

Pastor Kelly Sensenig

It's inevitable. We are all going to die. Sooner or later death comes to all of us, in spite of the many years we've had on earth, in spite of the good times and struggles we have passed through, in spite of our service and work that we have accomplished for the Lord, and in spite of our family and friends that we have close ties or bonds with in this life. Death is a sure thing. It eventually comes to all of us; some sooner than others, but in time, we all die.

Job 14:1-2 states this fact:

"Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down (a fading flower): he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not" (a fleeing shadow).

These two illustrations of a fading flower and fleeing shadow speak of the brevity of life. There is a finality about human death. We slowly but inevitably move from the cradle to the casket. We can't escape death. We might try to avoid it and stay healthy and busy in life, so we might not think about it, but lurking in the corner of our mind is the reality that we are all going to die. We may attend a funeral thinking that something like this will never happen to us, but in reality, it will happen to us. We might be the next one to go. We

may be the next one to die and depart from this life into the life beyond. None of us are exempt from death. Unless Jesus Christ returns for His beloved Church, someday our body will stop breathing and we will enter into the next life.

Are you ready to die? Do you know how to die? Are you prepared to experience death and how will you face it when it comes knocking at your door? The Bible, God's Word, gives us various instructions on how to die. This should not surprise us since the Bible touches every area and phase of our lives – even death (2 Tim. 3:16-17). I think these God-given Bible instructions will be helpful to you and give you the hope that you can have regarding eternal life with God in Heaven and the necessary help that you will need during the days and hours that lead up to your death. God's Word instructs us, not only how to live, but how to die. We don't have to die without God's hope and assistance. We certainly don't have to die alone. We can die experiencing God's presence and promises in our hearts.

As a young pastor, I remember attending a funeral service where an elderly and well-seasoned pastor was preaching a sermon to those who were left behind. I was listening intently for I had never performed a funeral. Prior to the message, I was watching every move of the pastor, how he dealt with the people and interacted with them, when and how he prayed for them. I learned some valuable lessons as a young pastor on this day. However, it was his message that left a lasting impression upon me, at least one sentence in his message. At one point he calmly said, "One of us sitting in this room will be next."

I was somewhat stunned when hearing this statement, thinking it might be too straightforward, but the veteran pastor was right and he was preparing us for the reality that death eventually comes to everyone. Yes, "One of us will be next." Is it you? Has your time come? Is death knocking on your door? Have you been told that you only have so much time to live? Perhaps you are older and have enjoyed many years on earth. Maybe you are younger, middle-aged, or in the prime of your life but you have been given a medical diagnosis that confirms your time on earth is limited.

One of the certainties of life is death. This may sound like a paradox but it is true. The shadow of the tomb can be seen hovering over the cradle. When death comes calling at our door, we will have to answer the call no matter what age we are or how long we have lived on earth. In some cases, we receive this news from the doctor: “You only have one week to live.” You have six months to live.” Of course, you know your body and realize that something is happening that you will not recover from and that your time on earth is limited. At one point you must face the reality of your own death.

During our lifetime we have seen many others die never really thinking that our time would come. But it has finally come. It’s here. How do you face death? How do you deal with your impending and imminent death? What should be your reaction when you are walking the last mile of your way? What should you be thinking about when you know that your time is short and the sun is setting on your life? The last mile of the way is an expression that means we’re on the last leg of a journey or in the last stage of our life here on earth. It signifies the end is near and in sight. There comes a time when everyone knows this and must face their date with death.

There is an old church hymn that speaks of “The Last Mile of the Way.” It is directed primarily to Christians who have expressed personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It gives them the assurance of entering their heavenly home when they have traveled the last mile of their journey on earth.

“When I’ve gone the last mile of the way,
I will rest at the close of the day;
And I know there are joys that await me,
When I’ve gone the last mile of the way.”

The very first sermon I preached as a teen was entitled: “The Clock is Ticking.” I mentioned how the clock of life is winding down for all of us and we must be prepared for death. At one point, we will all find ourselves traveling the last mile of the way since death comes to all of us. There comes a time in everyone’s life that they must face the reality of death and the end of their days here on earth.

Perhaps you are on your deathbed. Maybe you have some time left but you sense and know that the time of your departure is at hand. You can sense the sun is setting on your life and your days on earth are coming to an end here on earth. As you read this little booklet, or perhaps a loved one is reading it to you, I want to share something with you that is very reassuring.

The Bible tells you how to face death. It gives you CERTAINTY regarding your eternal destiny and dwelling place. It informs you that you can experience God's dying GRACE and PEACE as you pass through the valley of the shadow of death. Finally, it tells you how you can end your life in TRIUMPH through submitting to God's will and resting in His promises. The Christian view of death provides a future that is filled with hope. As a pastor, I have watched Christians who were on the brink of eternity and how they possessed a sparkle in their eyes and a smile on their face, when I read the promises of Scripture to them.

Herbert Vander Lugt said:

"Christians really do face death differently. When you believe what the Bible says, you don't end up in a dark, foreboding canyon of hopelessness. The Scriptures give light in the valley!"

How can I prepare myself for death or the last mile of the way?

Let me share with you five important end-of-life preparations.

I. Realize that Jesus is the only way to Heaven.

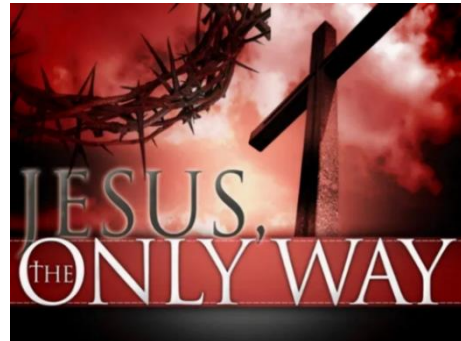
The Bible teaches that physical death is not the termination of a person's existence. It is a departure from one sphere of existence to another that is just as real (Luke 16:23; John 14:1-3). What each one of us must determine before we die is that Jesus is the only way of entrance into Heaven and acceptance before God.

John 14:6

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way (the only pathway to God and Heaven), the truth (the only true and trustworthy way as opposed to untrue ways), and the life (the actual source of spiritual and eternal life): no man cometh

unto the Father (into the Father's heavenly home and abode), but by me" (only through Jesus Christ – His death and resurrection).

Salvation is in a Person (Jesus Christ). If you accept this Person as your own Savior, then you have salvation (deliverance from hell). The Lord Jesus is not just one of many ways. He is the only Way to Heaven. The Bible does not teach pluralism (all ways lead to Heaven). No person enters Heaven except through Jesus Christ.



1 Timothy 2:5

"For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."



A mediator is literally a "go-between" (one who intervenes between two). The way to God's presence is not by trying to obey the Ten Commandments, following the Sermon on the Mount or the Golden Rule, it's not by taking sacraments or participating in church ordinances (baptism, Eucharist), or being a

church membership. Jesus Christ is the only "go-between" or mediator between sinful man and a holy God. Nothing else can give us acceptance in the presence of God and eternal life in Heaven.

Many come to the end of their life and they are religious but not right before God. Their sins are not forgiven. This is because they have always sought to achieve forgiveness and salvation through a particular church, its religious ordinances, which supposedly transfer God's grace into their life. Instead of relying on Jesus Christ alone to bring them complete forgiveness and salvation, many rely on taking sacraments or the Mass, and they place their faith in religious ceremonies, instead of actually placing faith in Jesus Christ.

Trying to get to Jesus Christ through religious rituals and observances (eating something or doing something) or praying to Mary and other saints, is not a true expression of faith in Christ alone for one's salvation. For many today, religious rituals and observances become the mediator between God and man – not Christ alone.

Then too, many think they must offer God good works so that He will accept them in the end and give them a home in Heaven. All of these things keep people from expressing faith alone in Jesus Christ alone to be their Savior. Instead of trusting or relying on Christ to take them to Heaven, many people are actually relying on their church affiliations, religious observances, and good works. Many religious and even non-religious people actually believe that their good works or deeds act as a “mediator” between God and man – not Christ alone.

Charles Spurgeon once said:

“One might better try to sail the Atlantic in a paper boat than to get to heaven on good works.”

This is because Jesus is the only “mediator” between God and man and the Bible says we cannot be saved by our good works for salvation is “Not of works, lest any man should boast” (Eph. 2:9).



Many people have false hopes about going to Heaven and what lies beyond death's door. They think they are going to end up in Heaven but they are not saved and therefore they enter hell after they die. This is a sad reality. At this point, I must be very honest with you. If you have not placed your faith alone in Christ alone to be your Savior, then your destiny will consist of a ruinous awakening in hell. Don't be deceived. You can encounter roadblocks that might deceive you and keep you out of Heaven. The truth is that we don't need anything but Jesus Christ to save us and bring us into Heaven.

Again, Jesus said, “I am the way” (John 14:6) – not the Catholic, Lutheran, Episcopal, or Baptist Church, not the sacraments, good deeds, or anything

else. All the religious rituals, observances, and good works a person must do throughout the course of their lifetime on earth so they can go to Heaven, act as roadblocks, which get in the way of an individual expressing faith in Christ alone to be their Savior from hell. Genuine faith in Christ is not expressed through sacraments, baptism, Mass, or any religious observances, it is expressed directly in Jesus Christ alone, since salvation only comes through Jesus Christ. The pipeline of our faith must go directly to Jesus Christ or else it cannot be faith in Christ alone.

Acts 4:12

“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”

There is no salvation without Jesus Christ and there is no salvation in anything or anyone else but Christ. He is the exclusive Savior. A “name” stands for who a person is and what He has done. Christ has done everything for us to get us to Heaven. All we must do is believe in His death and resurrection and embrace Him as our Savior. The most wonderful thing about dying for believers who know Christ as their Savior is that they can claim the promise of eternal life, living with Jesus in Heaven, when they pass from this earth and into the next life.

For some reading this booklet, you may never have understood the significance of Christ’s death and resurrection on your behalf. Let me briefly share this with you by addressing both the bad and good news. Let’s start with the bad news.



The Bible clearly and unmistakably teaches that “all have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). This means that we have all missed the mark of God’s moral perfection. “God is light, and in him is no darkness at all” (1 John 1:5). This means that God is absolutely pure and holy in His eternal being. For this reason, He cannot except sin and sinners in His presence. We cannot live with Him in Heaven as a sinner for this would offend His holiness.



A righteous and respectful judge could not let someone who broke the law go free. Think of it this way. If God would accept sinners in His presence, He would cease from being an infinitely holy and righteous God. Therefore, His character of justice and righteousness demands that sin and sinners be judged and

experience His righteous wrath against sin. God's judgment is just because the judgment is based upon what people did (Rev. 20:12) and rejected (Rom. 1:20; 2:14-16). It is also based upon the seriousness of sin which has offended God's perfect righteousness. Habakkuk 1:13 says, "*Thou art* of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity." The immensity of our sin against a holy God cannot be overstated.

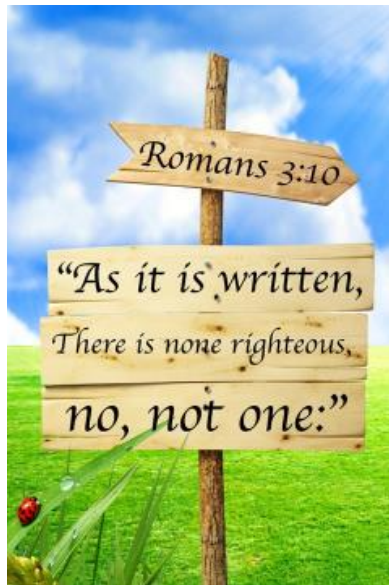
So the bad news begins like this: "But there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not" – that has not sinned (Ecc. 7:20). For this reason, the entire world of mankind has "become guilty before God" (Rom. 3:18). This includes you! We are all sinners who have missed the mark of God's perfect holiness and righteous character. This is God's record of our lives that we must accept. No matter how good we might think we have been, we fall short of God's perfect standard of righteousness, which means that God does not see us as being righteous at all, but only as sinners.

Romans 3:10

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one."

Romans 3:12

"They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one."



This is looking at people from God's viewpoint. God is perfectly righteous and sinless.

This means that God sees imperfect people as being unrighteous sinners who have missed His standard of perfect righteousness.

God views our good deeds through the prism of imperfection – they are as filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6).

According to God's reckoning, in our unsaved state we are all unrighteous sinners (Rom. 3:10, 12, 23). This means our good deeds do not change our unrighteous and sinful standing and status before a holy God. In fact, when we are not one of God's children, He views our good deeds through the prism of imperfection and therefore "we are all as an unclean thing, and all of our righteousnesses (our good deeds) are as filthy rags" (Isa. 64:6). In short, God does not see us as a good person, doing good deeds, but as a bad person doing bad deeds. What we think is good is not good in God's eyes because we have offended a perfectly holy and righteous God. Everything we do, even the seemingly good things, is in some way tainted by sin. Unsaved people have sinful inclinations and motives for doing even good deeds, whether it is to merit God's favor, or promote their own pride and personal agenda in life.

Isaiah 59:2 illustrates our separation from God in this way: "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid *his* face from you, that he will not hear." Most people do not realize they are totally separated from a perfectly holy and righteous God.



Therefore, many think they can earn or merit their salvation through doing commendable acts of goodness. But the Bible tells a different story about the human race.

Since we are all unrighteous sinners separated from a holy God, Romans 6:23 goes on to say that the “wages of sin is death.” The wages are something that we have earned and deserved as sinners which is spiritual death, separation from God in hell forever. However, the good news is that Jesus bore the “wages” (penalty) for our sins on the cross so we don’t have to pay for our sins in eternal judgment, separated from God’s presence in Hell.

“The clock of life is wound but once
And no man has the power
To tell just when the hands will stop,
At late or early hour.
To lose one’s wealth is sad indeed.
To lose one’s health is more.
To lose one’s soul is such a loss
That no man can restore.”



Now comes the good news! After finding out about the bad news, it makes the good news that much better! God’s desire is that you might live with Him forever in Heaven. The Bible says God is “not willing that any should perish (in hell), but that all should come to repentance” (2 Pet. 3:9). This is good news! This means that God does not want you to end up in hell facing His wrath and justice because of your sins. Instead, He wants to extend to you His love, grace, and mercy, which is the other side of His character. For this reason, the Heavenly Father sent His Son (Jesus Christ) into the world to suffer and die on the cross. On the cross Jesus paid the penalty or wages for your own sins, suffering God’s wrath on your behalf, so you can be rescued from the penalty of sin, so you don’t have to live eternally separated from God but in the presence of God within Heaven.

John 3:16

“For God so loved the world (the greatest Lover), that he gave his only begotten Son (the greatest sacrifice), that whosoever believeth in him should

not perish (the greatest deliverance), but have everlasting life” (the greatest hope).

Yes, God loves you and sent His only Son (Jesus Christ) to die in your place on the cross. Through placing our personal belief of faith in Christ’s death and resurrection to save us from hell, we can claim the promise of eternal life, which ultimately means that you will spend eternity with God in Heaven.

Elsewhere, the Bible teaches that “Christ died for your sins” (1 Cor. 15:3) which means he suffered and died on the cross on behalf of you. He took the judgment and wrath of God that you deserved, the penalty, fine, and wages that you deserved for your sins (Rom. 6:23). He then was buried and rose again the third day.



1 Corinthians 15:3-4 gives us the complete Gospel story when it states “that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures (paying sin’s penalty on your behalf); “And that he was buried (proving the finality of Christ’s death), and that he rose again the third day (providing assurance that the Father accepted His sacrifice on the cross) according to the scriptures.”

This is the Gospel or good news! Jesus died to save us from hell by incurring the wrath of God on our behalf. When we place our faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, what Christ did for us through His death and resurrection to keep us out of hell, it’s then that the provisionary sacrifice of Christ’s death and resurrection is applied to our life. This results in the record of our sins being removed, it delivers us from God’s wrath because of our sins, and in return gives us with eternal life in Heaven forever.

2 Corinthians 5:21

“For he (Jesus) hath made him *to be* sin for us (judicially taking the penalty of our sins upon Himself), who knew no sin (Jesus was the pure, perfect, and priceless sacrifice on the cross); that we might be made the righteousness of God in him (that we could be cleansed of our sins and be made righteous and accepted in the presence of God).

THE GREAT EXCHANGE

I like to call this the “great exchange.” Jesus takes our sins upon Himself and dies the sinner’s death in our place, but through faith in Christ our sins are removed from our legal record before God, and we

are given a perfectly righteous standing before God and eternal life in Heaven.

God’s forgiveness of sins, salvation from hell, acceptance before God, and eternal life can be ours if we are willing to place our personal faith in the saving work of Jesus Christ, relying on Him alone to give us salvation from hell and eternal life.

Application Questions:

- Do you understand that Jesus is the only way to Heaven?
- Have you been placing your faith in church membership, your church affiliation, and your participation in the sacraments as the way to receive God’s grace, forgiveness, and entrance into Heaven?
- Do you now understand that it’s faith in Christ alone that brings you into a right relationship with God?
- Do you comprehend the message of the Gospel (good news)?
- Do you realize that God loves you?
- Do you know that the Father sent His Son to die on the cross for you, that Jesus rose from the dead, that He wants to save you from hell and give you eternal life with Him in Heaven?

A father was at the beach with his children when his four-year-old son ran up to him, grabbed his hand, and led him to the shore, where a seagull lay dead in the sand. “Daddy, what happened to him?” the son asked. “He died and went to Heaven,” the dad replied. The boy thought a moment and then said, “Did God throw him back down?” Well, there is much to learn about the afterlife. Seagulls are not one of them!

How can I prepare myself for death or the last mile of the way? Allow me to share with you another important end-of-life preparation.

II. Reconfirm your faith in Christ and Eternal Life

Martin Luther once said:

“Every man must do two things alone; he must do his own believing and his own dying.”

I must talk openly and frankly about the spiritual realities of the importance of faith in Christ as you face death. I have a deep conviction that people should be told the truth when they have a terminal condition and facing death. You see, faith in Christ makes a tremendous difference in the way a person views death. It gives them a tremendous hope and expectancy about the future.



There are many unsaved people today who are lost and going to hell. This is because they have never heard the Gospel or understood the meaning of the Gospel. Nor have they heard or understood that salvation comes through faith alone in Christ alone for one's salvation. UNSAVED

people need to express their personal faith in Christ alone for salvation, so they can CONFIRM and be assured that their faith is only resting in Christ to take them to Heaven.

Christians who know the end is near can make the necessary emotional adjustments and RECONFIRM that their faith continues to rest in Jesus Christ to grant them everlasting life in Heaven. This will be reassuring to their hearts and give them peace. We need to die knowing and being reassured that our faith in Christ is all that God requires to take us to Heaven.

Some people die in very strange and unexpected ways. Anthony Fernando, a twenty-one-year-old man living in Colombo, Sri Lanka, went fishing one day off the coast of the island. He had no idea he would never make it back alive. A giant forktail gar fish jumped out of the water and cut him on the neck with its tail. He bled to death before a fellow fisherman could get him to a hospital.

Lance Foster, a twenty-three-year-old student at the University of Kansas was studying at his desk one night. Little did he know he would be dead a few minutes later. Foster became thirsty and decided to walk down the hallway to get something to drink. He put his money in the machine, but the drink didn't come out. When he rocked the vending machine back and forth to get the can of soda, it fell on top of him. He died from internal injuries shortly thereafter.

Proverbs 27:1

“Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.”

Are you prepared to die? Sadly, there are many people traveling the last mile of the way who are unsure whether or not they have placed faith in Christ or what it really means to believe in Christ alone for salvation. Maybe they have been in traditional, liberal, mainline churches that hid the Gospel behind sacraments, rituals, and good works. People may not fully understand about faith alone in Christ for one's salvation. Sometimes it seems that people possess what I term as a “fuzzy faith.” They may be confused about what it means to believe in Christ alone for salvation. It's important to share the Gospel with these people and direct them to either confirm or reconfirm that their faith only rests in Jesus Christ for their eternal life and salvation. Let them know that they must express personal faith in Christ for everlasting life.

Jesus gave this promise in John 6:47:

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.”

1 John 5:11-12 echoes the same truth:

“And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; *and* he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.”

Salvation and eternal life is not found in religion, science, philosophy, or psychology. It is found only in Jesus Christ. When we transfer our personal belief or faith to Christ, Jesus comes to live within us and He gives to us eternal life. Eternal life resides in Jesus Christ alone (Col. 3:4; 1 John 5:20) and this is why we must express personal faith in Him to receive this

wonderful gift. The Bible says that “the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:23) which means that it’s only through the death and resurrection of Christ that a person can receive the free gift of eternal life and know they are going to live eternally with God in Heaven.

Dwight Lyman Moody said:

“Some day you will read in the papers that D.L. Moody of East Northfield, is dead. Don’t you believe a word of it! At that moment I shall be more alive than I am now; I shall have gone up higher, that is all, out of this old clay tenement into a house that is immortal—a body that death cannot touch, that sin cannot taint; a body fashioned like unto His glorious body. I was born of the flesh in 1837. I was born of the Spirit in 1856. That which is born of the flesh may die. That which is born of the Spirit will live forever.”

Every Christian that has invested his life in eternity can share that attitude toward Heaven. For those who have never heard the message before and who are traveling the last mile of the way, facing imminent death, you must come to the place where you will express personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, so you can be saved from hell and be given eternal life.

Ephesians 2:8-9 declares:

“For by grace (the expression of God’s kindness through Jesus Christ’s death on our behalf) are ye saved (from hell – the righteous expression of God’s wrath) through faith (faith in Christ alone); and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God (salvation is a free gift to receive with no payment): Not of works, lest any man should boast (salvation cannot be earned or merited through good works).

The Devil’s greatest deception within the human race is that people can go to Heaven through being good, doing penance, performing good deeds for others, living a good life, and trying to do their best. But the Bible has a different story. It tells us that salvation and acceptance before God has nothing to do with our good deeds and works. We are only saved by God’s grace, through Jesus Christ. Only those who have been saved by grace, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, will be able to sing these words someday:

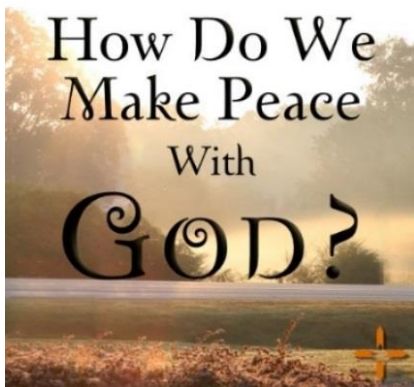
“Some day the silver cord will break,
And I no more as now shall sing;
But, O the joy when I shall wake
Within the presence of the King!
And I shall see Him face to face,
And tell the story, saved by grace:
And I shall see Him face to face,
And tell the story, saved by grace.”

Friend, will you express faith in Christ today, what He did for you (His death and resurrection) to provide you with forgiveness of sins, salvation from hell, and the free gift of eternal life?

Romans 10:13 says:

“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

Expressing faith in Christ means that an individual will personally call upon the Lord Jesus Christ to be his Savior. Faith is an expression of total reliance upon Jesus Christ to be your Savior. It involves transferring your faith to Jesus Christ and receiving the spiritual blessing of salvation and eternal life.



Some people who were on their deathbed have told me that they had “made their peace with God.” What does this really mean? For many this means that they try and confess all of their sins to God, so they can find forgiveness and hopefully go to Heaven after they die. I want to be very honest with you today. You do not go to Heaven by confessing your sins to God. How could you ever remember to confess all of them that you

have committed throughout your lifetime? What if you miss one? What some claim to be true peace is actually a false peace.

The Bible does not teach that we go to Heaven by confessing our sins in some generic fashion before God but by BELIEVEING on Jesus Christ to be our Savior, who through His death and resurrection provides us with the total

and complete forgiveness of all our sins forever, resulting in our acceptance before God and entrance into Heaven when we die.

Ephesians 1:7 declares:

“In whom we have redemption (freedom from God’s wrath and judgment) through his blood (the sacrifice of Christ on the cross), the forgiveness of sins (past, present, and future sins), according to the riches of his grace” (God’s kindness expressed to us through Jesus).

The only way we can have peace before God is through believing on Jesus Christ alone to provide us with forgiveness of sins which results in bringing us into a peaceful standing before God and a right relationship with Him.

Romans 5:1

“Therefore being justified by faith (faith alone in Christ alone), we have peace with God (a peaceful standing before God, acceptance, access into His presence) through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

This is the only way you can make peace with God. You must express faith in God’s Son, Jesus Christ, which results in God granting you the total forgiveness of sins and a justified (legal standing of righteousness) before God’s presence in Heaven.

I shared the Gospel with an Egyptian man who was on his deathbed. He told me that he was scared to die. I shared with him the simple Gospel plan of salvation through Jesus Christ alone. I asked if he wanted to by faith accept the free gift of salvation that Jesus offers to him. He affirmed that he wanted to be saved. So we prayed together and he called upon the Lord Jesus Christ to become his Savior. Afterward the man said to me, “Thank you, I am now at peace.” You see, true peace can only come to our heart when we place our faith in Jesus Christ, the One who died and rose again to save us from hell by forgiving all of our sins and promising us eternal life in Heaven.

Some reading this may have already expressed faith in Christ to be their Savior. Others may be unsure if they have really expressed personal faith in Christ. No matter what your situation might be, I have discovered that the best thing to do is to CONFIRM or RECONFIRM your faith in the Lord Jesus

Christ before you pass from this life into eternity. Make absolutely sure your faith is resting in Jesus Christ alone for your salvation. Your eternal destiny depends on it.

You can through a simple prayer remind the Lord Jesus Christ that you are totally relying upon the Gospel (His death and resurrection) to save you from hell and give you eternal life. The confirmation or reconfirmation of one's faith in Christ alone for salvation can bring great assurance, peace, and confidence when you are facing the last mile of your journey on earth. Remember this prayer?

“Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray Thee, Lord, my soul to keep.
And if I die before I wake,
I pray Thee, Lord, my soul to take.”

Lehman Strauss wrote:

“I see nothing wrong with this prayer, except that it might be uttered, as many prayers are, by someone who had not received the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour. But for those who are redeemed, it is an assuring experience to know that at death, whether it be day or night, you have committed your soul to God.”

For some who have already been saved, prayerful reconfirm that your faith rests only in Christ for eternal life will bring reassurance, blessing, and peace to your heart.

For others who have never expressed personal faith in Christ, if you believe on Christ today, you can confirm that your faith is now resting in Christ and this will bring a new joy of everlasting life and hope of Heaven into your heart, which you have never possessed before. Yes, we can commit our faith to the Lord Jesus Christ and know that He will take us to Heaven when we die.

Below is a prayer that you can pray that might help you to personally express your own faith in Jesus Christ to be your Savior. If you are unsure of your

salvation, if you are unsure that your faith rests only in Christ for your salvation and eternal life, then express faith in Christ right now.

A Prayer of Confirmation and Reconfirmation of Your Salvation:

“Dear Lord Jesus, thank You for what You have done for me. I am so grateful that You came to die on the cross for me, taking the judgment for my own sins, and that You rose again the third day to give me the promise of everlasting life in Heaven with You. As I finish out my days here on earth, I want to express personal faith in Christ right now and confirm that my faith is resting only in Jesus Christ to save me and give me eternal life. I will reconfirm that my faith is totally relying on Jesus Christ and completely resting in Jesus Christ to be my personal Savior. I will express my faith in You alone this day, and until the end of my days on earth, to grant me the free gift of salvation and eternal life. Thank You Lord for saving my soul and giving me the hope of eternal life. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

Application Questions:

- Have you confirmed or reconfirmed that your faith is relying only in Jesus Christ for your personal salvation?
- Do you know that you have peace before God through Jesus alone?
- Do you have the assurance in your own heart that you are going to Heaven when you die?
- Will you read and meditate through some of the promises that Jesus gave to you so that you can experience a true peace regarding death and the afterlife?

Below are some Bible verses that you can pray and meditate on which will provide you with hope, reassurance, and a peaceful outlook regarding your future destiny. When we confirm or reconfirm our faith in Christ, we can allow these blessed promises about eternal life to gladden our hearts and bring real peace into our souls.

John 3:15-16

“That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

John 6:37

“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”

John 6:47

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.”

John 10:28

“And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand.”

John 11:26

“And whosoever liveth (who is physically alive) and believeth in me (transfers their trust to Christ to be their Savior) shall never die (never die spiritually and be separated from God’s presence in hell). Believest thou this?”

1 John 5:11

“And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.”

Romans 6:23

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

Romans 8:38-39

“For I am persuaded (confident and sure), that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Philippians 4:7

“And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep (guard) your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

Habakkuk 3:18

“Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.”

Jesus gives us many promises that we can treasure and hide in our hearts as we travel the last mile of the way. The greatest promise is that He has given us the promise of eternal life and a peace that we can have knowing that we are saved from hell and going to Heaven when we die. Make them your own personal promises and God will grant you peace and rest as you pass through the valley of the shadow of death. Right now thank God for what He has done for you in saving your soul and giving you the promise of eternal life. You can express your thanks in these words:

“How can I say thanks for the things
You have done for me?
Things so undeserved yet You gave
To prove Your love for me.
The voices of a million angels
Could not express my gratitude.
All that I am, and ever hope to be
I owe it all to Thee!”

III. Rest in God’s sovereign plan for your life.



Psalm 90 was written by Moses and references the time when Israel was in the wilderness. Many were dying.

William McDonald captures what was happening: “Every morning a reporter comes to Moses’ tent with a fresh report of casualties. Deaths, deaths, deaths, and more deaths. Obituaries are the

commonest item of news, and the desert seems to be an expanding cemetery. Every time the people break camp, they leave another field of graves behind.”

Psalm 90:1-2 begins like this:

“Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou *art* God.”

In the midst of so much transience, mortality, and death, Moses finds relief in the eternal nature of God. God is always the same, His plans are always perfect, and we can find rest in His eternal plan for our lives. This is a comforting promise. Moses is basically saying that since God is eternal all generations of believers have found Him to be a protective shelter from the storms of life. This will also be true in the time of death as well. God will be our “dwelling place” (a hiding place of shelter and safety). Since God never changes, He will be our hiding place and shelter of provision in the time of our departure from this life into the next.

“I have found a hiding place when sore distressed,
Jesus, Rock of Ages, strong and true;
In a weary land I in His shadow rest,
He is my strength in all that I do.
Jesus, Rock of Ages let me hide in Thee,
Jesus, Rose of Sharon, sweet Thou art to me;
Lily of the Valley, Bright and Morning Star,
Fairest of ten thousand to my soul.”

Psalm 90:3 goes on to say:

“Thou turnest man to destruction (to grind to powder or dust); and sayest, Return, ye children of men” (our bodies return to the dust following death).

The point is this, God outlasts man. He creates him and then sees him return to dust or pulverized material of the earth. But God is eternal and unchanging and a constant home and refuge for His people even as they pass through the valley of the shadow of death.

Psalm 90:5-6 speaks of the brevity of life:

“Thou carriest them away as with a flood; they are *as* a sleep: in the morning *they are* like grass *which* groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth.”

The first illustration of death is a current of water that passes by quickly. As the torrent or current of water rushes through the riverbed and washes away everything in its path, so the timeless God removes the children of men from this earth with equal speed. We are here and then gone. Our time on earth passes by quickly.

The second illustration of death is compared to falling asleep, dreaming, and then waking up without you realizing or being conscience of the passing of time. In a similar way, our time on earth passes quickly (like a dream in the night) and then we come to our end. This is why we say, "I cannot believe where all the years have gone."

The third illustration of death is the grass in the spring rain. It is fresh and green in the morning, then fades and withers by evening because of the intense sun. As Spurgeon said, it is "sown, grown, blown, mown, gone." All of these illustrations portray how fast our time on earth passes by. Before we know it, death comes knocking at our door. Job 7:6 adds: "My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle..." Job 9:25 also says, "Now my days are swifter than a post (a runner): they flee away..."

Psalm 90:10 reveals this about the span of a person's life:

"The days of our years *are* threescore years and ten (70 years); and if by reason of strength *they be* fourscore years (80 years), yet *is* their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away."

The point in this Bible verse is not to set a maximum lifespan, but to present a context for the brevity of human life. No matter how long people live, it is inevitable that they will fly away to death. God has determined the length of a person's life. This verse emphasizes God's sovereign power and wisdom over people who are under divinely set limits. In short, God determines how long we live and when our time is up. God has a sovereign timing and place for your death. It's already set. We must learn to accept this and come to rest in God's providential purpose for the length and ending of our lives.

Psalm 90 reminds us of the shortness of our span of life on earth. Of course, God may decide to take someone earlier or later, but this should be used as a general time frame of someone's life on earth and a reminder of the brevity

of life and the certainty of death. Seventy or eighty years is a very short period of time when compared to eternity! Since our lives are comparatively short we should number our days and use them wisely (Ps. 90:12). God has planned the year, the day, the hour, and the minute we will pass from this life into the next. We must surrender to the sovereignty of God over the matter of our death and departure.

“Bow the knee; lift your eyes toward heaven
And believe the One who holds eternity.
And when you don't understand
The purpose of His plan,
In the presence of the King, bow the knee.”

Jesus had to one day face the end of His life as He hung on the cross. Sometimes we forget this. How Christ dealt with the ending of his life is important to us. It teaches us some valuable lessons on how to die. There is a right way to die. God's Word gives us a lesson on how to die! This is seen in the death of Jesus Christ and His last words upon the cross. Jesus died in submission to the providential plan of the Father.

Listen to the words of Jesus when He died on the cross and see how they relate to our own death and departure.

Luke 23:44-45

“And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst.”

The darkness represented the time when the sins of the world were placed upon Christ and the untold trillions of sins He took upon Himself during these dreadfully long hours, paying the necessary fine or penalty for every one of those sins that were committed against a holy and righteous God. Yes, this includes your sins and mine.

Jesus was the sin-bearer! But after His redemptive work was finished (John 19:30), Christ's very last words on the cross expressed His submission to the Father's right and timing over His death. At the close of His time on the cross,

He committed His spirit into the hands His Father and voluntarily yielded up His life.

Luke 23:46

“And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend (commit) my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.”



The way Jesus died or how He dealt with the last mile in the journey of His life on earth is very important. Are you READY to die as a Christian? Do you know HOW to die as a Christian? This may sound like a rather strange question to ask but for the believer in Jesus Christ we find some instruction in the Bible concerning how to die. There is a right way to die and in this section of our study we want to explore the correct way to die. These truths need to be embraced by those who already know Jesus Christ as Savior and who are contemplating death.

The Bible gives us some information on how to die. If Jesus does not return for His children, we will one day die! The Bible reveals that Jesus died with the right attitude, which was an attitude of submission to the Father's purpose and timing over His death. He committed His death and eternity into the hands of the Father in Heaven.

You might think that learning how to die seems very morbid. No, it's very practical. We must not only live in a Biblical fashion but also die in a Biblical fashion which means to submit to God's timing and will over our death and in doing so commend ourselves to God and His way. Like Christ, we must die in submission to God's sovereign plan over our death. Dying with the right attitude is important. He said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Jesus died submissively. He died in submission to the Father's will. He knew it was His time to go and He was willing to accept it. He was not going to say, "Why Father, why now? Can't you wait a little longer." No, possessed the attitude of submission to the Father's purpose, providence, and particular timing over His death. He knew that everything was in the hands of the Father.

The word “commend” means to deposit, commit, entrust oneself to another. In a similar way, Paul said in 2 Timothy 1:12, “for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.” In salvation, we commit our faith to the Gospel, believing that Christ can save us from hell through His death and resurrection. In death, we commit our spirit to the Heavenly Father’s plan, purpose, and providence over our death. This means we entrust ourselves in God’s care and keeping, believing that He knows what is right and best for us, including our time of departure from this life.

Like Jesus, Stephen prayed a similar prayer at the time of his death when he said, “And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit” (Acts 7:59). When we commend ourselves to God, we are entrusting ourselves to His providential plan, His authority over our death, and His care and provision for us as we face our time of death. You can be sure that God will be there for you as you pass through the valley into eternity.

“Be not dismayed whate'er betide,
God will take care of you;
Beneath His wings of love abide,
God will take care of you.

Through days of toil when heart doth fail,
God will take care of you;
When dangers fierce your path assail,
God will take care of you.

God will take care of you,
Through every day, o'er all the way;
He will take care of you,
God will take care of you.”

How should a Christian die? The same way Jesus died! I don’t mean we must die on a cross but that we must die with a right attitude, the attitude of being submissive to God’s way, His sovereign purpose, and timing over the time span of our lives on earth and when our time comes to die. Job submitted to God’s sovereignty when he said in Job 13:15, “Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.”

As a pastor, I've seen many Christians slowly dying due to age-related illnesses and other injuries and symptoms that lead to death. Sometimes the process was long and drawn out. As I ministered to them and listened to them, I have discovered that not all Christians die in a submissive and sanctified manner. In other words, not all Christians face death in a holy and victorious manner because they have not availed themselves to God's amazing grace and surrendered to the sovereignty of God as it relates to the timing of their death. When we surrender to God's sovereignty and therefore experience His dying grace and peace in our hearts, we will die in a sanctified or holy manner that is pleasing to God.

Of course, each of us has an innate desire to live as long as possible. This is natural. But we must surrender to God's sovereign timing of our death. We must realize there is no such thing as an "untimely death" when it comes to God's providential purpose (Eph. 1:11). When God calls us, we must surrender to His call and accept it as part of God's perfect plan for our lives.

We sometimes say, "But if we would have done this or that than things would be different and we would not be facing death." We also reason, "If only we had called the doctor sooner. If only there would not have been ice on the highway we would not have been in an accident. If only we had noticed the lump sooner." "If only... (fill in the blank)

Erwin Lutzer said:

"Let me encourage you to take those 'if onlys' and draw a circle around them, then label the circle, 'The providence of God.' The Christian believes that God is greater than our 'if onlys.' His providential hand encompasses the whole of our lives, not just the good days but the 'bad' days too. We have the word *accident* in our vocabulary; He does not."

Job 14:5 recorded long ago:

"Seeing his days *are* determined (our days upon earth), the number of his months *are* with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass."

Job observed that we cannot live beyond our appointed time on earth. Our time of departure is in God's hands. Our death is not an accident but an

appointment. God in His sovereignty and infinite wisdom determined the exact time allotment for each one of us. God has the complete oversight of our death. Some of us are younger when we die and others die at a ripe old age. We can be sure that if the Father pays attention to the death of every sparrow (Matt. 10:29), then surely He will be concerned about the death of His saints and come to their aid during their time of departure.

When Christ commended His spirit into the hands of the Father He was committing Himself to God's sovereign purpose, into God's loving care and keeping, and committing His future into the hands of the loving Father. All of this means that Christ died with the right attitude for He knew that He also would die at the right time and in the right way in accordance with the Father's providential plan.

Now let's apply this to our own time of death. We must also die with a right attitude if we want to be like Jesus. I must die possessing a submissive attitude to the Heavenly Father, acknowledging that He is in charge of our death, so we can turn the entire event over to Him. Yes, we can be like Jesus when we die, commending, entrusting, and committing ourselves to God's plan and provision for us as we face death and find rest for our departing spirit.

"Here the dearest of ties we must sever,
Tears of sorrow are seen every day;
But no sickness, no sighing forever
When I've gone the last mile of the way."

At one point, we will all be traveling on "The Last Mile of the Way." Perhaps today your name will be called. If Jesus does not return for His Church, we will all most certainly walk down this path and finish the final mile of our journey on earth. But are we ready to submit ourselves to God when that time comes even as Jesus did?

In Luke 22:42, while Jesus was in the garden, He prayed:
"Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done."



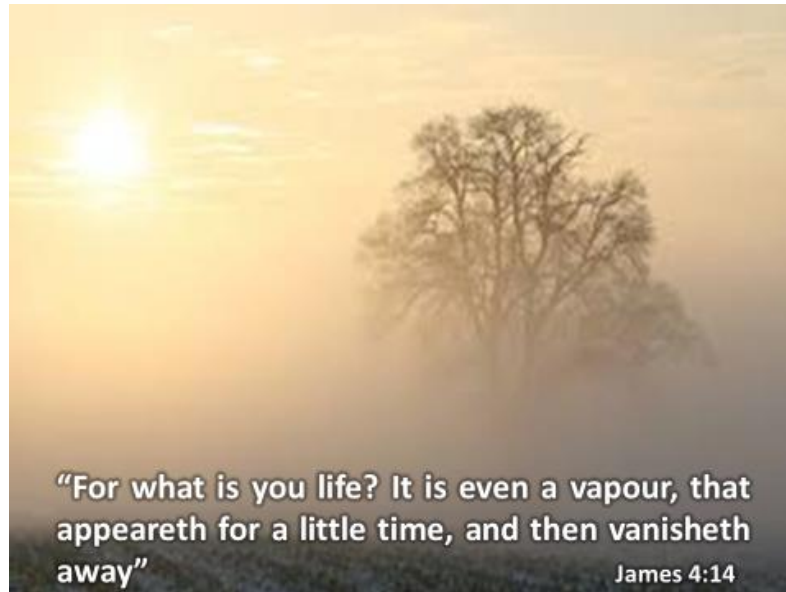
You will notice that Jesus submitted Himself to the Father's plan for His death while He was in the garden, even before His time came to die upon the cross. He said, "Nevertheless." In the Garden, Jesus actually turned His spirit over to the Father's will and purpose which was for Him to die on Calvary's cross. He prepared for His own death ahead of time by

submitting to the Father's will. Then, when the time actually came, and at the end of the ordeal, He openly yields His Spirit over to the Father's plan for His death.

Yes, Jesus had already submitted to God's plan for His death before the event actually took place. There is an important lesson for us. We should not wait till the end to commit ourselves to God's timetable of death for our lives, but by faith commit ourselves to His perfect plan and schedule beforehand. It's much easier to submit to God's providence over our death even before death's door closes on us. As we see the time approaching, we should commend our spirit and death to God, to His way and purpose, and we will find rest and peace for our souls.

Like Jesus, we should get ready before the end comes! Turn your death over to the One Who is in charge of it and rest in His way for your life. If we commit ourselves to God's "death plan" for our lives and rest in it, we will be ready to say as Jesus did when the time came, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Perhaps your name will be called soon. You may be next! Are you ready to commit yourself to the Father's will over your life? Beloved, take heart, God will see you through the valley and you can die as Jesus did with a submissive heart and attitude.

I was talking to a pastor friend of mine one day. He had suffered a heart attack and had a triple bypass. He came out of the operation with no damage to the heart and a new start and lease on life. We were discussing together how short life is in comparison to eternity and the nature of our frailties in these present bodies. Our bodies are weak and we have no guarantee that we will be here tomorrow.



James 4:14

“Whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapour (mist or fog), that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.”

We have all seen the fog or mist that appears and then disappears after the morning sun breaks through it and it quickly is gone and no longer seen. James compares our lives to this type of mist or fog. Our life on earth when compared to eternity is very short. As the mist or fog disappears quickly, so does our lifespans on earth. Elsewhere the Bible states that our days on earth pass away like smoke (Psalm 102:3). Our life is like the wind which is here and gone (Job 7:7).

We have no guarantees on tomorrow for once again the Bible says, “Boast not thyself of to morrow for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth” (Proverbs 27:1). We should never be overconfident of living a long life. We have no guarantees. There is not one of us who can be sure that we will be on earth tomorrow at this same time. Today may be our last day! We are not in charge of our lifespan on earth. God is! That is why we are to say, “If the Lord will.”

James 4:15 goes on to say:

“For that ye *ought* to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.:

We don't know about tomorrow but God does for He holds it in His hands! If it means death, then so be it. We can take our last breath knowing that every breath we take is a precious gift that comes from God (Acts 17:25), the One who loves His children with an everlasting love. We can take our last breath knowing that "our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased" (Ps. 115:3).

Beloved, we must make our days count for God and then submit ourselves to God, His plan for our lives in relationship to both life and death.

Before his death John Calvin said:

"Thou, Lord, bruise me. But I am abundantly satisfied since it is from Thy hand."

Even those of us who are left behind must submit to God's sovereignty over the death of their loved ones. I know various Christians who have struggled with God's timing over the death of a loved one, whether it was a husband or wife, or one of their children. They found it difficult to accept and never seemed to experience peace about the departure to Heaven. But when we submit to the Father's will like Jesus did, as His death was impending, we can find closure and comfort instead of experiencing resentment. This is true not only for ourselves, who can sense when our death is approaching, but also for those Christians who are left behind and struggling with the death of a loved one.

On his deathbed, British preacher Charles Simeon smiled brightly and asked the people gathered in his room, "What do you think especially gives me comfort at this time?" When they all remained silent, he exclaimed, "The creation! I ask myself, 'Did Jehovah create the world or did I?' He did! Now if He made the world and all the rolling spheres of the universe, He certainly can take care of me. Into Jesus' hands I can safely commit my spirit!"

Hudson Taylor, founder of China Inland Mission, in the closing months of his life said to a friend, "I am so weak. I can't read my Bible. I can't even pray. I can only lie still in God's arms like a little child and trust."

Dearly beloved, you can trust God. He knows what He is doing. Commit yourself and death in to the hands of a loving Heavenly Father, believing that His will is perfect, His timing is perfect, and that His care and provision over your life will also be perfect. Remember that God is sovereign over your life. He is in charge – not you. Yield to His way over your life and find peace. “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit” (Luke 23:46).

Someone said:

“Jesus died like a child asleep in his Father’s arms.”

Jesus committed Himself to His Father’s will and purpose, to His loving care over His life, and placed His future in the Father’s hand. Jesus died victoriously because He surrendered to the Father’s plan, rested in this plan, and You can die victorious too. We don’t have to die with anger and bitterness. Yes, Jesus turned Himself and His death over to the Father. You must do the same, not only for yourself, but also for others that you have loved and which God has chosen to take.

If you want to be like Jesus, then you must submit to God’s providential plan as you face death. Each one of us must learn to accept our own death and also the death of our loved ones as coming from the Lord’s hand. Many times we only think about ourselves instead of our loved one, who is facing death. When God’s time comes to take one of our loved family or friends home to Heaven, we would never wish them back or become disillusioned and angry at God for taking them from us. In fact, when you know where someone is you have not really lost them!

Dearly beloved, we must bow before the God who is in control of death and dying. We must be willing to die with the right commitment to God’s providence over our lives and also surrender our death and the death of our loved ones to the sovereignty of God.

John Wesley, the founder of Methodism said: “Our people die well.” These words may sound cold and out of place but they remind us that we can die victoriously by commending our spirit to the Father and submitting to His sovereignty over our time of death. Dying well is a mark of a Christian’s robust faith in the Lord.

“Soon I shall hear the call from Heaven's portals
'Come home, My child, it's the last mile you must trod.'
I'll fall asleep and wake up in God's new heaven,
For I'm sheltered in the arms of God.
So let the storms rage high
The dark clouds rise,
They don't worry me,
For I'm sheltered safe within the arms of God.
He walks with me
And naught of earth shall harm me,
For I'm sheltered in the arms of God!”

Application Questions

- Are you willing and ready to commit your death into the hands of the loving Father?
- Will you be like Jesus as you face your death?
- Will you die in submission to the Father's providential timing and plan regarding your death?
- Are you willing to accept your physical condition and put the future in God's hands?
- Will you say, “Nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done?”

The 18th-century English pastor, Rowland Hill, lived to a ripe old age. In fact, he outlived most of his friends. Missing them very much and anxious to join them on the other side, he grew more homesick for Heaven with each passing day. It seemed so long since some of them had gone to glory that he would often jokingly say with a wink, "Do you think they'll remember me?" It was not unusual for him to go to some other believer well along in years with this request: "If you should go before I do, give my love to everyone. Be sure to tell them that old Rowley, although staying behind a little while, is coming on as fast as he can."

“Soon I shall hear the call from Heaven's portals
'Come home, My child, it's the last mile you must trod.'
I'll fall asleep and wake up in God's new heaven,
For I'm sheltered in the arms of God.”

IV. Rely in God's spiritual provision

God gives His own children dying grace and peace. As a pastor, I have witnessed this over and over again as God's people came to the end of their journey in this life.

In 2 Corinthians 12:9, Paul speaks of God's provisional grace:

"And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness (strengthening and supplying grace – *it is adequate and enough to help you though your trials including dying*). Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (sanctifying grace - *it enables us to reach the goal of maturity and possess a right attitude during our trials, including the timing of our death*).

God did not give Paul any explanations; instead, He gave him a promise: "My grace is sufficient for thee." We do not live on explanations - we live on promises! God promises that His strengthening, enabling, sustaining, and comforting grace is showered upon our lives during the time of our infirmity or illness and it will certainly be available for us up to the time of our death. In other words, God promises to give us dying grace as much as He does living grace. God's grace is sufficient for you, no matter what you are facing or passing through, life or death.

Hebrews 4:16

"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

In our time of greatest need, as we are facing death, we can be sure that God's mercies and gracious help will be there to supply us with everything we need. God will be there for us as we walk the last mile of the way.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon said:

"Brother, you do not want dying grace till dying moments. What would be the good of dying grace while you are ye alive? A boat will only be needful when you reach a river. Ask for living grace, and glorify Christ thereby, and then you shall have dying grace when the time comes."

Some believers who thought they could not face death discovered that they had the strength to die gracefully and filled up with God's amazing grace as they passed through the valley.

“Jesus loves me this I know
For the Bible tells me so,
Little ones to Him belong,
They are weak but He is strong.”

The word “sufficient” means that it is not only enough, but more than enough to keep us spiritually stable and strong as we pass from this life into the next. We need to keep “looking unto Jesus” (Heb. 12:2) as we walk the last mile of the way!

“Look at self and be distressed,
Look at others and be depressed,
Look at Jesus and you'll be at rest!”

Philippians 4:13 gives a similar promise:

“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”

Do you need to claim this promise today? Yes, we can do anything with the strength of Jesus Christ. Even die!

“God hath not promised skies always blue,
Flower strewn pathways all our lives through;
God hath not promised sun without rain,
Joy without sorrow, peace without pain.

But God hath promised strength for the day,
Rest for the labor, light for the way,
Grace for the trials, help from above,
Unfailing sympathy, undying love.”

Beloved, we don't have to be overcome with fear and anxiety as we face death since God has said that He will renew our inner spirit when our body is dying and death is looming over us.

2 Corinthians 4:16 says:

“For which cause (our suffering and trials) we faint not (we are not overcome with crippling grief, discouragement, and dismay); but though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day.”

Let us remember that it is the outward body that is perishing or dying. Our inward spirit (where God communicates to us) lives on and can experience God’s inner refreshment as we face death. This is because God communicates His presence, peace, and promises to us so that we can be “renewed.” This word means to be made new or to cause to be changed. God keeps working with us on the inside even though our body is no longer working on the outside! We must remember this as our body slows down and heads toward the grave.

When John Quincy Adams was eighty years old, a friend said, “How is John Quincy Adams?” He replied, “John Quincy Adams himself is very well, thank you; but the house he lives in is sadly dilapidated. It is tottering on its foundations. The walls are badly shattered, and the roof is worn. The building trembles with every wind. And I think that John Quincy Adams will have to move out of it before long. But he himself is very well.”

Yes, “the inward man is renewed day by day.” It is true, we can be spiritually renewed, experiencing His inward supply of strengthening, sustaining, and soothing grace, so that we might become more like Christ up to the end of our journey on earth. As we travel the last mile of the way, God will be there for us working on the inside of us, supplying us with His grace and mercy. We need not fear. God will be there for us “day by day” and on the last day!

“Day by day, and with each passing moment,
Strength I find, to meet my trials here;
Trusting in my Father’s wise bestowment,
I’ve no cause for worry or for fear.
He Whose heart is kind beyond all measure
Gives unto each day what He deems best—
Lovingly, its part of pain and pleasure,
Mingling toil with peace and rest.

Help me then in every tribulation
So to trust Thy promises, O Lord,
That I lose not faith's sweet consolation
Offered me within Thy holy Word.
Help me, Lord, when toil and trouble meeting,
E'er to take, as from a father's hand,
One by one, the days, the moments fleeting,
Till I reach the promised land."

Application Questions:

- Have you claimed the promise of God's replenishing grace?
- Have you been experiencing God's inner renewal as you travel the last mile of the way?
- Will you open your heart to God, pray to Him, depend upon Him, and allow Him to minister His inner work of grace upon your soul?
- Do you believe that the strengthening grace of Jesus is enough while you experience your last days on earth?

V. Remember the promises God has given to you.

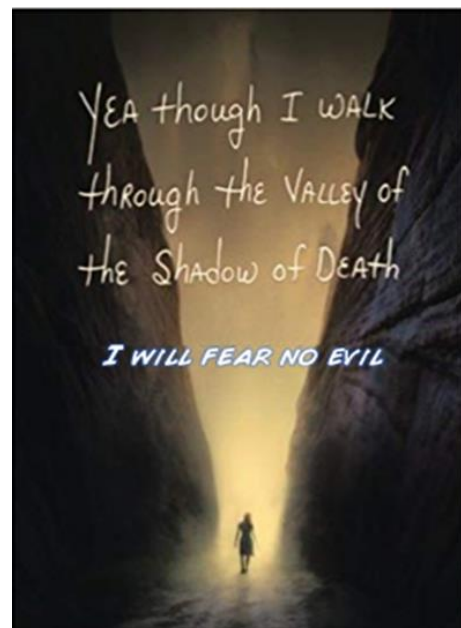
There are some specific promises given to every child of God that deal with Heaven and the afterlife. Remember, tarry at a promise and God will meet you there!

A. God's promises in the valley.

The beloved Psalm 23:4 says:

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

When David mentions the word "death" he was most certainly including the final struggle we must face in life, as God's children, which is death itself. It's called "the valley of the shadow of death."



➤ The protection of God in the valley – “I will fear no evil.”

As we pass through this valley which is the last mile of our journey upon earth, we can say as David voiced long ago: “I will fear no evil.” This wonderful truth of not fearing evil is brought in the imagery of a passing shadow that cannot harm us. Death’s shadow passes over us but cannot harm us. Why is this? David said “for thou art with me.” This means that God will protect us as we pass through the valley and travel the last like of our way. He has promised us His presence and protection through the valley.

Of course, from a New Testament perspective, this is based upon Jesus Christ and His sacrifice on the cross. God’s wrath and judgment has already been poured out on Jesus Christ. God’s only Son experienced separation from the Father and judgment in our place, while hanging on the cross, so we can pass through the valley unscathed. Think of it this way. Jesus passed through this valley on the cross, taking our actual judgment and death upon Himself, so we can confidently walk through the valley and have death’s shadow pass over us! Jesus experienced the real judgment, wrath, and hell associated with death for us, so that death cannot harm us. The judgment of death was poured out upon Christ so that the shadow of death could pass over us!

When we believe in Jesus Christ’s provision of salvation from death’s judgment (Heb. 9:27) we also receive the free gift of eternal life. It’s called, “everlasting life” (John 3:16; 36; 5:24; 6:47). If we are one of God’s children, who has received His wonderful gift of eternal life (Rom. 6:23), then we not need fear the time of death, the time when our spirit leaves our body. We can be assured that death cannot harm us for we will not pass into God’s judgment.

John 3:18

“He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”

Not condemned! No future judgment! Eternal life! Only glory by and by! This is the promise that every blood-washed believer in Christ can claim. We need not fear death for a shadow cannot harm us!

There was a day when Donald Grey Barnhouse was driving his children to the funeral of their mother. A semi-tractor trailer truck crossed in front of them at an intersection, momentarily casting a shadow on the car, and Barnhouse asked his children, "Would you rather be struck by the semi or the shadow?" "The shadow, of course," they replied. "That's what has happened to mother," said Barnhouse. "Mother's dying is only the shadow of death but the lost sinner is struck by the semi of death."

- The presence of God's comfort in the valley – "thy rod and thy staff they comfort me"

Beloved, God will give us the comfort, courage and strength we need when we pass through death's door into the next life. David is suggesting that when we come to the end of life's journey, we can experience God's presence in a wonderful way. As we pass through the veil and valley into the next life God will be there to comfort us and give us the courage we need ("thy rod and thy staff they comfort me").

I was in the hospital visiting one of my own parishioners. While walking through the hospital, I saw several people standing outside the waiting room in distress. As I got closer, I recognized one of them and greeted him. He told me that his father was "transitioning." I saw his mother in tears and gave her a hug and prayed that they would experience hope and peace in Jesus Christ. Later, I thought to myself that "transitioning" is a good word to use in describing what happens while we pass from this life into the next. If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, let me assure you that during your time of transitioning God will manifest His presence to you ("thou art with me") and for this reason there will be light, safety, and reassurance in the valley of death. Earlier David declared: "He restoreth my soul" (Ps. 23:3). God will be with us and restore us with His presence and healing touch.

"There's a light in the valley for me,
And no evil will I fear while my Shepherd is so near,
There's a light in the valley for me.
And in the valley He restoreth my soul."

When a person is born, he starts down a great canyon, and that canyon eventually leads into the valley of the shadow of death. We can sense when

the shadow of death is upon us, but how can we find comfort when we must take that final walk through the valley which leads into the next life? We must remember that there is light in the valley that brings hope and peace to our hearts. For in the midst of the valley, God will restore our soul! He will bring us His comfort and make the last mile of the way a journey of solace and peace.



How wonderful to rest in God's promise that He will comfort us and give us His peace as we pass through the final valley "for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me" (Ps. 23:4) Yes, in the time of death, the Psalmist declared, "Thou art with me." This speaks of the continual presence of God. This is a blessed reassurance. It's the

assurance that God will be there for us as we are dying and passing through this final valley or trial. God's promised presence is comforting and is experienced through the rod and staff imagery of the shepherd.

Someone once said:

"There are two things that every person will do alone. They will be born alone and they will die alone."

This may sound right but it's not true for the believer who is in Christ. They will not die alone. The believer in Jesus Christ is promised the Lord's presence and assistance in the time of death. The presence of the Shepherd means that He will be there for us and will guide, lead, and sustain us through the valley. We will not die alone.

The shepherd's armor consisted of his "rod" which was actually a club that was worn on the belt. It was the shepherd's rod that protected the sheep from the attack of wild animals. The rod or club is a symbol of God's protective care and provision over our lives as we pass through the valley of death. God will be there for us. You can count on it! Death cannot harm our

soul! He will keep us safe and free from spiritual harm. We will not be separated from Him.

The “staff” was a slender stick with a hook on one end. The shepherd would use his staff to tap on the ground and find the most solid ground. He wanted to be sure that the path was solid and safe for the sheep to walk upon. Also, if the sheep would fall into a ravine, beyond the shepherd’s reach, he would use this staff, twisting the hook into the wool of the sheep and lifting enough to enable it to climb out. The staff portrayed the shepherd’s desire to provide the sheep with safety, comfort, well-being, and guidance. In a similar way, God provides us with all the safety, comfort and care and guides our way as we pass through the valley of the shadow of death.

This is very wonderful! As God’s sheep, we are not alone, since our Shepherd is standing over us, comforting us, and guiding and protecting us as we pass through the final valley into life everlasting.

“Thou art with me.” God is with us and that is enough! He will be there for us as we travel the last mile of the way. You can count on it!

“We shall walk through the valley in peace,
We shall walk through the valley in peace;
If Jesus Himself will be our leader,
We shall walk through the valley in peace.”

- The promise of God’s city after the valley - “and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.”

After God’s presence in the valley comes the promise of eternity!

Psalm 23:6

“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.”

Even the Old Testament saints “looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker *is* God” (Heb. 11:10). David looked forward to a heavenly city and longed for this “house of the LORD” – to dwell with God

forever in the heavenly city prepared for him. At one point, David knew that he would be in God's presence forever within the promised heavenly city that God prepared for all of His beloved saints.

What do we learn from the beloved Psalm 23?

- The secret of a happy life - every NEED supplied. "The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want" (Psalm 23:1).
- The secret of a happy death - every FEAR removed. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me" (Psalm 23:4).
- The secret of a happy eternity - every DESIRE fulfilled. "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever" (Psalm 23:6).

"Precious Lord, take my hand,
Lead me on, let me stand,
I am tired, I am weak, I am worn;
Through the storm, through the night,
Lead me on to the light:
Take my hand, precious Lord,
Lead me home."

There are really only two things that we must learn – how to live and how to die. Psalm 23 provides the answer for both. When we have a personal relationship with God, who is our caring Shepherd (Psalm 23:1), we will find everything we need for life, death, and eternity!

"Lead me through the vale of shadows,
Bear me o'er life's fitful sea;
Then the gate of life eternal,
May I enter, Lord, with Thee."

A little girl returned home from Sunday school and proudly announced she had memorized a new Bible verse. "Eat carrots for me," she recited. The

confused mother called the Sunday school teacher for an explanation. She discovered the verse was actually 1 Peter 5:7: "He careth for me." Yes, our blessed Lord will care for us and provide our every need as we pass through the final valley of our lives. And after we pass through the valley, we will meet Jesus Christ on the other side!

B. God's promises of personal blessings.

When we arrive in the New Testament there is more light given on the future of living in Heaven, enjoying the presence of the Heavenly Father and His Son Jesus Christ.

➤ Death is gain.

Philippians 1:21 explains that entering Heaven is our gain: "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Yes, death is gain for the child of God – not loss! This is because we enter the place God has prepared for us (John 14:1-2) and will enjoy the presence of God forever throughout the eternal ages of time. The gain in dying far outweighs the losses in this life for every believer.

Revelation 21:4 speaks of the gains of Heaven and eternity:
"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

Heaven is the land of no more – no more tears, no more suffering and death, no more sorrow, no more crying, no more pain, and no more night for the Bible says, "And there shall be no night there" (Rev. 22:5). This is great gain!

"In the land of fadeless day
Lies the city foursquare;
It shall never pass away,
And there is no night there.
God shall wipe away all tears,
There's no death, no pain, nor fears,
And they count not time by years,
For there is no night there."

The truth that “death is gain” needs to be emphasized to those traveling their last mile on earth. It will bring comfort to the bereaved. It will minister peace to those who know that their death is imminent. Yes, we can actually look forward to death with joyous anticipation. We can eagerly anticipate our deliverance from this earthly scene with its pain, sin, and sorrow.

When John Knox was dying in 1572 his friends gathered around him. One of them begged him, if all was well as he crossed the river of death, he would give them a sign. The poet tells us what happened.

“Grim in his deep death anguish the stern old champion lay,
And the locks upon his pillow were floating thin and gray:
And visionless and voiceless, with quick and labored breath,
He waited for his exit through life’s dark portal death.

“Hast thou the hope of glory?” They bow to catch the thrill,
That through some languid token might be responsive still;
Nor watched they long nor waited for some obscure reply,
He raised a clay-cold finger and pointed to the sky.”

John Knox died with his finger pointing to Heaven. Dear friend, are you going to Heaven? You can have the assurance that you will enter Heaven someday.

Jesus said in John 6:47:

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.”

We can know beyond a shadow of a doubt that we possess everlasting life right now within the realm of our human spirit by expressing personal faith in Jesus Christ (Romans 6:23). Upon expressing faith in Christ we receive the promise of eternal life but when we die we experience this promise in a new, wonderful, thrilling, and exciting way.

➤ Death is our home-going.

Herbert Buffum wrote:

“Often I've watched the clouds up in the sky,
Always I've heard they were many miles high;

Then as they sailed out of sight far away,
I said, I'm going far higher someday.
I'm going higher, yes higher someday,
I'm going higher to stay;
Over the clouds and beyond the blue sky,
Going where none ever sicken or die;
Loved ones to meet in the "Sweet by and by";
I'm going higher some day."

2 Corinthians 5:8 reminds us of our home going:

"We are confident, *I say*, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."

We can possess the "confidence" (complete assurance) that upon death we will be with Jesus Christ in Heaven. This is the glorious prospect for those who have transferred their trust to Christ alone to be their Savior. They will immediately be transitioned into the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ at the moment of their death. They will close their eyes in death but open them in the presence of Jesus Christ. The idea of being "present with the Lord" (literally "be at home with the Lord") speaks of permanent fellowship, intimacy and companionship with Jesus Christ within the heavenly city.



When we get to Heaven, we will in one sense, be finally home! We will be "at home with the Lord." We will dwell in His presence and experience firsthand, like never before, His personal fellowship and intimate companionship.

One Christian said:

"Have a good time at my funeral, because I'm not going to be there!"

This is very true. While others our mourning our death here on earth we are going to “be at home with the Lord.” Right now we are “strangers and pilgrims on the earth” (1 Pet. 2:11) but when we finish the last mile of the way, we will finally be “at home with the Lord.” We are already citizens of the heavenly city (Phil. 3:20) and someday we will be finally and forever home!

The Bible teaches that our spirit and soul (the unseen or immaterial part of our human existence) leaves our body at death and goes immediately to be with the Lord. This is why “souls” or “spirits” are seen in Heaven following death (Rev. 6:9-11; Heb. 12:23). It is why Stephen said just before he died, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit” (Acts 7:59). This is called the “intermediate” state between death and resurrection which will occur at Christ’s coming (1 Cor. 15:23).

2 Corinthians 5:1 teaches that after our earthly body (“tabernacle” or tent) dies, we will eventually, at a later time, be given a resurrection body (“building”) that is “eternal in the heavens.” In other words, Paul is looking ahead to the permanent resurrection body that we will receive at Christ’s coming which will be an eternal body that will never die. It will be the ultimate body upgrade! Until then, 2 Corinthians 5:4 teaches that we enter an intermediate state whereby we are termed as being “unclothed” (naked) until the resurrection when we will never be unclothed again. This reference to being naked means to be bodiless (without possessing a human body) and confirms that we will exist only as a spirit outside the physical world that we now know and perceive.

For the unbeliever who has not placed faith in Christ, his intermediate state will be one of judgment for the Bible says in 2 Peter 2:9, “The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.” Until the final judgment (Rev. 20:11-15), there will be an intermediate state of judgment for the unbelieving and lost (Luke 16:19-31) while they exist in disembodied spirits.

When we place our faith in Christ to save us, the tables are turned. We are forgiven of our sins and will not suffer the penalty for them in judgment. Instead, we will enter Heaven as a disembodied spirit. We will be

“unclothed” (possessing no body) until the resurrection. We are spiritual beings and our spirits will live on after death. Several heavenly scenes envision the spirits and souls (the immaterial or incorporeal part of a person’s existence) living on in Heaven after death (Heb. 12:23; Rev. 6:9).

At death, the body ceases to function but the spirit and soul of a believer continues to live on in Heaven. Again, Stephen said at the time of his death, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit” (Acts 7:59). Stephen not only yielded his spirit to Jesus but fully expected that his spirit would exist in the Jesus’ presence after his death and departure. This is what Paul meant when he said, “absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord!” (2 Cor. 5:8). Our spirit leaves our body at the time of death but it lives on with Jesus in Heaven.

"There's a land beyond the river,
That we call the sweet forever,
And we only reach that shore by faith's decree;
One by one we'll gain the portals,
There to dwell with the immortals,
When they ring the golden bells for you and me.

When our days shall know their number,
And in death we sweetly slumber,
When the King commands the spirit to be free;
Nevermore with anguish laden,
We shall reach that lovely Eden,
When they ring the golden bells for you and me."

There was a little book entitled “Walter Doesn't Live Here Anymore!” It was a touching account of an earnest preacher, greatly loved by all, who was taken from a fruitful ministry at the age of 34 by a sudden illness. His brother Clarence Walker wrote this memorial booklet with this unusual title because it brought great comfort to his heart. This is because Clarence knew that his saved brother was not really dead but had just changed his residence from earth to Glory.

Clarence told about his brother's becoming critically ill and being taken to the hospital. He wrote, "When I arrived at his bedside, he was dying; yet he was singing, praying, and even witnessing to those nearby. I said to him,

'Walter, you must be quiet and rest.' For a while he would be still but not for long. Then, his condition worsened, and suddenly he left this life and moved from his tenement of clay to be with Jesus. As I gazed upon his face, I remembered the words of Paul that to be 'absent from the body' is to be 'present with the Lord' (2 Cor. 5:10) The blessing this brought to me found expression as I said to myself, 'Walter doesn't live here anymore! He has gone to Heaven, and his earthly house is empty.'"

Being "unclothed" (not possessing a physical body) may seem undesirable for some but only because we have never functioned in this realm before. During this blessed, spiritual state of our existence, we will continue to have personal knowledge, communicate, love, possess personal feelings and be involved in all kinds of wonderful activities in Heaven such as worship of God and enjoying our loved ones. The souls/spirits of the departed will in some ways have the function of the body without actually possessing a body until the resurrection. Even immaterial spirits can take upon themselves the shape and bodily characteristics without possessing a body. It seems strange to us because our concept of the immaterial world is limited. We will understand it better by and by!

"By and by, when the morning comes,
When the saints of God are gathered home,
We'll tell the story how we've overcome,
For we'll understand it better by and by."

Philippians 1:23

"For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better."

Dearly beloved, you can be confident, possess the complete assurance that following your death that you will immediately enter God's presence in the great heavenly city. Paul said that "to depart, and to be with Christ" is actually "far better" (Phil. 1:23). It's much better because upon our death we immediately enter Heaven – the better land! Everything is better in the better land! This is because it's a time when we will see and live with Jesus, have intimate fellowship with God, experience incalculable joy, peace, rest, and enjoyment that will last for eternity. Even though Paul was hard pressed

("For I am in a strait betwixt two"), possessing the desire to remain on earth as an apostle serving the Lord, or going to Heaven, he realized that Heaven was the better choice! This is because departing from our body to live with Christ is far better than anything else!

Elsewhere, Paul used the same terminology of departing from this life when explaining death: "the time of my departure is at hand" (2 Tim. 4:6). This means that Paul's death was approaching, he was traveling the last mile of the way, and was looking forward to the time when his soul and spirit would leave his body and enter Heaven. If you are traveling the last mile of the way, the time of your departure is also approaching. It is not that far away!

In his excellent little book, "When Loved Ones Are Taken in Death," Dr. Lehman Strauss made some interesting comments about the Greek word translated "departure." He wrote, "It is used metaphorically in a nautical way as when a vessel pulls up anchor to loose from its moorings and set sail, or in a military way as when an army breaks encampment to move on. In the ancient Greek world this term was used also for freeing someone from chains and for the severing of a piece of goods from the loom. This is what death is as described in the Bible. Here, we are anchored to the hardships and heartaches of this life. In death, the gangway is raised, the anchor is weighed, and we set sail for the golden shore. In death, we break camp here to start for heaven."

Absent from this body and immediately present with the Lord! The moment our body ceases to function on earth, our human spirit leaves the body and it ascends into Heaven. This is the teaching and promise of the Bible.

A friend once told another friend about his dying brother who has lapsed into unconsciousness. The sufferer unexpectedly rallied, and opened his eyes to look into the face of his brother. He managed a slight smile and said, "Shucks! What a disappointment! I thought the next face I'd see would be that of Jesus!" There are many saints who feel the tug more forcefully from above than from below. This is especially true as they near death. They eagerly await their summons to come Home!

The Bible says that at the exact moment of death, our spirit departs from our human body and we are immediately ushered into the presence of Jesus (“absent from the body ... present with the Lord”). We take off this flimsy, ageing, and dying, mortal body and we are forever at home with the Lord in Glory.

We mentioned already how the word “present” has the concept of being home with the Lord. The Greek word behind the English preposition “with” (with the Lord) suggests a very close (face-to-face) fellowship. It means to be “by the side of,” “near” and “among.” It is a word typically used of intimate relationships. When you get to Heaven, Jesus is not going to wave at you from a distance. He is not going to say “Welcome” and then walk off and leave you. We will enjoy the direct, unhindered, continued, and intimate presence of the Lord. His presence will be very real and dear to us. We will sense that God is right by our side and live eternally and perpetually experiencing His companionship and intimate fellowship.

Revelation 21:3

“And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God.”

This announcement from Heaven speaks of the promise of intimate and personal fellowship with God in Heaven and what will occur throughout the Eternal State. As His people we will enjoy communion with God closer than we ever dreamed of here on earth. God will be nearer and dearer to our hearts unlike we have ever experienced before.

Throughout eternity God’s saints will enjoy a new intimacy with Himself which is presently impossible in a world where sin and death are still present. So, the phrases of “the tabernacle of God with men” or “he will dwell with them” and “God himself shall be with them” is talking about a continual awareness of the presence of God when we get to Heaven and as people experience the Eternal State. In Heaven there will be a constant awareness and fellowship with God’s presence unlike we have ever known here on earth. It’s a place of open, ongoing, and uninterrupted communion with God.

“Lead me through the veil of shadows
Bear me o'er life's fitful sea
Then the gate of life eternal
May I enter Lord with Thee
Close to Thee, close to Thee
Close to Thee, close to Thee
Then the gate of life eternal
May I enter Lord with Thee.”

“Absent from the body ... present with the Lord.” This wonderful future with Christ and all the glories of Heaven should give us a new outlook on death. Instead of denying our death, resenting it, bargaining with God, or becoming depressed, we should accept our time of departure and look forward with great anticipation to what lies on the other side. There should be a calm acceptance and joyful expectation of death since Jesus defeated the power that death and the devil have over you and gives you the promise of everlasting life in His presence (Heb. 2:14-15). I am convinced that if we knew everything that God knows, we would agree that His way is best for us (Rom. 8:28; Isa. 55:8), even when it comes to our impending death. For those who are going to be left behind after the departure of their loved ones, we must remember that God loves our loved ones even more than we do!

Psalm 116:15 declares:

“Precious in the sight of the LORD *is* the death of his saints.”

This is the Lord's observation of our death. It is true of all saints. Our death is not a trivial matter to God. He treasures the death of His beloved children. Our death does not go unnoticed by God. Our death is precious to our God which is an indication that God sees death as something that brings eternal release for His saints from the ravages of sin, pain, and suffering. This thought is precious to the Lord. Also, since our death is precious to God, it gives us the reassurance that He comes to our aid to sustain our souls in the hour of death.

Charles Spurgeon said this of the death of God's saints:

“They shall not die prematurely; they shall be immortal till their work is done; and when their time shall come to die, then their deaths shall be precious.

The Lord watches over their dying beds, smooths their pillows, sustains their hearts, and receives their souls.”

Of course, today we die and we are absent from this body and present with the Lord (2 Cor. 5:8). This too is precious to God. The greatest treasure God has is seeing His saints in Heaven with Him. Likewise, the greatest treasure we have as God’s saints is that we will see Jesus when we get to Heaven! Jesus said in “that where I am, there ye may be also” (John 14:3). This is what makes Heaven to be so wonderful and joyous. It’s because we will be with Jesus – the One who loved us and gave Himself for us!

“Face to face I shall behold Him,
Far beyond the starry sky;
Face to face in all His glory,
I shall see Him by and by!”

This is what makes Heaven – Heaven! It is meeting and living with Jesus Christ, the One who gave His very own life for us. Heaven would not be Heaven without Jesus since He is the focus of Heaven (Rev. 5:12-13; 21:23).

Psalm 17:15

“As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.”

This verse is a key text on Biblical immortality from an Old Testament perspective. David seems to be saying, “Even when I die, the Lord won’t desert me; for I shall be awakened someday and be given a glorified body. I shall see His face, and I shall be satisfied!” David anticipates the resurrection day when he will awake in glory and be made in the likeness of God. David longed to see the Lord someday! With the resurrection of Christ, the New Testament reveals that believers will immediately enter the presence of the Lord upon death, even prior to their bodily resurrection (2 Cor. 5:8).

Now reflect upon this. “I shall be satisfied.” This means to experience overwhelming fullness, pleasure, and enrichment. These words are an appropriate description of the believer’s enjoyment and complete satisfaction they will experience in God’s presence. When we see Jesus face

to face for the first time, we will be “finally home” and be fully satisfied. So, even our death is something to celebrate. Why? It’s because when we die as one of God’s children, we will be with the Lord and experience great satisfaction, blessing, and fulfillment like we have never experienced before.

“As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness.” What a moment that will be! The hymn writer Fanny Crosby gave us more than 6,000 gospel songs. Although blinded by an illness at the age of 6 weeks, she never became bitter. One time a preacher sympathetically remarked, “I think it is a great pity that the Master did not give you sight when He showered so many other gifts upon you.” She replied quickly, “Do you know that if at birth I had been able to make one petition, it would have been that I should be born blind?” “Why?” asked the surprised clergyman. “Because when I get to heaven, the first face that shall ever gladden my sight will be that of my Savior!”

FANNY
CROSBY



One of Miss Crosby’s hymns was so personal that for years she kept it to herself. Kenneth Osbeck, author of several books on hymnology, says its revelation to the public came about this way: “One day at the Bible conference in Northfield, Massachusetts, Miss Crosby was asked by D.L. Moody to give a personal testimony. At first she hesitated, then quietly rose and said, ‘There is one hymn I have written which has never been published. I call it my soul’s poem. Sometimes when I am troubled, I repeat it to myself, for it brings comfort to my heart.’ She then recited these words while many wept:

“Someday the silver cord will break,
And I no more as now shall sing;
But oh, the joy when I shall wake
Within the palace of the King!
And I shall see Him face to face,
And tell the story—saved by grace!”

At the age of 95 Fanny Crosby passed into glory and saw the face of Jesus!

C. God's promises of a permanent inheritance.

Jesus gave us this wonderful promise in John 14:1-3:

“Let not your heart be troubled (Christ's calmness of soul): ye believe in God, believe also in me (Christ's claim to be God – we can trust what He says!). In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you (Christ's promised dwelling place). And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also” (Christ's promised return).

How can you be delivered from a troubled heart? How can you be relieved of your fears while you walk the last mile of the way? Believe that God has a wonderful heavenly inheritance awaiting you! This will calm your heart and produce peace and assurance in your soul.

Some suggest that this prepared place is the actual “heavenly city” itself which is mentioned in Revelation 21-22 and which is but one part of the vastness of Heaven. However, since all the descriptions we have in the Bible of Heaven seem to reference the heavenly city, Jesus may simply be conveying that He has a specific place within the heavenly city that is prepared and reserved for us, the heavenly city being the full explanation and expression of what we know to be Heaven. The old gospel song reminds us about this prepared place.

“I've got a mansion just over the hilltop
In that bright land where we'll never grow old
And some day yonder we will never more wander
But walk on the streets that are purest gold.”

In a home there was a little boy, the only son, was ill with an incurable disease. Month after month the mother had tenderly nursed him, read to him, and played with him, hoping to keep him from the dreadful finality of the doctor's diagnosis--the little boy was sure to die. But as the weeks went on he gradually began to understand that he would never be like the other boys he saw playing outside his window. Small as he was, he began to understand the meaning of the term death, and he too knew he was to die.

One day his mother had been reading to him the stirring tale of King Arthur and his knights of the Round Table, and about that last glorious battle where so many fair knights met their death. She closed the book as her little son sat silent for an instant, deeply stirred. Then he asked the question weighing on his childish heart, "Mama, what is it like to die? Mama, does it hurt?"

Quick tears sprang to her eyes and she fled to the kitchen, supposedly to tend to something on the stove. She knew it was a question with deep significance. She knew it must be answered satisfactorily. So she leaned for an instant against the smooth surface and breathed a hurried prayer that the Lord would keep her from breaking down before the boy and that she would be able to tell him the answer; the Lord did tell her. Immediately she knew how to explain it to him.

"Kenneth," she said to her son, "do you remember when you were a tiny boy how you used to play so hard all day that when night came you were too tired even to undress and you'd tumble into your mother's bed and fall asleep. That was not your bed, it was not where you belonged. You would only stay there a little while. Much to your surprise you would wake up and find yourself in your own bed in your own room. You were there because someone had loved you and taken care of you. Your father had come with big strong arms and carried you away.

"Kenneth, darling, death is just like that. We just wake up some morning to find ourselves in the other room. Our room where we belong, because the Lord Jesus loved us and died for us." The lad's shining face looking up into hers told her that the point had gone home and there would be no more fear, only love and trust in his little heart as he went to meet the Father in Heaven. He never questioned again. Several weeks later he fell asleep just as she had said and the Father's big, strong arms carried him to his own room.

"In my Father's house are many mansions (residencies, dwelling places, rooms): if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." Dear one, the Bible teaches that God has prepared a dwelling place for us in the heavenly city and it will be there when we get there. It will be our own personal room, whatever size it might be, and we will know that we are finally home!

Jesus is teaching that as we approach our time of death, we should not be troubled in our hearts or fearful. This is because we can believe Christ's wonderful promise that He has prepared a glorious dwelling place for us in the great heavenly city. Why should we fear death if it the route to our final home? Yes, we are going to possess a permanent residency in Heaven. Since this specific place is prepared for us, it will be there when we get there. We can be absolutely certain about this.

"I go to prepare a place for you." What Jesus said reminds us that Heaven is a prepared place for prepared people. You cannot enter Heaven unless you express faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, so He can forgive all of your sins and make you fit to enter Heaven. Since Jesus has gone to prepare a special place for us, we should remember that we have a glorious destiny and inheritance awaiting us for the Bible says "we have obtained an inheritance" (Eph. 1:11) and it gives a promise to God's children that "they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance" (Hebrews 9:15).

"This world is not my home,
I'm just a pass'n through.
My treasures are laid up
Somewhere beyond the blue."

A bank in Binghamton, New York, had some flowers sent to a competitor who had recently moved into a new building. There was a mixup at the flower shop, and the card sent with the arrangement read, "With our deepest sympathy." The florist, who was greatly embarrassed, apologized. But he was even more embarrassed when he realized that the card intended for the bank was attached to a floral arrangement sent to a funeral home in honor of a deceased person. That card read, "Congratulations on your new location!" Actually, a sentiment like this is appropriate for Christians because they move to a wonderful new location when they die. They go to the place Jesus has prepared for them. They go to live with Christ, and the sorrows and heartaches of this earthly existence are past forever.

We can be sure that we will enter into all of our future heavenly inheritance. Everything is prepared for us who know Jesus as our Savior. Heaven and all

of our future inheritance is waiting for us! It will be there for us when we die! At this point, we need to consider what God has prepared for us when we die.

1 Peter 1:1-4 speaks of our permanent inheritance:

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again (given us a new spiritual birth and life) unto a lively hope (a living hope even though we are dying) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (the underlying premise of our heavenly hope), To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.”

The word “inheritance” is referencing all the future and eternal blessings that will be associated with Heaven and eternity such as our eternal dwelling place, our heavenly fellowship with Jesus Christ, a new, glorified, an eternal body, our reward, and all the promises Jesus gave to us regarding the future. We are going to enter into a new environment, the heavenly city, and someday get a new body, find true rest, and be rewarded for all eternity. All of this is part of our future inheritance!

Revelation 14:13 promises this:

“And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed *are* the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.”

In summary, this inheritance refers to everything that God’s children receive when they leave this earthly scene and obtain their eternal glory. The inheritance of the believers is kept in Heaven, where God keeps it absolutely safe for us until the appointed time when we receive it. There are various parts and phases of our inheritance that we will enter into as different times – our dwelling place in Heaven, then our glorification, new body, and reward. Peter is likely envisioning our total inheritance that awaits us in the future.

Our future inheritance, what God has prepared for us, is described in several ways.

✓ DEATHLESS or Undying = “incorruptible” (1 Pet. 1:4)

This reminds us that our heavenly inheritance will never die or grow old! Everything connected with our future inheritance is incorruptible. It will not suffer decay and deterioration. How wonderful this is since our lives (bodies) and everything connected with the earth gets old and eventually deteriorates and dies. But our future inheritance, which includes our redemptive body, is incorruptible and will never die.

“I have heard of a land on the faraway strand,
'Tis a beautiful home of the soul;
Built by Jesus on high, where we never shall die,
'Tis a land where we never grow old.

In that beautiful home where we'll never more roam,
We shall be in the sweet by and by;
Happy praise to the King through eternity sing,
'Tis a land where we never shall die.

Never grow old, never grow old,
In a land where we'll never grow old;
Never grow old, never grow old,
In a land where we'll never grow old.”

✓ SPOTLESS or Unblemished = “undefiled” (1 Pet. 1:4)

Peter goes on to say that everything about our future inheritance is pure whether it is the place of Heaven itself or the new bodies that we will someday receive. It can never be spoiled, corrupted, or polluted. It remains free from any blemish and is absolutely pure. In fact, only God's forgiven children, who have been cleansed of their sins, will be able to enter Heaven, a place of holiness and purity, and which is part of our inheritance.

Revelation 21:27 declares:

“And there shall in no wise enter into it (the heavenly city) any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.”

Is your name in the Lamb's scroll or Book of Life? You need to have God's spiritual life indwelling you, if you want to know that your name has been recorded in this heavenly book. Only through faith in Christ can we be sure that we are "born again" (John 3:7) which means we possess God's life so that our name is recorded in the Book of Life within Heaven.

✓ TIMELESS or Eternal = "fadeth not away" (1 Pet. 1:4)

When a flower is past its peak, its beauty fades. This can never be said of our inheritance. The things of this earth and life fade away like the flowers and leaves during the Fall season. But our heavenly and future inheritance is timeless. It will never fade away. This means that it will never lose its magnificence and it will last forever and forever! Our heavenly inheritance will never suffer variations in its value, glory, or beauty. It is time-proof.

Revelation 3:12 records:

"Him that overcometh (in Christ and His finished work) will I make a pillar in the temple of my God (the heavenly city), and he shall go no more out (our heavenly inheritance is timeless, eternal, unending): and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name."

Everything about our future, heavenly inheritance is viewed as being permanent and eternal. It is fadeless or timeless in nature.

"I am going to that city
Where the streets with gold are laid
And all the tree of life is blooming
And those roses never fade
Here they bloom, but for a season
Then their beauty is decayed
But i am going to a city
Where the roses never fade."

Our bodies in this life become older and their outward luster and glory begin to fade away. The Bible in Philippians 3:21 identifies our bodies as being “vile” which means they are bodies of humiliation and lowliness. Paul says our bodies die for they are sown in “corruption,” dishonor,” and “weakness” (1 Cor. 15:42-43). We see this as our bodies begin to wrinkle, break down, and suffer prior to death.

This is why some people choose to not have anyone surround them, except their loved ones, during their time of death. Visitors should respect the wishes of the dying and family on these occasions. One man that I know singled everyone out of the room when he knew that he was about to die. The humiliation of death is very real. Some fears associated with fading away (death) are described by Herbert Vander Lugt in the following statement. “What if I become a burden? Will I become incoherent and act foolishly? Will I become a horrid spectacle through the ravages of some disease? I do not deny that thoughts like these may arise. Reflection upon a dying or dead body can give rise to morbid conceptions. There is something extremely humiliating about it all.”

Yes, our bodies are fading away in humiliation but a better day and eternal day is coming! 1 Corinthians 15:42-43 teaches that we are going to get a brand-spanking new body at the resurrection. It will be a body that will be “raised in incorruption” (it’s eternal), “glory” (it reflects dignity and honor), “power” (it will be able to do tremendous feats), and it will be “spiritual” (completely pure and without sin). Yes, all of our inheritance, all the blessings associated with it, including a new body, is eternal. They are unending! They will never fade away!

Just think about eternity for a few moments. Imagine that we could empty the largest body of water in the world, the Pacific Ocean, and fill it with sand as tall as the highest mountain in the world, Mount Everest. Now imagine that a bird flies by and takes one grain of sand off that sand pile once every 100 billion years. How long will it take for that sand pile to disappear? We can consider that amount of time to be equal to one second in eternity. Yes, our

heavenly inheritance is forever! Our heavenly inheritance is eternal! And we will be together with our Lord and Savior forever! Together forever!

We have a glorious inheritance and destiny awaiting us as God's children. It includes Heaven, a redemptive body, an eternity without sin, pain, and death, and the blessing of eternal reward that Jesus gives to us. And it's all because of His amazing grace or as the Bible says, "to the praise of the glory of his grace" (Ephesians 1:6).

"When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we first begun."

✓ SAFENESS or Security = "reserved in heaven for you" (1 Pet. 1:4)

The word "reserved" means "guarded" or "watched over." That fact that our inheritance is "reserved" means that it is already in place and being guarded, and superintended by God. The language suggests that the God of Heaven is guarding it and guarantees that we will enter into our full inheritance. Everything that God has promised to give us will be ours. We can be absolutely certain about this.

A reservation means that our inheritance is secure. Its nature is fixed and unalterable. This means it will be there when we get there! We can be sure that all God promised to give us will come to pass. This is because our future inheritance is safe. This glorious inheritance is not subject to any changes and there are no loopholes in the believer's title to it! We will get it!

It is comforting to realize that God has a reservation for us if we have come to personal faith in Jesus Christ. He already has a place prepared for us in Heaven (John 14:2), which is part of our glorious inheritance, and He will eventually give us everything that He has promised, including a new glorified body at His return which is sinless, painless, and timeless.

Peter speaks of the redemption of our body in the phrase “unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time” (1 Pet. 5:1) which refers to the time when Jesus returns for His children and we receive the final part of our salvation – a new body. Expressing faith in Christ as our Savior gives us the assurance that we will enter the joys of Heaven immediately upon our death and that our heavenly reservation and full inheritance awaits us. Part of this inheritance will include the experience of a resurrected, new body that will never again experience pain, age, and death. This glorious destiny and specific aspect of our inheritance will occur at the Rapture when Jesus returns for His children.

2 Corinthians 4:17 speaks of the great gain that we will experience when we share in this new, glorified body: “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory.” Beloved child of God, your affliction and soon death must be put in its proper perspective in relation to time, eternity and the future glory of the new redemptive body that you will receive someday when Jesus Christ returns. Your future destiny as a believer is one of great glory and splendor. The best is yet to come!

If you compare your wondrous, future glory to your present earthly battles with sickness and pain, it makes these earthly battles seem “light” (easy) and “temporal” (momentary) troubles. What this means is that we must learn to view our sufferings and trials from an eternal perspective. We need to look at the bigger picture. The affliction by itself may seem heavy, but when viewed from the eternal perspective, or compared to the glorious destiny that awaits you, your suffering is a very small, insignificant, and a transitory trial.

As we look forward to the “weight” (degree or abundance) of the glory and splendor that we will someday experience, it makes our present day trials seem small and insignificant. In other words, the degree of suffering in our present life does not compare with the degree of glory and great blessing that awaits us in the future, when we receive our magnificent body of redemption with its release from all pain and sickness. We need to possess a proper perspective on eternity and the wonderful destiny that awaits us.

Romans 8:18 says something similar about the gains of our eternal inheritance: “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” We need an eternal, top-down perspective that enables us to see all our earthly realities and problems, including death, from the vantage point of our eternal inheritance. Paul is teaching that there can be no comparison between our present-day suffering and the future of our glorious inheritance, which includes the time when we receive our glorified and eternal body that will never again experience cancer, pain, and suffering.

The future is so much more glorious when compared to our present suffering that we can’t begin to compare or measure the two intensity levels. The future glory far outweighs the present troubles that we are passing through. Keeping this eternal perspective will enable us to pass through our trials and death victoriously. Knowing what is going to take place in the future helps us to deal with the trials that we are facing today, including the pains and difficulties associated with our death and departure into the next life.

Authors Timothy Demy and Thomas Ice conclude:

“The God of the universe invites us to view life and death from His eternal vantage point. And if we do, we will see how readily it can revolutionize our lives: daily anxieties, emotional hurts, tragedies, our response and responsibilities to others, possessions, wealth, and even physical pain and death.”

The book of Revelation gives us some further insight regarding our future inheritance within the heavenly city. Revelation 2:7 informs us that the heavenly city will be a lovely “paradise of God” filled with beautiful green landscape and there will be “a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb” (Rev. 22:1; 22:2).



“Yes, we'll gather at the river,
The beautiful, the beautiful river;
Gather with the saints at the river
That flows by the throne of God.”

Heaven and more specifically the heavenly city is not a figment of man's imagination. It is not merely a state of mind. It's not a philosophical concept. It's not a religious abstraction. Nor is it merely a sentimental dream or some kind of medieval fantasy. It is not a worn-out superstition. The Bible informs us that Heaven is an actual place, a specific location that is far more real than were we presently live. It is a real place where God dwells and we will live for eternity.

There are many more wonderful descriptions of your future dwelling place. Let's peek behind the curtain of Heaven and reflect on these breathtaking and beautiful descriptions of the heavenly city.



Revelation 7:16

“They shall hunger no more,
neither thirst any more;
neither shall the sun light on
them, nor any heat.”

Revelation 21:18

“And the building of the wall
of it was *of* jasper: and the
city *was* pure gold, like unto
clear glass.”

Revelation 21:21

“And the twelve gates *were* twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city *was* pure gold, as it were transparent glass.”

Revelation 21:23 records:

“And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb *is* the light thereof.”

Revelation 21:25 adds this:

“And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.”

Revelation 22:3

“And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him.”

Revelation 22:5 finally states:

“And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.”

“All the gates of pearl are made,
In the city foursquare;
All the streets with gold are laid,
And there is no night there.
All the gates shall never close
To the city foursquare;
There life’s crystal river flows,
And there is no night there.
There they need no sunshine bright,
In that city foursquare;
For the Lamb is all the light,
And there is no night there.”

God gives us glimpses of our future heavenly home and inheritance to encourage us in the present! God has not told us everything about Heaven but He told us what He wants us to know. Dear friend, I want to repeat something. If we know Jesus Christ as your Savior – the best is yet to come! We have the thrilling prospect and hope of a heavenly city, a heavenly home, a new body, never dying again, eternal joy and rest, and fellowshiping with God and God’s people throughout eternity.

When brother Baxter lay dying, and his friends came to see him, the last words he said were in answer to the question, “Dear Mr. Baxter, how are you?” His answer was this. “Almost well.” And so it is. Death actually cures

the Christian. Death is the best medicine for a Christian since when we die we are healed forever!

When our time of departure comes, we must remember that God has saved us through the work of His Son Jesus Christ. This should cause rejoicing in our hearts. Our death should be something that we face as our graduation day!

Dwight L Moody awoke from sleep shortly before he died and said: “Earth recedes. Heaven opens before me. If this is death, it is sweet! There is no valley here. God is calling me, and I must go.” And Moody’s son said, “No, no, Father. You’re dreaming.” And Moody replied, “I am not dreaming. I have been within the gates. This is my triumph; this is my coronation day! It is glorious!”

Yes, when we know Christ as our Savior, our death should be a time of celebration. This is because we are about to enter the presence of Jesus Christ in Heaven and enjoy wonderful communion and fellowship with Him throughout eternity.

Composer Don Wyrzten wrote the music for a wonderful song that pictures our earthly life as a “tempestuous sea.” But the song ends with these words:



“Just think of stepping on
shore—and finding it
heaven!
Of touching a hand—and
finding it God’s!
Of breathing new air—
and finding it celestial!
Of waking up in glory—
and finding it home!”

Many wonder if we can actually experience God’s presence in such a way as this. Will we be able to sense God’s touch upon our lives and live in His

presence continually? The Bible clearly reveals that each individual Christian will have a very close and intimate fellowship with God forever within Heaven for we will be “present with the Lord” (2 Cor. 5:8). As we have discussed already, being present or home with the Lord conveys the idea of close companionship and intimacy with God. The Bible teaches that in Heaven we will have a real sense of God’s personal presence in our hearts and lives.



There are several verses which speak of our future in Heaven and the new names that we will be impressed upon our minds and hearts. These names indicate closeness, intimacy, and a personal awareness and fellowship with God. Yes, we will sense the eternal touch of God upon our lives as we live in Heaven.

Revelation 2:17 says:

“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth *it*.”

The figurative manna typology of Jesus Christ (John 6:48-51, 58) speaks of Christ Himself and the provision and blessing of eternal and abundant life that we have received through Him. Although we do experience and richly enjoy the manna of His life and presence right now, there is a greater and richer enjoyment of this life in the future, when we all get to Heaven. In other words, we taste and enjoy the spiritual manna of Christ’s presence and life right now on earth, but we will feast upon it in a much greater way, when we all get to Heaven. The fact that the manna is now “hidden” in some respect reveals the fact that the half has not been told!

“The half cannot be fancied,
This side the golden shore,
O there His still be sweeter
Than He ever was before!”

What does the “white stone” mean? The Roman Empire handed out special passes or tickets for admissions to different forms of entertainments or special events. The tickets were often in the form of white stones with their name inscribed on them. It may be that Christ is speaking about the saint’s entrance or admissions ticket to Glory. Since Christ has just promised that He would fellowship with the saint’s in Heaven He may now be promising them their entrance ticket or pass into the gates of glory. What a wonderful promise this is! This stone is the believer’s title deed to glory. It is the believer’s passage (entrance ticket) into the Heavenly City.

What does the “new name” mean which is written on the stone? This name is likely referring to the recipient’s own private and special name that will be given to him. Revelation 2:17 says, “which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.” In other words, Christ will impress upon the individual heart and mind of each saint in Heaven a special and secretive name that only they will know about and enjoy. It will likely be a special name that is somehow related or connected to our life on earth. It’s a name that will explain our commitment to Christ’s cause, our faithfulness, and life fellowship with Him on earth. Jesus has promised to give us a new name, a secret name, a special mark of intimacy with Him. This will be a name impressed upon our hearts and minds that will live with us for eternity!

Revelation 3:12 also conveys another heavenly scene:

“Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, *which is* new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and *I will write upon him* my new name.”

The figurative imagery of God’s saints being a “pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out” and how the Jesus promises that “I will write upon him ... the name of the city of my God” (impressing the heavenly city upon our mind and heart) speaks of how each child of God living in Heaven will possess a wonderful satisfaction that comes from knowing we have a permanent residency, eternal protection and safety, and ownership in the great heavenly city.

The impression of God's name on the minds and hearts of His saints ("I will write upon him the name of my God") means that throughout eternity we will have a special identity and relationship with the Heavenly Father. The name of the Heavenly Father will somehow be impressed upon our mind and heart to the extent that we will enjoy His intimacy and fellowship in a special way throughout eternity.

But God's Son (Jesus Christ) will also be special and dear to our hearts for Christ also states, "I will write upon him my new name" (a reference to Christ's name). This may mean that in Heaven we will possess a deeper understanding, manifestation, and revelation of Christ's name (a fuller and deeper expression of Christ's character) that will completely satisfy both our heart and mind.

However, Christ's "new name" may also imply that He will impress upon our hearts and minds a unique name of His own that is tailor-made for each believer. It will be a personal and private name of Christ that only we know about – a name that will bring us great joy and delight throughout eternity. In other words, there will be a personal name related to Christ, what He means to each believer, that will be an intimate self-revelation of Christ. This "new name" impressed upon our hearts will bring a fuller appreciation of Christ and intimate fellowship with Him throughout the eternal ages.

Revelation 22:4 also gives an additionally heavenly scene:

"And they shall see his face; and his name *shall be* in their foreheads."

"While I draw this fleeing breath,
When my eyes shall close in death,
When I rise to world's unknown,
And behold Thee on Thy throne,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let hide myself in Thee."

This means we will see Jesus Christ face to face when we get to Heaven. Again, "his name" (Rev. 22:4) which is now said to be "in their foreheads" (a figurative expression) means that Christ's presence, intimacy, fellowship, ownership, and security (Rev. 2:17; 3:12) will be impressed upon our minds.

God's people will see God's face through Jesus Christ and we will enjoy personal, intimate, fellowship with Him in Heaven and throughout eternity as His "name" (His character and Godlike qualities) are impressed upon our minds. With the impression of these names (the Father's name, Christ's new name, and a personal name given to us by God) upon our hearts, we will sense the Lord's nearness, ownership, and safety within the heavenly city. We will see Jesus, enjoy His personal presence, intimacy, and companionship for all eternity. When the Bible says, "and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:17), it speaks of nearness and intimacy with the Lord. Yes, I believe we will sense the touch of God upon our lives in an experiential way in Heaven. That is how close we will be to God.

Safe in the arms of Jesus,
Safe on His gentle breast,
There by His love o'ershaded,
Sweetly my soul doth rest.

Hark! 'tis a song of heaven
Borne in the sweetest voice,
Echoed by saints in spirit,
Making my heart rejoice.

Safe in the arms of Jesus,
Safe on His gentle breast,
There by His love o'ershaded,
Sweetly my soul doth rest."

In Heaven, we will know and sense the nearness and dearness of God's presence and fellowship in our hearts and lives like we have never experienced before. We will walk close to Him and encounter His life like never before.

Psalm 16:11

"Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence *is* fulness of joy; at thy right hand *there are* pleasures for evermore."

David was looking ahead to the resurrection and one day being with God in Heaven. The "path of life" speaks of resurrection and then comes the

“presence” of God and the “pleasures for evermore” when we are dwelling in His presence. The word “pleasures” speaks of something sweet, pleasant, lovely, agreeable, delightful, and beautiful. When we are in God’s presence, we will experience great joy and pleasures that will last for eternity! For the believer today, we immediately enter God’s presence when we pass from this life into the next (2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; 2 Tim. 4:6). And when we get to our heavenly home there will be “pleasures for evermore.” Living in Heaven and experiencing God’s presence will result in our greatest delight, it will be something wonderful, exciting, beautiful, and pleasant to us.

John Wesley said right before he died: “The best of all is: God is with us.” Missionary David Brainerd, at the moment of his death in 1747 said, “I am going into eternity, and it is sweet for me to think of eternity.”

“There is coming a day
When no heartaches shall come
No more clouds in the sky
No more tears to dim the eye
All is peace forever more
On that happy golden shore
What a day, glorious day that will be!

There'll be no sorrows there
And no more burdens to bear
No more sickness and no more pain
No more parting over there
And forever I will be
With the One who died for me
What a day, glorious day that will be!

What a day that will be
When my Jesus I shall see
When I look upon His face
The One who saved me by His grace
When He takes me by the hand
And leads me to the Promised Land
What a day, glorious day that will be!”

Application Questions:

- Have you forgotten that the shadow of death cannot harm you?
- Have you been experiencing the comfort and reassurance of knowing that you have a glorious inheritance waiting for you in Heaven?
- Have you been reflecting on the tremendous hope and eternal joy that you are about to enter when you pass into Heaven?
- Have you been thinking of what it's going to be like when you see Jesus for the very first time?
- How does the eternal perspective of Heaven effect our emotional and future outlook today?

D. God's promises of victory over death.

In comforting one another after a loved one dies, we sometimes will conclude that he has departed. Although this is an appropriate expression to convey regarding a loved one who has gone on to be with Christ (Phil. 1:23), we could also say, "He has arrived." Why is this? It's because we are victors over death. Our spirit enters Heaven the moment we pass from this life into the next and we will get a new body someday that will never die.

First, there is victory over death through the suffering and death of Jesus Christ on the cross.

Hebrews 2:14-15 declares:

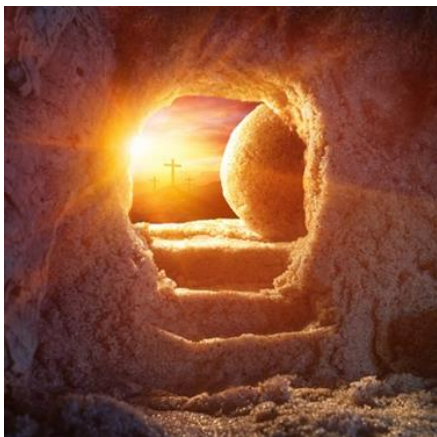
"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same (*the humanity of Jesus*); that through death (*Christ's sacrificial death on the cross*) he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil (*destroying the devil's power and authority to keep us in the realm of*



spiritual death which is ultimately separation from God in hell); And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage"

(providing us with deliverance from Satan's power, bondage, and authority by giving us salvation and new life in Christ).

In other words, the suffering and death of Jesus Christ removed the strongholds of Satan from our lives in including His power, blindness, and accusations against us, demanding that God should judge us as sinners. When placing personal faith in Christ, the devil's power and authority over our lives is broken and removed and we are given eternal life and the hope of Heaven. This is because the death of Jesus Christ is the basis of our deliverance from Satan's power and sin's penalty.



Second, we also possess victory over death because of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ and His authority over death! The fifteenth chapter of Corinthians is focusing on the resurrection of Christ and its importance. The resurrection of Christ is an integral part of the Gospel message (1 Cor. 15:2-3). Christ's death and resurrection is like the heads and tails on a coin. They cannot be separated without destroying the coin. The same is true regarding the Gospel. If you remove either the death or resurrection of Christ, the message of the Gospel is destroyed.

Without the resurrection of Christ, there would be no confirmation that the Father received the payment of Christ's death for our sins (Rom. 4:25; 1 Cor. 15:17) and we certainly could not have eternal life if Christ did not rise from the dead (John 11:25-26; 1 Cor. 15:19). This is because eternal life is based upon a living Savior and Lord! The resurrection of Christ was the Father's receipt which gave proof of our purchase, that through Christ's death we have been redeemed or set free from Satan's power and sin's penalty. This is a wonderful truth to contemplate and treasure in our hearts.

1 Corinthians 15:55-57 gives us the wonderful promise of deliverance from spiritual death which in return gives us the blessed hope of someday receiving a glorified body at the resurrection.

Paul states: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave (literally - hades), where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin (*the explanation of sin's judgment in hell*); and the strength of sin is the law (*the explanation of sin's power over our lives*). But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."



The Sting of
Death is
Removed!



Paul is teaching that we cannot have the hope of receiving a resurrected, glorified, body someday (vv. 51-54) unless we bypass spiritual death and Hades, the place of God's wrath and judgment for sinners (vv. 55-57), and the only way to escape this place is through faith in the Gospel of Christ's death and resurrection (1 Cor. 15:1-3). In other words, when we place personal faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the sting of death, our judgment in hell, has been forever removed from us through Christ's death and resurrection.

It is a known fact that when certain insects sting a person, they leave their stinger imbedded in the person's flesh, and being thus robbed of their "sting," they die. In a very real sense Jesus Christ was stung to death on the cross for us which means the stinger of death has been removed from our lives forever when we place faith alone in Christ. In other words, death has been robbed of its sting and terror as far as the believer is concerned for Jesus was stung to death in our place and removed the sting of death for each one of us who come to faith alone in Christ.

As the result of the sting of death being removed from our life and record, we can be absolutely sure that the moment we die, we will immediately and forever enjoy eternal life with God in Heaven.

When they were young, some of my cousins would catch the large wood bees and remove their stingers from them. They would then tie a piece of thread around their body and tie the other end around the sissy bar on our bikes. Then they would proceed to ride around their



bikes with the bumble bees buzzing around their heads and flying all around them. Those watching would often say, "Be careful of that bumble bee." But my cousins would often say, "Don't worry, the stinger has been removed."

Dear friend, because Jesus Christ died and rose again from the grave, the sting of death has been removed from every believing sinner who places their faith alone in Christ. "The strength of sin is the law." This means that when we are unsaved and without salvation, God's holy law sets a perfect standard we cannot keep, which incites rebellion against God due to our own sin nature, and then condemns us as sinners (Rom. 7:7-12). It results in what Paul refers to as: "the sting of death is sin" (God's wrath and judgment). However, because Jesus died and rose again from the dead, the sting of death (God's righteous wrath and judgment cannot harm us) has been forever removed from us. Also, the grave ("hades" - the place of judgment for unsaved human spirits cannot claim us) which means it will not harm us.

Though faith in Jesus Christ's death and resurrection we are victorious over death and hades. This is because Jesus experienced the wages of sin and death on our behalf (Rom. 6:23) when suffering and dying on the cross (1 Pet. 2:24; Gal. 3:13) and then rose again giving us the promise of eternal life. Jesus took the sting out of death for each believer when He was stung to death in our place and then rose again from the grave. For the believer death is now the gateway into the presence of the Lord (2 Cor. 5:8).

A godly, elderly lady said to me the other day:

"When you are at my funeral, don't look down at my body in the coffin, look up, since that is where I am going to be!"

Sigmund Freud was wrong when he said: "And finally there is the painful riddle of death, for which no remedy at all has yet been found, nor probably ever will be." What a sad statement. But compare this statement with Paul's triumphant declaration, "Death is swallowed up in victory! (1 Cor. 15:54).

Yes, we are victors over death through Jesus Christ who is Lord over the realm of death. Death can no longer harm us! We can claim this authority and rejoice in the hope of eternal life!

Jesus triumphantly said in Revelation 1:18:

“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.”

Keys speak of authority and when Jesus died on the cross and rose again He defeated the devil, death, hell, and the grave! For this reason, Jesus has complete authority over the realm of death. This means we can be absolutely sure that we are going to Heaven when we place our faith in Christ and receive His free gift of eternal life. The gates of Heaven are opened and God is waiting for us!

Mark 15:37

“And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost” (spirit).

We too shall one day “give up the ghost” and our human spirit will depart from this earth into the next life. Here is the good news. Because of the victory and authority that we have over death through Jesus Christ’s own death and resurrection, we will someday fly away into the presence of Jesus when we walk the last mile of the way and our time comes to leave this earth. What a difference Jesus makes!

“Toiling will all be ended,
Shadows will flee away;
Sorrows will be forgotten,
Oh, what a wonderful day!
Over the sunset mountains
Heaven awaits for me,
Over the sunset mountains,
Jesus my Savior I’ll see.”

Because we are victorious over death through Jesus Christ’s death and resurrection, we are going to Heaven someday! But what are we going to do in Heaven? There are many activities that we will be involved with in Heaven.

- ✓ We will serve God in various ways.

Revelation 7:15

“Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.”

Revelation 22:3

“And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him.”

How we will serve Him is yet to be seen. But we won't be sitting in a Lazy boy chair. Heaven is a place of activity and service rendered unto God.

- ✓ We will have close fellowship with God.

We already mentioned about the intimate fellowship and close contact we will have with God in Heaven when being present with the Lord (2 Cor. 5:8).

Revelation 21:3 once again reminds us:

“And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God.”

Yes, we will be constantly aware of God's presence and fellowship in a new, fresh, and unending way.

- ✓ We will fellowship with other saints.

1 Thessalonians 4:17-18

“Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them (our loves ones) in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord (sharing together our lives with Jesus Christ). Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”

1 Thessalonians 2:19

“For what *is* our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? *Are* not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?”

Fellowshipping with the saints who have gone on before us is implied in these verses. Paul's statements of meeting our loved ones in Christ when Jesus returns and then fellowshipping with them for eternity provided encouragement to his heart. The saints who have gone to Heaven before us would be in the presence of Jesus Christ at His return and together we will one day enjoy one another's fellowship at His return and within Heaven.

✓ We will praise and worship God.

Revelation 7:9-10

"After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."

Revelation 19:5-7

"And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready."

The most outstanding heavenly scenes in the Bible is where all of God's saints and the hosts of Heaven are seen worshipping God, giving praise and adoration to Him for His grace and glory. One Christian lady told me that she did not choir. I told her, "Get used to it for you are going to be in the heavenly choir someday!"

✓ We will experience peaceful rest.

Revelation 14:13

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed *are* the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."

Eternally resting from our toils and troubles on earth, those things which make us weary and distressed is going to be a wonderful part of Heaven. We will never again be stressed out as we live in Heaven!

- ✓ We will enjoy God's heavenly paradise.

Revelation 2:7

“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.”



The “paradise of God” speaks of a heavenly garden of pleasure and enjoyment that we will experience throughout eternity in Heaven. The scenery of Heaven is breathtaking. It is literally out of this world!

Paul had a vision of Heaven in 2 Corinthians 12:2-4: “I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven (God's abode). And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable (unimaginable) words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.”

The man who Paul was talking about was himself (vv. 7-9). He referred to himself in this manner to probably minimize what might appear to be boasting. Paul was given a preview of Heaven through the means of a special vision (vs. 7) and it was used for the purpose of giving us information that would be recorded in the Bible. On this celestial journey Paul affirmed the reality of Heaven and the ability of God to take people there! When the

curtain was peeled back, Paul likens Heaven to a “paradise” (a garden of delight, an Eden or park of exquisite beauty and happiness). Heaven is going to be a place of unimaginable beauty. We can fully imagine what it will be like!

But more than this, while he toured Heaven, Paul heard “unspeakable words.” He overheard the divine secrets that are shared only in Heaven. These things could only be spoken by God and by those in Heaven. They could not be spoken by men on earth. This reminds us that the veil between Earth and Heaven remains in place. What God wants us to know about Heaven is revealed in the Bible; as for the rest, “The secret things belong unto the LORD our God” (Deut. 29:29).

There are so many more things that we will experience in Heaven that are beyond our imagination. Heaven is not going to be a boring place where we sit around on clouds and play harps! Heaven is so wonderful that Paul was commanded to not talk about it after he was given a glimpse of it. Paul’s experience reminds us that there are some incredible things we are going to learn when we get to Heaven. Until then, we must simply conclude that we’ll understand more about God’s ways regarding our time on earth and more about Heaven when we get there. We will understand it better by and by!

“Trials dark on every hand,
And we cannot understand
All the ways of God would lead us
To that blessed promised land;
But he guides us with his eye,
And we'll follow till we die,
For we'll understand it better by and by.
By and by, when the morning comes,
When the saints of God are gathered home,
We'll tell the story how we've overcome,
For we'll understand it better by and by.”

Whatever Paul experienced and heard in Heaven, it had the profound effect of strengthening his faith and hope that the Lord would abundantly reward

his sufferings. Folks, there can be nothing better than experiencing the eternal bliss of Heaven. We should look forward to it with great anticipation.

A little girl was taking an evening walk with her father. Wonderingly, she looked up at the stars and exclaimed; "Oh, Daddy, if the wrong side of Heaven is so beautiful, what must the right side be! Death really is swallowed up in victory (1 Cor. 15:54) for it brings the believer into the presence of Heaven and God! This is why you can have the wonderful hope of entering Glory when you die with your faith in Jesus Christ.

"Some glad morning when this life is o'er,
I'll fly away.
To a home on God's celestial shore,
I'll fly away.
When the shadows of this life have flown,
I'll fly away.
Like a bird thrown, driven by the storm,
I'll fly away.
Just a few more weary days and then,
I'll fly away.
To a land where joy shall never end,
I'll fly away."

Yes, we will one day fly away to Heaven. And we will finally be home! One moment we might be walking through the dark valley of the shadow of death, only to suddenly discover that we are now in the great heavenly city. One moment we might be struggling in our state of weakness and terminal sickness, and the next moment find ourselves with strength and health in Heaven.

"Life's day is short—I soon shall go
To be with Him who loved me so;
I see in the distance that shining shore,
My beautiful, beautiful home.
Home, sweet home, home, sweet home—
Where I'll never roam!
I see the light of that city so bright—
My home, sweet home."

As God's children, our citizenship is in Heaven (Phil. 3:20). We are pictured as sojourners or pilgrims on our way to the great heavenly city (Heb. 11:9-10, 13; 1 Pet. 2:11). Some of us will get there sooner than others but eventually we will all be in Heaven and what a day of rejoicing it will be!

“While we walk the pilgrim pathway
Clouds will overspread the sky
But when travlin' days are over
Not a shadow, not a sigh.
When we all get to heaven
What a day of rejoicing that will be,
When we all see Jesus
We'll sing and shout the victory!”

2 Corinthians 4:18 is a good reminder for all of us as we close our study: “While we look not at the things which are seen (*our suffering, hardships, trials, impending death*), but at the things which are not seen (*our future in Heaven, release from all suffering and pain, seeing Jesus, getting a new body*): for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.”

Where we look is important as we move into our sunset years and finally travel the last mile of the way. Our viewpoint must be on the future, eternal realities and not the transitory things related to earth. We must face the fact that our bodies are getting older and they are moving toward the tomb while at the same time our spirit is closer to Heaven. We can do so with



great anticipation of what lies ahead for each one of us as God's children. We have a glorious inheritance and destiny awaiting us. Although we don't see the future with our physical eyes, we do see it with the eyes of faith. Abraham, “looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God” (Heb. 11:10). Anticipation and longing for our future glory

helps us deal with the temporary sufferings that we endure in this life. It gives us the courage and hope we need while passing through the valley.

Someday we will have gone the last mile of our journey on this earth and we will depart to that special place God has prepared for us. Someone wrote these encouraging words that should thrill our hearts.

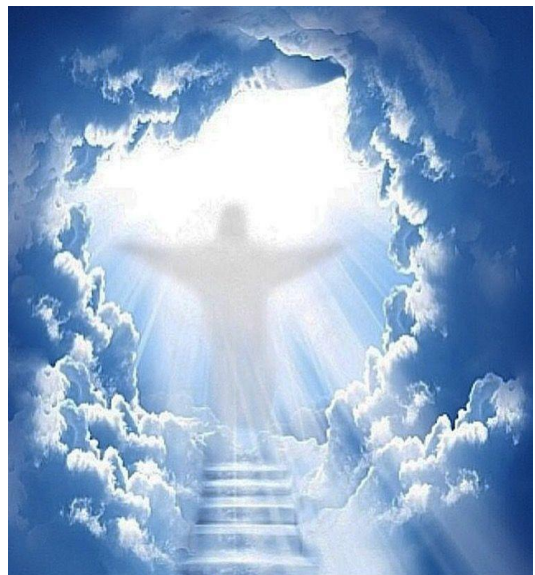
“A Great day is coming, Heavens gates will open wide,
And all who love the Lord will enter in;
To join with their loved ones who in Jesus Christ have died;
Our eternal life in Heaven to begin.
And the Lord Himself will greet us on that great and glorious day
And with the smile of the proudest Father He’ll look at us and say,
‘Welcome Home Children! This is the place I’ve prepared for you.
Welcome home children, now that your work on earth is through.
Welcome home children, you who have followed so faithfully
Welcome home children! Welcome home children!
Here where I am you shall always be
Forever rejoicing with me.’”

Yes, we will be “present with the Lord” (2 Cor. 5:8). What a thrilling moment it will be when we see Jesus for the very first time! The Bible places an emphasis on seeing Jesus and looking at His face for the very first time.

Revelation 22:4

“And they shall see his face; and his name *shall be* in their foreheads.”

Imagine what it will be like to see Jesus for the very first time when we step inside the gates of Heaven! Imagine how wonderful it will be to dwell with Christ forever within the great heavenly city and the place He has prepared for us (John 14:1-2). Throughout the eternal ages of time Christ’s revelation to us will be visual but at the same time His personal presence and



fellowship will also be impressed upon our minds and hearts which is what “their foreheads” indicates.

As previously stated, in Heaven there will be a personal communion with God that far surpasses what we experience here on earth. Although millions upon millions of people will populate the great heavenly city, we will still have an ongoing, intimate, and personal awareness of God’s fellowship. When we see the face of the Jesus Christ for the very first time, it will be a joyous revelation and experience that we will never forget.

“We shall see His lovely face some bright golden morning,
When the clouds have parted and the shades have flown;
Sorrow will be turned to joy, heartaches gone forever;
No more night, only light, when we see His face.
God shall wipe away all tears some bright golden morning,
When the journey's ended, and the course is run;
No more crying, pain or death in that home of gladness,
Trials cease, all is peace, when we see His face.”

The Bible says that “we shall see him as he is” (1 John 3:2), either at the return and Rapture of Christ’s Church or when we die and go to Heaven. This expression means that we will have unhindered fellowship in the presence of God in a way that we have never experienced before. We will see Jesus in all of His wonderful purity, glory, and splendor. Dear friend, to live in His heavenly presence will be a joyous and unending privilege throughout eternity.

“Sweet is the hope that is thrilling my soul—
I know I’ll see Jesus some day!
Then what if the dark clouds of sin o’er me roll,
I know I’ll see Jesus some day!

I know I’ll see Jesus some day!
I know I’ll see Jesus some day!
What a joy it will be
When His face I shall see,
I know I’ll see Jesus some day!”

We will not only see the face of Jesus but also the prints of the nails in His hands.



Zechariah 13:6

“And *one* shall say unto him, What *are* these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, *Those* with which I was wounded *in* the house of my friends.”

This is a prophecy about the Second Coming but reminds us that Jesus Christ in His resurrection body does retain the wounds of the nails in His hands. Why? It’s because it will be a precious reminder to us throughout eternity of the suffering and salvation that Jesus provided for us on the cross. We will actually see Jesus face to face and look upon the nail prints in His hands which saved our souls from hell and gave us the hope of eternal life in Heaven. Imagine what it will be like when we see Jesus for the very first time. The blind Fanny Crosby also wrote these lovely words:

“When my life's work is ended and I cross the swelling tide
And the bright and glorious morning I shall see
I shall know my Redeem when I reach the other side
His smile will be the first to welcome me

I shall know Him, I shall know Him
And redeemed by His side I shall stand
I shall know Him, I shall know Him
By the print of the nails in His hand.”

Application Questions:

- Have you expressed personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ to be your Savior?
- Have you been reflecting on the great victory that you have over death because Jesus rose from the dead and opened the pathway to Heaven for you?
- Are you ready to reclaim your victory over death right now by resting in the victory Christ has provided through His death and resurrection?
- What kind of things can you look forward to in Heaven?

A bright young girl of fifteen was suddenly cast upon a bed of suffering, completely paralyzed on one side and nearly blind. She heard the family doctor say to her parents as they stood by the bedside: “She has seen her best days, poor child!” “No, doctor,” she exclaimed, “my best days are yet to come, when I shall see the King in His beauty.” This will be true for all of us who know Jesus Christ as our personal Savior!

This is why the hymn writer wrote:

