

“No Fear ...the fear of death”

(Luke 4:38-44)

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I. Introduction

A. Life in the womb

I know you don't remember life in the womb so let me remind you what happened during it. Every gestation day equipped you for your earthly life. Your bones solidified, your eyes developed, the umbilical cord transported nutrients into your growing frame...for what reason? So you might remain entombed in the womb? Quite the contrary...“womb time” equipped you for “earth time.”

Some prenatal features went unused before birth. You grew a nose but didn't breathe. Eyes developed, but could you see? Your tongue, toenails, and crop of hair served no function in your mother's belly. But aren't you glad you have them now?

Certain chapters in this life seem so unnecessary, like nostrils on the preborn. Suffering. Disease. But what if this earth is the womb? Might these challenges, severe as they may be, serve to prepare us, equip us for the world to come.

2. Baby's don't want to come out...are comfortable
3. Yet once they're out...
 - a. Bella and discovery
 - b. What a world!

B. Living in fear of dying

1. The most terrifying unknown
 - a. The moment after your heart stops
 - b. Letter from Cathy
2. Luke series
 - a. “No Fear”

- b. Jesus has delivered us from
 - 1. Demons
 - 2. The Message in Luke 4:31-32
 - a. My passion to deliver the message from God
 - b. God has sent me with a message for you
 - 3. Now...Death
 - c. Change in schedule
 - 1. Next week.... “The Biopsy Results”
 - a. Luke 4:38-44
 - 2. Faith Healers, etc.
 - d. But first....No Fear of Death
3. I’ve done lots of funerals
- a. With people during the greatest sorrow
 - b. Have buried all four of our parents
 - c. I’ve learned a few things about death

II. What I’ve learned about death

1. Death is a transition...not a final destination

- a. Death marks the true beginning of the believer’s glorious journey

- 1. Psalm 23:4

“Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me;”

- b. Life as we know it is a narrow vestibule where we linger for a time waiting for the door to open so we may step into our life of incredible dimensions

- c. Blind Fanny Crosby wrote a song entitled, “My Saviour First of All.”

*When my life work is ended, and I cross the swelling tide,
When the bright and glorious morning I shall see;
I shall know my Redeemer when I reach the other side,
And His smile will be the first to welcome me.*

*Thro' the gates to the city in a robe of spotless white,
He will lead me where no tears shall ever fall;
In the glad song of ages I shall mingle with delight,
But I long to meet my Saviour first of all.*

I shall see Him, I shall see Him

2. Suffering and sorrow need to be put into perspective

a. Enduring life's sorrows and suffering

1. I don't mean to down-play them
2. But, there's something you need to know...

b. What lies ahead...

1. Romans 8:18

"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".

2. II Corinthians 4:17-18

"For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. (18) So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal."

3. I Cor. 2:9

"No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him"

3. The death of a believer is precious in the sight of God

a. Psalm 116:15

"precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints"

b. Why?

1. The Lord's view of death as "precious" is because He alone can see both sides...the full scope of life as we know it here, and also as He knows it beyond this dark veil we call death.

2. Parents miss their children

3. When God calls one of his kids home...

c. The warmth as God welcomes them

d. Truly, the death of a believer is precious in the sight of God

4. *If we knew what God knew... we'd do what God did*

a. It doesn't always make sense

1. The loss of a young mother

2. A life of suffering

3. Why???

a. Romans 12:2

"the will of God is good, acceptable, and perfect"

b. We don't know what awaits each of us down the road

1. God sees it all

2. If we knew what He knows...

c. The sorrow is for those left behind

5. *We're currently writing our own eulogies*

Ecclesiastes 7:1-2

(1) A good name is better than fine perfume, and the day of death better than the day of birth.

a. Scott DeWitts eulogies

b. Invest in people

- c. The legacy we leave behind
- d. Filters down for generations
- e. What's your legacy going to be?
 - 1. Will live on through people you touch

6. *Our 1st day in Heaven will be the most memorable*

Ecclesiastes 7:1-2

(1) A good name is better than fine perfume, and the day of death better than the day of birth.

- a. That would appear backwards
 - 1. But not really
- b. My dad...what he got on the day he was born
 - 1. 87 years of hard work
 - 2. Getting up at 3:00 a.m. to go to work
- c. What he got on the day he died
 - 1. Fell asleep surrounded by family
 - 1. Awoke surrounded by family
 - 2. His wife of 59 years
 - 1. Wow did he miss her
 - 2. 59 years of devotion
- d. He woke up and saw Jesus

Our birth begins a life of uncertainty. There are sorrows, disappointments, pain, losses, broken lives, broken bodies, and broken homes. But our "death-date" marks the beginning of certainty. On this date, chiseled into the marble markers as our termination point, the believer leaves a life of struggle and uncertainty and enters a life of bliss and certainty...into the glorious presence of God

- e. Psalm 23:6

“and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever”

7. Death is the eventual destiny of even the healthiest

(Eccles. 7) (1) A good name is better than fine perfume, and the day of death better than the day of birth. (2) It is better to go to a house of mourning than to go to a house of feasting, for death is the destiny of every man; the living should take this to heart.

- a. The certainty that each of you will die
 - 1. Some young and some old
 - 2. You may feel immortal...
- b. It's not “if” but rather “when” you will die

8. We don't have the luxury of picking when we will die

- a. Sometimes we see it coming
- b. Sometimes it's completely unexpected
 - 1. Daniel B.
 - a. Did his sons wedding
 - 2. On the tee at Diamond Springs
- c. It will not be a day early...or a day late

9. Funerals are meant to be life-changing events

(2) It is better to go to a house of mourning than to go to a house of feasting, for death is the destiny of every man; the living should take this to heart.

- a. A time of soul searching
 - 1. What will happen to you the moment you die?
- b. Is there life after death?
- c. Is there a heaven and a hell?
- d. What must you do to be saved?
- e. I get to speak on behalf of the deceased

1. What he wants you to know
2. Whether they were saved or unsaved

10. Death leads us to the greatest of all reunions

- a. The joy of a family reunion
 1. Often happens at funerals
- b. If we could see death from the viewpoint of the multitudes already in heaven, death would likely be viewed more as a homecoming...a reunion
- c. People awaiting us in Heaven
- d. The saints in heaven want their loved ones will join them
 1. The promise of John 3:16

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

- e. The departed now know it to be true
- f. I speak for them by inviting you to receive Christ as your Savior.

11. There's one key question each must answer

- a. Whether or not you have accepted Christ as your Savior
 1. Everything else is left behind
- b. God's question; "Why should I let you in?"
- c. "Because of your Son, Jesus"
- d. The RSVP
 1. You've been invited
 2. If you fail to respond...

12. Jesus guaranteed we can have life after death

- a. Jesus conquered death

a. I Cor. 5:8 ***“To be absent from the body and present with the Lord”***

b. John 14:1-3

(1) Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. (2) In my Father’s house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. (3) And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.