

The Great Christian Hopes Pt 4: Hope in Death

1 Thess. 4:13-14 – 13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus.

Heb. 2:14-15 – 14 Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.

I. Death is Man's Old Enemy

- A. The human race is divided into two segments:
1. Those enslaved by the fear of death
 2. Those delivered from the fear of death

Jesus said: "He who lives and believes in Me shall never die" (John 11:26)

Ways we avoid dealing with death...

1. Don't talk about it
2. Cover up ageing
3. Avoid funerals
4. Denial
5. Cryogenics

Christians should have a different perspective:
No one is ready to truly live until they're ready to die!

- B. Two reasons for our fear of death:
1. Death is unnatural
 2. People love life

II. The Futility of Temporal Life

- A. Just when we're "learning how to live," we have to die
- B. History is like a field strewn about with people who never finished life
- C. Something inside our spirit longs for the infinite and the eternal
- D. In Job 18:14, death is called "The King of Terrors"
- E. The Old Testament leaves death a great mystery

III. Jesus Revolutionizes the Concept of Life & Death

- A. In the New Testament, Christ abolished death and illuminated life and immortality (2 Tim. 1:10)
- B. In the New Testament, Christians never die, only "fall asleep" (Jn. 11:25)

C. In the New Testament, Jesus died, but left death in the grave (Rev. 1:18)

IV. Jesus Brought Immortality to Light

A. Jesus took the fear of death away and gave purpose to life

B. Satan's worst taskmaster was reduced to a doorkeeper into the presence of God

C. Death is the doorway into the eternal, but Jesus said, "I have the keys"
1 Cor. 15:56-57

D. Death shrouded immortality in darkness, but Jesus turned on the light

V. Destiny in Death

A. Apprehension about death:

1. Death means change

2. We'll shed our body

B. The Christian sees the goal of these things:

1. Change from glory to glory

2. We'll exchange our mortal body for one glorified

C. Paul refers to his death as the "time of his departure"

D. As a Christian I see death, not just as a continuation of living, but as the beginning of the fulfillment of the goal God had for me before I was even born

VI. Hope Beyond Death

A. What shook the Roman Empire was the hope demonstrated by Christians who knew they would never really die

B. Stephen was at peace in martyrdom because he saw Jesus through the eyes of hope

C. When we've been in the presence of Jesus, we will take on the appearance of His glory