

# DOCTRINE MATTERS: ESSENTIAL TRUTHS OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

## Message 22: **Death and Glorification:** Our Complete and Final Redemption

*"And as he spoke he no longer looked to them like a lion; but the things that began to happen after that were so great and beautiful that I cannot write them. And for us, this is the end of all the stories, and we can most truly say that they all lived happily ever after. But for them it was only the beginning of the real story. All their life in this world and all their adventures in Narnia had only been the cover of the title page: now at last they were beginning Chapter One of the Great Story, which no one on earth has read: which goes on forever: in which every chapter is better than the one before."*

- C.S. Lewis, *The Last Battle*

### The doctrine of **glorification**:

"Glorification is the final step in the application of redemption. It will happen when Christ returns and raises from the dead the bodies of all believers for all time who have died, and reunites them with their souls, and changes the bodies of all believers who remain alive, thereby giving all believers at the same time perfect resurrection bodies like His own."

- Wayne Grudem, *Bible Doctrine*, 356

### Part 1: **Death**

Death is not \_\_\_\_\_ for a Christian.

The biblical penalty for sin is death – but that penalty no longer applies to us. Our penalty has been paid in Christ.

#### **Romans 6:23 (ESV)**

<sup>23</sup> For **the wages of sin is death**, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

#### **Romans 8:1 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> There is therefore now **no condemnation** for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Death is the final outcome of living in a \_\_\_\_\_ world.

All the benefits of Christ's redemptive work are not immediately experienced by us. God has chosen to leave us in this world as we await the final judgment and the establishment of a new heaven and a new earth. Our experience of salvation is not yet complete.

**1 Corinthians 15:26 (ESV)** *The last enemy to be destroyed is death.*

#### **1 Corinthians 15:54b-55 (ESV)**

<sup>54</sup> ... then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." <sup>55</sup> "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?"

God uses the experience of death to complete our \_\_\_\_\_.

We know that we do not pay a penalty for our sin because Jesus did that for us. Therefore, when we do experience pain and suffering in this life, we should not think of it as God punishing us.

Many times, our suffering is simply a by-product of the sin and fallenness all around us.

Sometimes, our suffering is self-inflicted and a result of natural consequences to poor decisions.

Other times, our pain is caused by God's disciplining of us. (Heb. 12:6, 10-11)

There also times when suffering is necessary to shape us and strengthen us. (Heb 2:10, 5:8)

Whatever the case, God is sovereign over our suffering and promises ...

#### **Romans 8:28 (ESV)**

<sup>28</sup> ... for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

For the Christian, death, then, is \_\_\_\_\_.

For the Christian, death is not gain because simply it gives us something great, but because, even though it takes away everything else, it can't take away Jesus. Death is gain because when all is lost, we still have all we ever really wanted, and now we have *him* in a deeper, richer experience that, as the apostle Paul says, is "far better".

**Philippians 1:21-23 (ESV)**

<sup>21</sup> For to me to live is Christ, and **to die is gain**. <sup>22</sup> If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. <sup>23</sup> I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is **far better**.

**Romans 8:38-39 (ESV)**

<sup>38</sup> For I am sure that **neither death** nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup> nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, **will be able to separate us** from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**2 Corinthians 5:6-8 (ESV)**

<sup>6</sup> So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, <sup>7</sup> for we walk by faith, not by sight. <sup>8</sup> Yes, we are of good courage, and **we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord**.

**Revelation 14:13 (ESV)**

<sup>13</sup> 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!"

When our **Christian** brothers and sisters die ...

**Acts 8:2 (ESV)**

<sup>2</sup> Devout men buried Stephen and made **great lamentation** over him.

**John 11:35-36 (ESV)**

<sup>35</sup> Jesus **wept**. <sup>36</sup> So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!"

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 (ESV)**

<sup>13</sup> But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not **grieve as others do who have no hope**. <sup>14</sup> For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. <sup>15</sup> For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. <sup>16</sup> For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and **so we will always be with the Lord**. <sup>18</sup> Therefore **encourage one another with these words**.

When **unbelievers** die ...

**Romans 9:1-3 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit— <sup>2</sup> that I have **great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart**. <sup>3</sup> For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh.

**What happens when we die?**

The souls of **believers** go immediately into \_\_\_\_\_.

Once a believer has died, though his physical body remains on earth, at the moment of his death his spirit goes immediately into the presence of God with rejoicing.

**2 Corinthians 5:8 (ESV)**

<sup>8</sup> Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord.

**Luke 23:43 (ESV)**

<sup>43</sup> And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

God will not leave our dead bodies in earth forever, for when Christ returns, the souls of believers will be reunited with their bodies, their bodies will be raised from the dead, and they will live with Christ forever.

*What about cremation?*

*What about purgatory?*

*What about "soul sleep"?*

*Should we pray for the dead?*

The souls of **unbelievers** go immediately to \_\_\_\_\_.

Scripture never encourages us to think that people will have a second chance to put their faith in Christ after they die.

**Luke 16:24-26 (ESV)**

*<sup>24</sup> And he called out, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.' <sup>25</sup> But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. <sup>26</sup> And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.'*

**Hebrews 9:27 (ESV)**

*<sup>27</sup> And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and **after that comes judgment,***

**2 Corinthians 5:10 (ESV)**

*<sup>10</sup> For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due **for what he has done in the body,** whether good or evil.*

*What about 1 Peter 3:18-19, 4:6?*

Although unbelievers pass into a state of eternal punishment immediately upon death, their bodies will not be raised until the final day of judgment. On that day, their bodies will be raised and reunited with their souls, and they will stand before God's final judgment to be pronounced upon them in the body. (Matt. 15:31-46, John 5:28-29, Acts 24:15, Rev. 20:12, 15).

## **Part 2: Glorification**

When Christ redeemed us, he did not just redeem our spirits (or souls) – he redeemed us as whole persons, and this includes the redemption of our bodies. Therefore, the application of Christ's work of redemption will not be complete until our bodies are entirely set free from the effects of the fall and brought to the state of perfection for which God created them.

**Romans 8:23-24a (ESV)**

*<sup>23</sup> And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as **we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.** <sup>24</sup> For in this hope we were saved.*

### 1 Corinthians 15:12-58 (ESV)

<sup>12</sup> Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? <sup>13</sup> But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. <sup>14</sup> And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. <sup>15</sup> We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. <sup>16</sup> For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. <sup>17</sup> And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. <sup>18</sup> Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. <sup>19</sup> If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. <sup>20</sup> But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. <sup>21</sup> For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. <sup>22</sup> For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. <sup>23</sup> But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. <sup>24</sup> Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. <sup>25</sup> For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. <sup>26</sup> The last enemy to be destroyed is death. <sup>27</sup> For "God has put all things in subjection under his feet." But when it says, "all things are put in subjection," it is plain that he is excepted who put all things in subjection under him. <sup>28</sup> When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all. <sup>29</sup> Otherwise, what do people mean by being baptized on behalf of the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptized on their behalf? <sup>30</sup> Why are we in danger every hour? <sup>31</sup> I protest, brothers, by my pride in you, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die every day! <sup>32</sup> What do I gain if, humanly speaking, I fought with beasts at Ephesus? If the dead are not raised, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." <sup>33</sup> Do not be deceived: "Bad company ruins good morals." <sup>34</sup> Wake up from your drunken stupor, as is right, and do not go on sinning. For some have no knowledge of God. I say this to your shame. <sup>35</sup> But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?" <sup>36</sup> You foolish person! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. <sup>37</sup> And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. <sup>38</sup> But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. <sup>39</sup> For not all flesh is the same, but there is one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish. <sup>40</sup> There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is of one kind, and the glory of the earthly is of another. <sup>41</sup> There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory. <sup>42</sup> So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. <sup>43</sup> It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. <sup>44</sup> It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. <sup>45</sup> Thus it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. <sup>46</sup> But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual. <sup>47</sup> The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. <sup>48</sup> As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. <sup>49</sup> Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven. <sup>50</sup> I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. <sup>51</sup> Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, <sup>52</sup> in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. <sup>53</sup> For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. <sup>54</sup> When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." <sup>55</sup> "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" <sup>56</sup> The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. <sup>57</sup> But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>58</sup> Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

What will our resurrected bodies be like?

"imperishable" ...

"in glory" ...

"in power" ...

"spiritual body"

### 1 John 3:2-3 (ESV)

<sup>2</sup> Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he **appears we shall be like him**, because we shall see him as he is. <sup>3</sup> And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

NEXT WEEK: **The Church (Ecclesiology)**