.
2. Almighty God will examine all guests and reject those without a proper garment (Matt 22:8-14).

For Further Study:

1. He Is Altogether Lovely (long sermon outline) ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/bible/christ/he-is-altogether-lovely.php>.
2. Death Declared, Defied, and Destroyed ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/death-declared-defied-destroyed.pdf>.
3. Death of the Righteous ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/death-of-the-righteous-redo-12-30-2017.pdf>.
4. Eternal Life Is a Gift ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/eternal-life-is-a-gift.pdf>.