

## Facing Death

### I. The purpose of this study

1. Every one of us is going to die if Christ doesn't return first.
2. Those of us who do not die suddenly are going to have to face the prospect of impending death.
3. All of us should be preparing for death now, but most people, including many Christians, don't even want to think about it.
4. The purpose of life on earth for a child of God is to prepare to die, meet God, be judged, and live in heaven (**Amo 4:12**).
  - A. The reason that most people are not ready to die is because they have not spent their lives thinking about it and preparing for it.
  - B. Unexpected things are always the hardest to deal with.
  - C. Most people, including old people, don't expect to die anytime soon, and therefore they are not prepared.
  - D. The purpose of this study is get you thinking about your own death and to help you to get prepared for it.

### II. Facing death as an unbeliever

1. Unbelievers fear death (**Heb 2:15**).
  - A. And *they should* because they have sinned against God, and He is angry with them (**Psa 7:11**).
  - B. When a wicked man dies his expectation and hope perishes (**Pro 11:7**).
  - C. All a wicked man has waiting for him is eternal wrath (**Rom 2:5-9**).
  - D. It's a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God (**Heb 10:31**).
2. What should an unbeliever do if he is fearful of death and God's judgment which follows?
  - A. Repent, believe and obey the gospel, and get baptized (**Mar 1:15; Mat 3:2, 5-6; Act 2:38**).
  - B. By doing so he is fleeing the wrath to come (**Mat 3:7**), and is showing the evidence that he is a child of God saved by grace who shall not come into condemnation (**Joh 5:24**).
  - C. Knowing the terror of the Lord I persuade men (**2Co 5:11**) to repent and believe the gospel that Jesus Christ died to justify sinners and save them from God's wrath (**Rom 5:8-9**).
  - D. All who believe *are justified* (are righteous in the sight of God) by Jesus Christ (**Act 13:39**).
  - E. If you truly believe that Jesus is the Christ, you are born of God (**1Jo 5:1**).
3. If you fear God and trust and obey Him, there's no reason to fear death.

### III. Facing death as a Christian

1. A Christian should not fear death.
  - A. Jesus Christ destroyed Satan who has the power of death (**Heb 2:14**).
  - B. Jesus delivered us from the bondage of the fear of death (**Heb 2:15**).
  - C. Jesus abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel (**2Ti 1:10**).

- D. Through His resurrection Jesus triumphed over the grave and is the first fruits of the resurrection (**1Co 15:20**).
  - E. Our bodies will be raised from the dead at His coming like His was (**1Co 15:22-23**).
  - F. Therefore, death has been vanquished and its sting has been taken away (**1Co 15:52-57**).
  - G. No Christian should therefore fear death or spend their lives trying to prevent it or stave it off.
2. A Christian should look forward to death.
- A. To die is gain (**Php 1:21**).
  - B. To depart and be with Christ is far better (**Php 1:23**).
  - C. Our father Abraham was not focused on this life, but on the next (**Heb 11:8-10**).
    - i. Abraham was a *sojourner* (**Heb 11:9**), a *stranger* (**Heb 11:13**), and a *pilgrim* (**Heb 11:13**).
      - a. Sojourn v. - 1. *intr.* To make a temporary stay in a place; to remain or reside for a time.
      - b. Stranger n. - 1. a. One who belongs to another country, a foreigner; chiefly (now exclusively), one who resides in or comes to a country to which he is a foreigner; an alien.
      - c. Pilgrim n. - 1. One who travels from place to place; a person on a journey; a wayfarer, a traveller; a wanderer; a sojourner.
    - ii. Like a traveler passing through, Abraham was not concerned with making himself a permanent dwelling on this earth.
    - iii. He was just passing though all the while desiring his final destination.
    - iv. He looked forward to being in the heavenly city (**Heb 11:10**) and country (**Heb 11:14**).
    - v. Abraham is now in the present heaven still waiting and desiring a better country on the new, resurrected earth (**Heb 11:16**).
    - vi. We should follow in the footsteps of our father Abraham and have our sights set on heaven and look forward to dying and getting there.
3. A Christian should be ready to die.
- A. Paul was confident and willing to be absent from the body and present with the Lord (**2Co 5:8**).
  - B. Can you say the same?
  - C. Paul thought it was far better to die and go to be with Jesus in heaven (**Php 1:23**).
  - D. Do you?
  - E. Paul didn't count his life dear unto himself (**Act 20:24**).
  - F. Can you say the same?
  - G. Paul was ready to die throughout his life (**Act 21:13; 2Ti 4:6**).
    - i. Paul is our example to follow (**1Co 4:16; Php 4:9**).
    - ii. Are you ready to die like Paul was?
  - H. Those who are nearing age 70 should especially be ready to die.
    - i. The reason? Because your time could come any day.
    - ii. If you're in your mid-60s or older and you are still talking about all the things you're going to do in the next 10-20 years, you need to get your thoughts aligned with the scriptures.

4. A Christian has heaven awaiting him when he dies (**Luk 23:42-43**).
  - A. Jesus has a place prepared for us (**Joh 14:1-3**).
  - B. All suffering and evil will be exchanged for blessing and goodness.
    - i. Suffering will be turned into comfort (**Luk 16:20-22, 25**).
    - ii. Mourning will be turned into consolation (**Mat 5:4**).
    - iii. Hunger and thirst for righteousness will be filled (**Mat 5:6**).
    - iv. Persecution will be turned into reward (**Mat 5:10-12**).
    - v. Weeping will be turned into laughing (**Luk 6:21**).
    - vi. Temporal pain will be turned into eternal pleasure (**Psa 16:11**).
5. It's normal to be shocked at the news of impending death (**1Ki 21:21 c/w 1Ki 21:27**).
  - A. Hezekiah pleaded with the Lord to extend his life when he was told he was going to die (**2Ki 20:1-3**).
    - i. But remember, Hezekiah was only 39 years old at the time.
      - a. He began to reign at 25 and reigned 29 years making him age 54 when he died (**2Ki 18:2**).
      - b. He was given an extra 15 years when he asked God to extend his life (**2Ki 20:6**).
      - c. Therefore, he was 39 when he was told he was going to die (54-15=39).
    - ii. Also remember that Hezekiah's plea was that he could live to go up to the house of the LORD (**2Ki 20:8**).
      - a. This is no doubt why God extended his life because he was seeking first the kingdom of God (**Mat 6:33**), not his earthly desires.
      - b. If you desire longer life to pursue your hopes and dreams and worldly desires, don't count on God granting your request.
      - c. But if your sincere desire is to live longer in order to worship God in His house, then God may grant your petition.
  - B. It's understandable *from an earthly perspective* for a 39 year old man to want to live a while longer, but if a person is 69 or 79 and is pleading for God to extend his life, he needs to examine his priorities.
    - i. The Lord has stated that we only normally get 70 years on this earth and 80 if we're strong (**Psa 90:10**).
      - a. Nowadays people view 70 as a floor not a ceiling.
        - (i) Most people don't even think of dying until they're in their 80s unless they are in very poor health.
        - (ii) If a person dies in his mid 70s, people are shocked.
        - (iii) This is just one of the many indications that we live in a Biblically illiterate society.
      - b. Since our time is short, we should pray that God would teach us to number our days so that we can apply our hearts unto wisdom (**Psa 90:12**).
      - c. We should not be numbering our days so that we can apply our hearts to our bucket list of travel, leisure, pleasure, and material pursuits.
    - ii. David died at 70 years old (**2Sa 5:4**).
      - a. He was said to be *old* and *stricken in years* (**1Ki 1:1**).

- b. He was said to be *very old* (**1Ki 1:15**).
    - c. At 70 he was "in a good old age, and full of days" (**1Ch 29:28**).
    - d. If you are 70 or older, prepare to meet thy God.
    - e. You should be doing that now no matter your age.
  - iii. If you are anywhere near 70, you should have your mind set on heaven and not on this life.
  - iv. If you seek to save your life, you may just end up losing it (**Mar 8:35**).
- 6. What to do if you know that your time is short
  - A. Do what you should have been doing all along.
    - i. Fear God and keep his commandments (**Ecc 12:13**).
    - ii. Go to church (if able) (**Heb 10:25; Psa 92:13-14; Psa 27:4; Psa 84:2, 10; Psa 87:2; Psa 137:6**).
    - iii. Read your Bible (**Psa 1:1-2; Psa 119:162-163**).
    - iv. Pray (**Col 4:2**).
    - v. Confess and forsake any sins you have not repented of (**1Jo 1:9**).
    - vi. Make things right with anyone that you have problems with (**Mat 5:22-24**).
  - B. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth (**Col 3:1-3**).
  - C. Exhibit charity, and be kind as you suffer (**1Co 13:4**).
    - i. Make good memories of your last days with your church, family, and friends.
    - ii. This will make it easier on those who love you after you're gone.
  - D. Make sure you have said all that you want to say to everyone that you want to.
  - E. Get your affairs in order (**2Ki 20:1; 2Sa 17:23**) (these things should be done long before you expect to die).
    - i. Make sure your will or trust is up to date.
    - ii. Consider transferring property titles to your children or others.
    - iii. Make sure that your life insurance and 401k beneficiaries are correct.
    - iv. Give someone durable power of attorney to conduct your affairs on your behalf if you become unable.
    - v. Write a living will and give someone medical power of attorney to make medical decisions for you if you become incapacitated at the end of life.
    - vi. Make your funeral arrangements.
    - vii. Make sure your spouse knows how to manage everything when your gone.
      - a. Write down all of your policy numbers, usernames, passwords for all of your accounts, especially bank accounts.
      - b. Write down all of your personal information your family will need after you're gone.
      - c. Make a list of where all your important documents are stored.
      - d. Write down the contact information of family, friends, organizations, etc.
      - e. Make sure your spouse's name is on all of your accounts if you want him or her to be.
    - viii. Doing these things will make it easier for your spouse or children to take care of things when you're gone.
    - ix. Have a family meeting and make sure your family knows what your wishes are.