

Blessed Are the Dead Who Die in the Lord

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 01 February 2015

Preacher: Rev Iver Martin

[0 : 01] And we'll read that first section there from 1 to 12. 1 Peter chapter 1.

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who are elect exiles of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood.

May grace and peace be multiplied to you. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

In this you rejoice, though now for a little while of necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold, that perishes though it is tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

[1 : 42] Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories.

It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves, but you, and the things that have now been announced to you through those who preach the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.

Amen. And we pray God's blessing upon our reading. We're going to sing now in Psalm 68, and this time it's from the Scottish Psalter version of the Psalm. It's page number 303.

Page 303. It's Psalm number 68. We're going to sing from verse 17. We'll sing five stanzas to the tune Sheffield.

God's chariots, 20,000 are thousands of angels strong. In his holy place God is, as in Mount Zinai, them among.

[2 : 48] Thou hast, O Lord, most glorious, ascended up on high, and in triumph victorious led, captive, captivity. We'll sing from 17 down to verse 25.

Five stanzas, we're going to stand to sing. Amen. Australia's 20,000 are thousands of angels strong.

In his holy place God is, as in Mount Sinai, them among.

The past, O Lord, most glorious, ascended upon high, and in triumph victorious led, captive, captivity.

Love has received gifts for men, for such as did revel.

[4 : 15] giving for them that God the Lord, in midst of them might dwell.

Let be the Lord who is to us, of our salvation God, who daily bread, this benefit, as plenched us, be the Lord.

He of salvation is the Lord, who is our God most strong.

And unto God, the Lord from there, the issues do belong.

our second reading this evening is Revelation chapter 14.

[5 : 41] Revelation, the last book of the Bible, and the 14th chapter, we're going to read the first section of that chapter, from 1 to 13. It's on page 1244, in my edition of the ESV Bible.

Revelation 14. We'll read from the beginning of that passage. Revelation 14. Then I looked, and behold, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him 144,000, who had his name and his father's name written on their foreheads.

And I heard a voice from heaven, like the roar of many waters, and like the sound of loud thunder. The voice I heard was like the sound of harpists, playing on their harps.

And they were singing a new song before the throne, and before the four living creatures, and before the elders. No one could learn that song, except the 144,000, who had been redeemed from the earth.

It is these who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are virgins. It is these who follow the Lamb wherever he goes. These have been redeemed from mankind, as firstfruits for God and the Lamb.

[6 : 51] And in their mouth no lie was found, for they are blameless. Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim, to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people.

And he said with a loud voice, Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come, and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water.

Another angel, a second, followed, saying, Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who made all nations drink the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality.

And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a loud voice, If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, he will also drink the wine of God's wrath, poured full strength into the cup of his anger, and he will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.

And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest day or night, these worshippers of the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of its name.

[8 : 06] Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and keep their faith in Jesus. And I heard a voice from heaven saying, Write this, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.

Blessed indeed, says the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them. Amen. And once again we ask God to bless his own word and to bring it to us with great power.

We're going to once again join together in prayer. Lord, it's our privilege to pray for other people, people who are in different circumstances from our own.

We are commanded to rejoice with those who rejoice, and we're commanded to weep with those who weep. And we ask, Lord, that we might be always conscious of those who are suffering around us, near to us, in our community, in our own homes, in our streets, and in our congregation, and those who are far away from us also.

Lord, we are always made conscious of the suffering that there is in various parts of the world, of various kinds. Lord, there is sickness, there is war, there is fear, there is abuse, there is injustice.

[9:31] Lord, we live in a world in which we are continuously reminded of how restless and uneasy that world is, how full of turmoil and uncertainty the world is, and it was ever thus.

We know, Lord, from reading the history of this world that it is full of suffering, and it will always be because we are violent men and women and people who are estranged from you.

And that is why we know that the only answer is the reconciling power of the gospel. And so, Lord, we pray for the gospel, and we want to always, every Lord's Day, when we remember, when we come together, how can we not want other people to have what we have?

And how can we fail to believe that the God who has done a miracle in our hearts cannot do a miracle in the hearts of those who do not know you at this time?

We ask, Lord, for the many people in this world, in various tribes and nations and places and locations in the world who have never heard the gospel.

[10:38] Father, we are so privileged. We have heard it time and time again. Many of us this evening have, we know the gospel from when we were young.

It was the first thing that we heard. Amongst the first thing we learned were the words that reflect what Jesus did when he came into the world to seek and to save those who were lost.

So, Father, we can hardly believe that there are people in this day and age who haven't heard and yet there are. We ask for, we give thanks that we live in a world where by means of technology and information that the good news of Jesus can go out to the many, many parts of the world.

And we thank you for people who are accessing the gospel for the very first time and coming to faith in Jesus. And we pray that this will continue and you will add to your church.

We pray for where the church is weak and where it is so new and where right now your people are gathering together in primitive conditions, not knowing what to do or how to conduct a service and not knowing who to be the leader or who to, what kind of service to have.

[11:59] Lord, we pray that you will bless where the gospel is fresh and where the gospel is such a new thing that people are learning from the very first time what we have known all our lives.

And we ask that you will add to your number. We pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to work in these places and use your people as they continue that work.

We pray for all those who are involved in mission work. We thank you for the privilege next week, if it's your will, of having Manuel Reanu. And we pray for him and his work. We are conscious of how often that work has seemed so perplexing and so stressful for him and for his wife.

And Lord, we're conscious of those who are laboring right now, like him, who are spending all their time in the service of Jesus so that they can prepare others to work amongst people and to share the gospel with them and to disciple people, to show them how to live in obedience to you.

Lord God, we give thanks for the many examples we've had of men and women who have showed us how to live the Christian life and how to put the Bible first.

[13:15] We pray, Lord, that as they move in trying to teach people how to live the Christian life in obedience to you, putting God first in their thoughts and in their conversation and their conduct, we pray for them, Lord.

We also, Lord, we want to pray for our own situations here. We pray that you will continue to bless your word. We ask that you will break the resistance that there is in our own culture to hearing the gospel.

We pray that you will give a real sense of emptiness to those who perhaps have plenty of everything else in this world and yet they still cannot find the satisfaction that they're looking for because they don't have God in them.

Pray for anyone here this evening in that position and ask that even tonight as we reflect on what your word tells us about life after death, we pray that you will speak to them and transform them and plant that seed within them and bring them to that step of faith in which they follow Jesus and in which they experience that life-changing power that the Holy Spirit can bring to us.

Lord, so that's what we pray for this evening. We ask, Lord, that you will hear our prayer. We pray for John Norman's family. We give thanks for every remembrance of him and for what he was in this congregation.

[14:48] We pray for the family now, for Lily and the family, that you will bind them together as they come to reflect on the many, many memories they have of a father, a grandfather, a husband and pray for this evening and for tomorrow as we gather as a congregation and we ask, Lord, that you will remind us afresh of how short our lives are here in this world and give us to make the most of every opportunity and give us to make the most of every person that we have in our fellowship and every day that we have.

Oh, Lord, our God, we pray that you will give us to count our days so that we may apply our hearts to wisdom and to make sure that we belong to Jesus and that we follow him and love him with our whole heart in Jesus' name.

Amen. We're going to sing now before we turn to that passage of scripture. Psalm 27, it's the Sing Psalms version. It's on page 32 and we're going to sing from verse 4 to verse 8.

Five stanzas. Psalm 27, verse 4. Sing Psalms. It's on page 32. The tune is Jackson. One thing I'll plead before the Lord and this I'll seek always that I may come within God's house and dwell there all my days.

From 4 to verse 8 and we'll stand to sing. One thing I'll plead before the Lord and this I'll seek that I may come within God's house and dwell there all my days.

[16:49] But on the beauty of the Lord I constantly make it and in His house may seek to know direction in His ways.

For in His reign He will keep me safe and troubled days within His hand He'll shelter me and Lord the road He raised.

My head My head will let me lift and I above my enemies and in His hand I'll sacrifice with shunts of joy and praise.

Lord hear me when I call to You be mercy and sing who will speak and sing my face You told my heart Your face Lord I will see see Will you turn with me to the second passage we read to Revelation chapter 14 14 and at verse 13 we read the following Revelation 14 13 and I heard a voice from heaven saying write this blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on blessed indeed says the spirit that they may rest in the world.

In the Lord from now on. blessed indeed says the spirit that they may rest from their labors for their deeds follow them.

[19:39] In the old days if you wanted to make an announcement about anything it was an enormously difficult thing to do.

Compared to nowadays when you hear announcements from all quarters and you hear it in a very very short space of time. Nowadays announcements there you we all hear them by way of television by way of newspapers and by way of the internet.

Somebody wants to announce something all they do is put on Facebook and it's around the world within seconds. It was not ever thus. In the old days before all of the technology that we enjoy if you wanted to make an announcement you had to ride a horse and you had to go all over the country and to post literally nail your announcement on the doors of various well known buildings.

And it would take sometimes days sometimes weeks for an important announcement to be made. Nevertheless announcements were made and announcements are still to this day hugely important.

It's information it's the way in which we learn about what's going on in various parts of the country and in various various bodies. The verse that I have just read is an announcement.

[21:13] It's an announcement from heaven. Which means that the source of that announcement.

The one who is making that announcement is none other than God himself. And because it is an announcement from heaven there cannot be a mistake.

It is absolutely certain and it is trustworthy and it is sure. We can believe it and we can rely upon it.

There's no hidden agenda in it. It's not meant to deceive you. It's not meant to trick you and it's not meant to rob you of anything. It cannot be anything else but true and it is sent from heaven by God for you to you.

That's what an announcement is. It's when in the old days it would be the king sending an announcement of some law or some rule that the king wanted to be enacted right away.

[22:28] It was his word to you. And here we have an announcement from the king, the king of the universe, the ruler of all the universe. And it is his word because he wants you to know something.

He has announced it. His message. It's almost as if it was just him and you. It is from him to you. And here is what it says.

It says, write this, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on. Blessed indeed says the spirit that they may rest from their labors for their deeds.

Follow them. I want us to think of three very simple things about this announcement this evening. I want us to think, first of all, that it is a heavenly announcement.

I want us to see, secondly, that it is an extraordinary announcement. And I want us to see, thirdly, that it is an impossible announcement.

[23:35] And yet, with God, nothing is impossible. It is only impossible with us. With God. With God. Because this is God's announcement.

The impossible becomes not only possible. It becomes certain. And true. Because when you listen, when you read the content of what this notice tells us.

It can only come from God. Because it tells us something about another world. It is not about what is happening in this world, in this life.

It is about what is happening in another world. A place that none of us have ever been to. A place that none of us have ever seen.

It is totally different from the world and from the life that we know in this world. But because the same God who made this world has made the other world.

[24:43] We can be sure that it is true and that it exists. We do not know where this other world is geographically.

There is no map that you can go to. To point out where the other world is. It is not another planet. And it is not another star. You can be the best expert of the galaxies and the stars.

You can be the best astronomer in the world. And you won't be able to tell where this world is. And that is because it is a different order of creation.

A different kind of existence to the one that we know in this world. We only know what we can see and what we can hear and what we can feel and what we can taste.

And what we can sense around us. Our life here in this world is so limited to our senses. It does not go beyond that. But the world that is being spoken about here in this announcement is a different order altogether.

[25 : 47] One which language can't describe. That is why people have such problem with the book of Revelation. And that is why the biggest mistake you can make is to try and interpret it literally.

The book of Revelation is full of symbolic language. And that is because our language simply cannot cope with the realities that are being described.

Our minds can't cope with what's being described. And so all that can be done is we can try and grasp what heaven is from the symbolic language.

It's a different order of existence to this one. We have to think when we want to think heaven. We have to think differently to the way in which we think in this world.

And of course that's virtually impossible for any one of us. But don't be tempted to think of heaven as being some kind of location as we know it somewhere beyond.

[26 : 53] You know there's a song that says that it's way beyond the blue. That's just not the case. Heaven is not way beyond the blue. Heaven I believe is far nearer than we than anyone really appreciates.

Much closer than we think. Heaven probably doesn't obey the same physical laws as you and I are used to. And as we are restricted by.

We don't know. Are there colors in heaven? I don't mean are there color. I mean are there the same kind of colors as we. You are the reds and the greens and the blues. Or is there a different order of color and sight and optical systems.

We don't know. The things that we are used to here in this world. We think that's all there is anywhere. We're wrong. The Lord who has made this world so wonderful.

And has given us such beauty and splendor in the universe. Could make a million different kinds of universes. Each one with their own order of existence and laws of science.

[28 : 04] Whatever science he chooses to create in all of these existences. And yet. Whatever we know about.

We don't know very much about. What the Bible calls heaven. There's not a huge amount of information. About it. And that's because as I said before.

We can't. Our minds simply cannot cope. We'll have to have renewed minds. Sinless minds. A different kind of mind. To be able to absorb. What we see. And what we hear.

Around us. When we. Arrive. In the place that God is preparing. For his people. And yet. Nevertheless. It is a real place.

When Jesus spoke to his disciples. Just before. He died. He died. He said. I go. To prepare. The same Jesus. As you are looking at.

[29 : 03] As we are. Talking together. The same person. As. You know. Over the last three years. I. Myself. I'm going personally. To prepare. A place.

For you. And just like. I am real. Says Jesus. I am going to prepare. A real place. For you. So heaven is not some kind of wishful thought. It's not some kind of pie in the sky.

It is as real. As this world. Because the same God. Who created this world. Has created. Another. The only reason. Why we have never seen it.

Is because God has chosen. To keep it hidden from us. At least. For. Now. But whatever we don't know.

About the other world. That are one or two things. That we do know. We know. That God. That God. Is. There. You might say.

[30 : 02] Well God is everywhere. Otherwise he wouldn't be God. That's what. Omnipresence means. Means the God who is not. Confined to one particular place.

In time and space. He's everywhere. Yes. That is absolutely true. True. But there is a special sense. In which God. Is dwelling.

In his fullness. The fullness of his glory. In heaven. There was a time. When God. Dwelt on. Or.

When God's presence was. Amongst. Men and women in this world. When he created the world perfectly. And when he put them into the garden of Eden. And when. They enjoyed that unbroken. Sinless fellowship with him.

But the moment sin came into the world. A separation. Came into being. That. That separated. That. That. That.

[30 : 58] That. That God was going to be. Apart from. This world. But what the Bible tells us about heaven. Is that God lives in his splendor. And in his glory. He dwells in unapproachable light.

Heaven. Therefore. Is first and foremost. The place. Where God is. We know also. That because God. Is there. That God. It's God's dwelling place.

We know that there is nothing sinful. In heaven. When God made the world. It was a sinless place. Quite how sin was allowed. To enter into this world.

Is a mystery. None of us will ever. Know the answer to that. But heaven is different. We can say that sin. Has never entered. Into heaven. And we can also say that sin.

Will never. Invade. This other world. In the way in which. It had. Has invaded. This world. We know also.

[31 : 57] From the Bible. That angels. Are in heaven. Angels are other beings. That God. Has created. That God. That God. Has created. That God. Has created. And some of these beings.

We believe. Fell from. Their sinless condition. And they became demons. But the rest. Thousands. Thousands. Thousands. Thousands. Thousands.

We don't know how many. Angels there are. They remained. Sinless. And devoted to God. In their perfection. Why is it so difficult. To believe.

In angels. Isn't it not strange. That people. Are so ready. To believe in aliens. You get people saying that.

They tell you how many. Billions of. Of stars. There are. In galaxy. In the universe. Which is. Millions. And millions. And millions. Of light years.

[32 : 53] Apart. And they'll tell you. But that by the laws. Of probability. That if life can be sustained. Here. In this part. Of the universe. Then it's likely.

That life can be sustained. In another part. Of the universe. And so it's likely. That. Other life forms. Have evolved. Well that's. If you take.

A godless view. Of. Why. Or of how. We have come to exist. You take God. Out of the picture. Then what you're left with. Is probability. And chance.

But it doesn't seem. To be difficult. For so many people. To believe. In probability. And chance. Over and against. Believing in. Because if I say tonight. That. Well why don't we believe.

That we're here. Because God wants us. To exist. And because God has created us. And the same God. Who has created us. Has created another. Order of beings. He can create. As many order of beings. As he wants to.

[33 : 48] You get laughed at. When you say that. Why is one cool. And the other one isn't. Why is one to believe. In godless evolution. Chance evolution.

Why is that so popular. And why is so unpopular. Well it was always the same. Wasn't it. Believing in Jesus. Has never been popular. It's never been cool.

And that's why. Have you become a Christian. Tonight. Prepare. For a difficult life. To be prepared. For people. To go against you. And to laugh at you. And to mock you. And to marginalize you.

That's the way it's always been. And that's what Jesus. Has always promised. For those who follow. Him. Tonight. We believe in a supreme being.

Who has created us. For himself. And he has also created. Other beings. Other life forms. What is the. What could the Bible calls. Angels.

[34 : 47] Angels. That have been created. To worship him. And to serve him. As his messengers. And I'm not going to say. Any more about. Angels. I'm just going to say. Say that.

But then. Another thing. That's true about heaven. Is that there are people. There. Dead people. That's what it says.

Blessed are. The dead. Blessed are. The dead. They're dead.

Because they have died. In this world. But they are not dead. In heaven. Their life has extended. Beyond this world. And their life continues.

Into a life. That will never end. We're promised. There's not just a few of them. Don't ever fall into the trap. Of believing that.

[35 : 44] That heaven is populated. By only a few. There are millions. And millions. Of people. If you read. Revelation chapter 7. You'll find. A number. A multitude.

That cannot be counted. And they're around the throne. Praising and worshipping. And gazing in wonder. And loving. Every single.

Every single. Eternal moment. Of what it is. To be around. The throne. Of God. And each of these people. Lived in some capacity.

In this world. Some of them. Lived a long life. In this world. 70. 80. 90 years old. Perhaps. More than that. In the old testament.

Some of them. Only lived till middle age. Some of them. Died. As children. And some of them. Died before. They were born. Heaven is full.

[36 : 39] Of a multitude. That no one. Can. Count. Some of them. Are the people. That we. Knew. In this world.

That we walked with. And that we talked with. And we lived with. And we fellowshiped with. But all of these people. Have one thing. In common. They followed.

Jesus Christ. They were God's people. They were born again. And their names. Were written. In the Lamb's.

Book. Of. Life. So this is. A heavenly. Announcement. It's also. An extraordinary.

Announcement. And by that. When you read it. You think. Well. There's something. Really strange. About this. There's something. That's. Just not quite. Logical.

[37:36] As far as. Our logic. Is concerned. And the Bible's. Logic. Very often. Differs. From our logic. Here's one. Prime example. When you think. About it. Look at the way.
It's put. Blessed. Are the dead. It's the very opposite. To the kind of. Thing. The kind of message. That you would expect. From the world. The world. Tells to us. Tonight. Blessed are you. While you live.
Life is for this. For living. And to make the most. Our goal. And our. Objective. In this world. We only live. For a short time. Our lives. Here. Will come to an end.
So therefore. The. The. The point of life. Is this world. Is this world. And now. And here. And now. For as long as you live. We only live. Once we're told. But here.
The Bible. Is telling us. What seems to be. The very opposite. That those who are. Really happy. And those who are. Totally fulfilled. Are the ones. Who are dead.

[38:31] That can't be right. After all. We know. We're going to die. Every one of us. We know. That that's the one. Certainty. That every one of us.
Faces. Death is inevitable. And we think of death. As the end. Of life. Not life. Death is the very opposite.
Of life. The very opposite. Of happiness. You can't be happy. If you're dead. But that's not what the Bible says.
The Bible says. Blessed. Are the dead. Who die. In. The Lord. And if you go on. And if you choose to.
Believe that death is nothingness. Then there is nothing more. If there's no God. Then death being the termination. Of all things physical.

[39:27] And biological. Death just signals the end. And the decay. That awaits the body. And all you have. As long as you live in this world.
As memories. As memories of those. That you've lost. And that's all you've got. And that's what keeps. As going. That's all there is.
When you take God out of the equation. When you choose not to believe in God. You really have nothing. You have no explanation. You have no reason. You have no purpose.
It's just. What is. And as death. And life. Are both amount to the same thing. They are meaningless. They have no value.
We are just. A dot. In the middle of a vast universe. A dot that happens. To be speaking. To one. In which we happen to be speaking.

[40:23] To one another. And asking these meaningless questions. I feel so sorry for people. Who refuse to believe in God this evening. If that's you. I won't ask. I'm asking you tonight. To think again.
I'm asking you tonight. To read the Bible. Read. At least. Make it your ambition. To read what God says about himself. And to ask. What logical sense.
Does your position make. And how does it even begin to answer. The questions. That naturally lie. In your heart. Questions that.

Go beyond this life. And go beyond this world. Questions that cannot be answered. By atheism. And meaninglessness. But.

It's also. An impossible statement. It's an impossible statement. Blessed. Blessed. Are. The dead. I said this.

[41:19] A wee. A wee minute ago. If you listen to the message of God's. God's message in the Bible. You discover that. Life. That he. Has created.
It extends. Beyond. This life. And beyond. Death. Listen to how Jesus. Puts it. In. John chapter 11. And verse 25.

And I think that this. Illustrates. How impossible. This. Statement is. And I'm saying all this. Deliberately. You might wonder. How can he possibly.

How can. How can he say. What justifies him in saying that. Any statement of the Bible. Is impossible. And that'll become clear. In a minute. Listen to what Jesus says.

In John chapter 11. In verse 25. I am the resurrection. And the life. Jesus said. Whoever believes in me. Though he were. Dead.

[42:12] Though he die. Yet shall he live. And everyone who lives. And believes in me. Shall never die. Now when you think about that. It says pretty much the same thing. As this verse here.

It assumes that. Life. Extends beyond life. In this world. But it also. Says things. Which to our way of logical thinking. Are impossible.

It's a contradiction. You know. People say. There are contradictions. In the Bible. Yes. There are contradictions. In the Bible. There are.

Usually. When people say. There are contradictions. In the Bible. The contradictions. That they're talking about. Can actually be explained. Very easily. But there are. Contradictions. In the Bible. And you know. Why I say this.

With absolute confidence. Is because. God is able. To take. What we find. To be contradictory. And bring them together. Because he has the authority. To bring them together.

[43:12] He alone. Has that authority. Nothing. Is impossible. With God. Now here's something. That for our way of thinking. Contradicts. Itself. But with God.

As far as God. Sees it. He brings these two. Opposites together. And joins them together. Look at what Jesus says. In that statement. That I've just quoted. He says. I am the resident.

Excellent life. Whoever believes in me. Though he die. Yet shall he live. Then he goes on to say. And everyone who lives. And believes in me. Shall never die. Now these are two.

Contradictory statements. Because he's saying. On the one hand. Though he die. Yet shall he live. And on the other hand. He's saying. In the same breath. He shall never die. Well.

It's got to be either. One or the other. Hasn't it? Both things can't be true. Either. He dies. Or he doesn't die. Jesus seems to be.

[44:07] Suggesting. That it's possible to die. And not die. Yes it is. Absolutely correct. Because it depends on the perspective.

That you're looking for. That you're looking at. From our perspective. We must all die. And death.

Signals the end of life. As we have lived in this world. We tonight. Have lost a brother. He has passed away.

His funeral will be tomorrow. And God willing. We will bring to a closure. By. By. Laying what remains.

Of this. Life. This body. Into. The grave. But God has promised. That the grave. Is a temporary.

[45:07] Resting place. Until. The resurrection. One day. Jesus. Will. Return. In all his glory. He says. Accompanied by angels.

And the trumpet. Will sound. And then something. Quite uniquely. Spectacular. Will take place. The dead. Will rise. I don't know.

How. That's going to happen. And I know. How. Utterly. Impossible. Scientifically. That is. People. Who have been dead. For tens. Decades.

Hundreds. Thousands. Of years. Whose bodies. Have. Who. Have. Are no longer. They no longer. Exist. In any form. Yet. God.

Has. Promised. That when. Jesus. Returns. That. These bodies. Will be. Reconstituted. And recreated. And glorified. And brought together. In sinless. Perfection.

[46:02] And made. To look. Like. Jesus. In some way. And he. Will. Personally. Do it. He says this. John. Chapter 5. Verse 28. Don't listen to me. Listen to Jesus.

An hour. Is coming. He says. When all. Those. Who are in the tombs. Will hear his voice. And come out. Those. Who have done good. To the resurrection. Of life.

And those. Who have done evil. To the resurrection. Of judgment. So that's what. Jesus. Means. When he says. Though he die. Yet.

Shall he live. Though that person. Passes away. And though the body. Is placed. In the ground. It is only. A temporary measure. Because yet. Shall he live.

On the day. That Jesus. Returns. To this world. The graves. Will open. And God's people. Will rise again. It also says. That everyone. Will rise. Those who have.

[46:56] Rejected. The gospel. Will rise. To the judgment. Don't let me. Ignore. That element. There's a promise.

And there's a warning. It's twofold. Everyone. Will rise. Though he die. Says Jesus. Yet. Shall he live. But he also.

Goes on to say. He who. Lives and believes. In me. Shall never die. There's what we call. The contradiction. But in actual fact. It's not a contradiction. Because now. He's no longer.

Looking from the perspective. Of the outsider. Looking in. He's looking from the perspective. Of the person. Who dies himself. Because for him. There is no death. Some people.

Pass out of this world. In unconsciousness. For that person. It's waking up. In glory. Like waking up. On a new day.

[47:54] Some people. Die. In consciousness. For them. It's the twinkling. Of an eye. If you blink. You miss it. It's simply. A transformation.

From being in this world. To all of a sudden. Seeing the face of Jesus. In glory. Whatever way it is. That person.

Who lives and dies. In Jesus Christ. Will. Never. Die. And from that moment. Onwards. For that person.

Who died in the Lord. But. Who hasn't died. That person. From that moment. Onwards. Is in a state. Of supreme. Happiness.

That's what the word. Blessedness means. You know that already. You know that. The word blessed. Comes. It runs all the way. Through the Bible. It's one of the key words. Of the Bible.

[48:50] It's not the happiness. That comes and goes. And that grows. And falls. That rises and falls. And that is dependent. Dependent on the. The various circumstances.

Whether they're happy times. Or sad times. The. Blessedness. Is. The kind of happiness. That only God can give you. And perfect blessedness. Perfect.

Is the happiness. That we can only experience. From God. Himself. And it's an unbroken happiness. It's an indescribable happiness.

It's a heavenly happiness. It has to be that way. Because it exists in heaven. Where there is no breach. And where there is no sadness.

There cannot be. In God. Who is. Joy. Who is. Joy in himself. As well as being love.

[49 : 49] And as well as being holiness. And as well as being light. And peace. And truth. He is joy. That's why Jesus. And wasn't it interesting.

When he says in his parable. Not the parable. But his. His prophecy. In Matthew chapter 25. When the. The person who. The man who was left.

The ten talents. And the five talents. And when he came to the master. He says. Enter thou into the joy. Of the Lord. Notice he uses that word.

In particular. The joy. Of the Lord. God is characterized. Amongst other things. By joy. Which is of course. Why we ought to be characterized.

Even in this life. By joy. As the fruit. Of the spirit. And they're blessed. Because they enter. Into the personal company.

[50 : 45] Of Jesus. No longer wrestling. With the doubts. That we've been assailed by. In this world. I wonder if it's true. Was Jesus truly.

The son of God. Did his death. Truly. Pay for my sins. Is Jesus truly. The only way. To God. How do I know.

We're. Continuously. Surrounded. By. These kind of questions. Particularly in a. Skeptical world. Well there won't be. These questions anymore. Because we will see him. God's people will see him.

Face to face. And there will be that. Total fulfillment. And rest. In knowing. That it's all over. Then they'll be blessed.

Because they'll be made perfect. The Christian life. Is full. I don't need to tell you this. You know. How. How. Much of a struggle.

[51 : 45] The Christian life is. Against the temptations. That constantly. Surround us. Here. In this world. The kind of thoughts.

That creep into our minds. Before you know it. We're sinning. Again. We're struggling. Again. Day after day.

But on the day. When we are. Brought into the presence. Of the king. All of that struggle. Will have disappeared. They will rest. From their labors.

And their works. Will follow them. If you're looking for a. Trouble free life. This evening. Don't follow Jesus. The Christian life.

Is full of commitment. Because when a person. Comes to love Jesus. And comes to discover. What Jesus did. For them. It's a commitment. It's a commitment. It's a commitment. That draws us.

[52 : 45] Into service. It's not an idle love. It's an active love. I can't think. I can't help thinking.

When I read. This verse. That they may. Rest from their labors. I can't help thinking. Of a brother. Whose death. We're mourning this evening. And how active.

Life. What an example. That was. To all of us. And is. To all of us. To be doing. God's work. In our own. Different ways. The Christian life.

Is an active life. And sometimes. That activity. The sheer activity. Of serving Jesus. It makes you tired. Makes you weary. It gets to you.

Sometimes. Especially when. When you. Give your service. To the Lord. And things don't happen. The way you expect them to. Or the way you pray. For them.

[53 : 42] And we become disappointed. And weary. Even with the life. That Jesus. Has given to us. Well. On the day. That we're brought. Into the.

The presence. Of Jesus. There will be rest. Rest. From their labors. But their works.

Will follow them. Tonight. I want us. To be assured. Of the certainty. Of this promise. The certainty.

Not just of life. After death. But precisely. What the Bible. Tells us. About what that life. After death. Will. Mean. For those.

Who have. Refused. To listen. To the gospel. And refused. To trust. In Jesus. How can you. How can you.

[54 : 39] Just turn away. From the son. Of God himself. How can you. Fail. To. Give yourself.

What is there. What is there. In this world. That is worth. More. Than being saved. Tell me. There isn't anything.

Is there. And yet. You've turned away. From Jesus. Jesus. Please turn again.

Please turn. To him. And give him. Your life. And your all. Because whatever.

The Christian life. Involves. It's worth it. It's worth it. In this life. And it's worth it. In glory. There's a hymn that says.

[55 : 42] It's not. It is not death. To die. To leave this weary road. And midst the brotherhood. On high.

To be at home. With God. It is not death. To close the eye. Long dimmed. By tears. And wake. In glorious repose. To spend.

Eternal years. It is not death. To bear the wrench. That sets us free. From dungeon chain. To breathe the air. Of boundless liberty.

It is not death. To fling aside. This sinful dust. And rise. On strong. Exalting. Wing. To live. Among the just. Jesus.

Thou prince of life. Thy chosen. Cannot die. Like thee. They conquer. In the strife. To reign.

[56 : 41] With thee. On high. Let's pray. Our father in heaven. We pray. That you will give us. That faith. To believe. What we cannot see.

And on the promise. That one day. That one day. We will see. And when we see. Everything. Will fall into place. And there will be.

Perfect. Happiness. Never again. To be spoiled. By sin. Give us. To see that. The way to get there.

Is only. Jesus. Jesus. And that we can do nothing. In ourselves. To earn. Your salvation. Lord.

If there's anyone here. This evening. Who has been trying. His whole life. To earn. Your favor. Lord. Show him how to give up. And show him. Lord. That it's all been done.

[57 : 37] In the death. And resurrection. Of Jesus. Us. And so. Lord. Convince us. And persuade us. And compel us. And draw us. Lord. And encourage us. This evening.

And forgive our sin. In Jesus name. Amen. Amen. We're going to sing together. In closing. Psalm 73. Verse. 23.

And that's the. Sing. The traditional version of the Psalms. On page 316. Psalm 73. And it's the traditional version.

It's on page 316. Verse 23. Nevertheless. Continually. O Lord. I am with thee. Thou dost me hold. By my right hand. And still. Upholdest me. Thou with thy counsel.

While I live. Will me conduct. And guide. And to thy glory. Afterward. Receive me. To abide. We'll sing. Verse. These verses.

[58 : 32] Psalm. Verse 23. To 26. Four stanzas. And we'll stand. To sing. Therefore.

The flesh. Continually. O Lord. Lord. I am with thee. I am with thee.
Thou dost behold. By my right hand. And still. Thou upholdest me.
Thou with thy counsel. The light. Thou will love.
Thou would e'mark. Through. to abide. Whom abide in the heavens I love thee, O Lord
God alone, and in the earth whom I desire besides me there is none.

[60 : 07] My flesh and heart doth faint and fear, but God doth fail me never.
For of my heart God is the strength and portion forever.
Now may the grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the love of God, the Father, and
the communion and fellowship of the Holy Spirit rest on and abide with each one of us
both now and always. Amen.