**Facing the Last Enemy**

1 Corinthians 15:26

Roger Myers and Don Maurer

January 24, 2025

 **Gary Dunbar**: We are recording.

 **Roger Myers:** Gary gave you these magic markers.

 **Don Maurer:** Thank you; I appreciate that. *(Laughter)* Gary, I’ll tell you what: What would I do without you? *(Laughter)* We are recording?

 **Gary:** We are recording.

 **Don:** Okay. Let’s pray. The Lord be with you.

 **Brave Men:** And also with you.

 **Don:** Let us pray. Our Father and our God, we thank You for another day. We thank You that You have sustained us throughout the night and that we are awake and able to be here this morning. We thank You that the weather has cooperated. And Father, we thank You for Your word of truth. Father, we echo the words of Peter when he said to Jesus, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.” And Father, as we study this subject—this unpleasant but inevitable subject of death today,--we pray, O Lord, that You would instruct us, that You would teach us, that You would prepare us for that time when we go through that valley of the shadow of death.

 And thank You, Lord Jesus, that You have conquered death. Thank You, O triune God that You are with us. And thank You, heavenly Father, for another time that we have together here today. We pray that You would instruct us in Your word, for we pray in Christ’s name. Amen.

 **Brave Men:** Amen.

 **Don:** Okay. If you remember a year-and-a-half ago or so, in 2023 I taught on this very subject. When Roger and I were getting together to figure out what we would do, he informed me that the January issue of *Table Talk* is about death. And so we thought that we would talk about this subject. It’s a subject that is relevant to each and every one of us.

 I just found out last night that someone who I knew from a sister church of mine where I play the piano and sub for the pianist played the saxophone and he died a couple days ago. And so death is something that touches each and every one of us.

 So I have half an hour to teach what it took me an hour to teach in Sunday school a few months ago, so let’s get right to it. Of course your participation is always welcome. I have seven points to cover.

 Let’s talk first of all about *the reality of death.* It’s safe to say that all of us have dealt with death in one way or another: loved ones, friends, etc. It’s going to be coming up on a year when I almost encountered it, but the Lord obviously had other plans.

 Death is a reality. Now of course those who espouse Christian Science would deny that. John MacArthur says that Christian Science is like the cereal Grapenuts. Grapenuts is neither grapes nor nuts. *(Laughter)* And Christian Science is neither Christianity nor science; it might be nuts. *(Laughter)*

 Even though we know that death is a reality, our culture and even some Christians want to avoid thinking or talking about it. After all we have distractions, don’t we? Music is mine; the computer is mine. It might be sports or entertainment for some people.

 And that has really always been the case. Let me quote Blaise Pascal: *“Being unable to cure death, wretchedness and ignorance, men have decided in order to be happy not to think about such things.”* But this is magnified in our culture. And of course, unlike in past generations, death is not something that we see a whole lot of. People don’t usually die at home, although I heard that the friend that I talked about earlier did. But that’s very rare.

 So out of sight, out of mind. Just don’t think about it and then we don’t have to deal with it.

 Whenever I had a meeting at Tapestry with a small group that I belong to, someone who was fairly young said, “I have to admit that I’m kind of depressed to be here, because whenever I’m here I think of death.” *(Laughter)* “I mean, it’s a very nice place”; it was formerly the Embassy Suite Hotel. But still he said that people come there to die, “and I don’t like to think about death.”

 So our secular age deals with death either with sloppy sentimentality or defiance. A British survey was taken, and the three top songs at funerals were not “Amazing Grace,” “It Is Well With My Soul,” or “How Great Thou Art,” but “Over the Rainbow”—Jeff’s favorite,-- *(Laughter),* “Time to Say Goodbye,” and “My Way.” We’ve come a long way, haven’t we? It’s probably similar here in the U.S. as well.

 Even in the church, or at least the professing church, a lot of them have entertainment and feel-good sermons, so who wants to talk about death? And who wants to be confronted with death and what happens after death? So that’s the way it is.

 Okay. So :2: *What does the Bible teach about death?* Contrary to our culture of relativism and secularism, and sadly even many churches today, the Bible does not shy away from the subject of death. You only have to go to Genesis 2 to get to it. And of course the bible teaches that death is the result of sin. It’s not part of the original creation.

 That’s very important, because we live in a world and in a culture that teaches and takes Darwinian evolution for granted. And if you dare to question it, especially in academic circles, you are looked down upon at best and fired from your position at worst.

 People say that death is just part of the cycle of life, a natural and normal part of life. No. Adam was warned by God that “The day that you eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you will die.” Before that everything was very good, according to God. As Romans 5:12 teaches us, it’s because of sin that death entered the world, and death through sin.

 Now I’m not going to get into why God ordained that evil should exist and the necessity of the plan of redemption, and all that kind of thing. But what God does is good and right. But Adam disobeyed God’s clear warning, and we suffer the curse, including physical death, as a result. Only Enoch and Elijah escaped from it. All die because all have sinned.

 And that is really the only thing that can explain death, and especially the death of babies and children. Babies and children must also be sinners in order for that to happen. And we know that the whole creation is subjected to futility, whether it’s disease, murder, war, accidents, old age, natural disasters, that kind of thing. We’re all going to die unless Christ returns first.

 Now of course the good news here is the word to the serpent, where God says in Genesis 3:15:

*“I will put enmity”* (or hostility) *“between you and the woman,*

*And between your seed and her Seed.”*

 I think that’s a cryptic reference to the virgin birth of Christ there.

*“He shall bruise your head,*

*And you shall bruise His heel.”*

 The death of Christ, by which He would conquer and destroy Satan, sin and death, is referred to here. It’s the only hope for mankind. That’s a dangerous thing to say in this politically correct age, even in our country, but it’s the truth.

 Okay, #3. *The Nature of Death.* What does the bible have to say about death?

 There are three kinds of death according to the Scripture. Obviously there is physical or biological death. And death, at least as far as we are concerned, is the temporary dissolution between soul and body.

 I remember a humorous incident where my mom and I once were talking. My mom was sure that our pet dogs and birds were going to be in heaven. And I said, “Well Mom, I don’t know. I don’t think so, at least not before the resurrection, because I don’t believe that animals have souls.”

 Then she said, “You just wait! The birds and the dogs that we had are gonna bite you when you get there because you didn’t believe they’d be there!” *(Laughter)* If that happens, I think it’s gonna be a friendly bite. *(Laughter)*

 All right. So anyway, Ecclesiastes 12:7 says:

*“The dust returns to the earth,*

*And the spirit returns to God who gave it.”*

 We have Rachel’s death described as the departing of her soul. All right, so we know that.

 Not only that, but we have spiritual death. Ephesians 2 verse 1 and Colossians 2 verse 13 say that before Christ made us alive that we were *“dead in our trespasses and sins.”* And that is the state of all those who are outside of Christ,--friends, coworkers, family members. I talk to people at Tapestry about the Lord and they have no clue.

 You know, they are as dead spiritually—and we were as dead spiritually—as Lazarus was physically before Jesus called him back to life. Bruce Bickel was always fond of saying that life precedes faith; first life, then faith as far as the spiritual realm is concerned.

 And so all that a person can do in that situation is to sin; total depravity, right? Ted is fond of pointing out to us time and time again that when we see politicians make policies that we don’t like, or people touting abortion or homosexuality or whatever, it’s all they are capable of; they can’t do anything else. We have to remember that, okay?

 And then we have the third kind of death: eternal death. A person outside of union with Christ dies in rebellion against God as His enemy forever. Revelation 20:6 talks about the second death, the lake of fire. In Matthew 10:28 Jesus says that God will destroy both soul and body in hell.

 And so death is not unconsciousness. It’s eternal destruction; it’s ongoing. It’s *“where the worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.”* Mark 9:48. Revelation 20:10 and 14 say that *“the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever,”* and that the beast and the false prophet experience death forever and ever.

 Now praise God that for us, we who believe in Christ, the second death has no power. *“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”* Romans 8:1.

 So biological death is certain for us unless the Lord returns first. And it says in Psalm 139 verse 16:

*“And in Your book they were all written,*

*The days fashioned for me,*

*When as yet there were none of them.”*

 And *“It is appointed unto man once to die, and then the judgment.”* Hebrews 9:27. For us, death is the entrance into eternal life.

 All right. #4. *Adam’s sin and death, and ours.* As I pointed out, Romans 5:12-21 and 1 Corinthians 15:22 say that because of sin there is death. *“As in Adam all die.”* God established a representative relationship between Adam and all human beings, except Jesus, of course. When Adam sinned, we sinned. Adam’s sin is imputed—credited, brought to the account,--of all those he represents. And that’s called original sin. Adam’s death penalty is our death penalty.

 Now many people object to this. Is this fair? After all, I didn’t ask to be born; I didn’t ask to be born a sinner. Why am I punished for something that someone else did? Why should I die?

 Well we have to remember that God is perfectly just. God made us, and as our Creator, and as an all-wise and perfect Creator, He has the right to do with us as He pleases. Romans 9:20 and 21 speak of vessels of wrath and vessels of mercy. The vessels of wrath are getting pure justice; the vessels of mercy are getting mercy. Nobody gets injustice. Some get non-justice, but no one gets injustice.

 And then of course we have examples of representation even in our own lives, don’t we? This past Monday we saw the inauguration of a new President, and people can complain all they want to.

 I remember that during Donald Trump’s first term that my aunt said, “He’s not my President!” Well yes he is, whether you like it or not. Even if you didn’t vote for him, what you have is what you get.

 That’s only half the story. Paul in Romans 5 and in 1 Corinthians 15 makes the parallel between the first Adam and the second Adam, Jesus Christ. He says, *“As in Adam all die, so in Christ will all be made alive.”*

 Now we have to be careful there. That’s not talking about universalism. It’s talking about the fact that all are going to die because of Adam’s sin. But all of those in Christ will be made alive eternally. And you see, if we object to being in Adam, it’s hard for me to see how we can rejoice at being in Christ. And if we understood the seriousness of our sins and everything that Christ has done for us, we wouldn’t have it any other way.

 All right. #5: *The Fear of Death.* The world is certainly afraid of it. And I think that those who say they aren’t are deceiving themselves, and of course that is why they avoid the subject.

 But it’s fearful for all of us; I don’t care what we say. To a certain extent we fear death because we fear the unknown.

 When I went to Croatia several years ago it was a new experience. When I moved to Tapestry it was a new experience. But at least I had people who shared that with me.

 But death is something that we face alone. Yes, God is with us; *“I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me.”* Psalm 23:3. Nevertheless, death deprives us of everything that is familiar and dear to us: family, friends, jobs, hobbies, the pleasures of life, our goals. It brings grief, it brings sadness.

 That is something that our secular world really needs to ponder. If we are just chemicals in a glass, as it were, cosmic accidents, why do people grieve at the loss of loved ones? I heard a sermon by Jeff Durbin, the pastor of the church that James White, the Reformed Baptist, is a member of. And Jeff Durbin said, “Look! If we’re just products of evolution and chemicals fizzing in a glass, stop crying when someone dies!”

 And you know, they did try to implement this at Pol Pot several decades ago during that Communist regime. And when people were sad about loved ones dying there were people who said, “We don’t allow crying here!” I don’t know what it takes for a person to get to that level where he is so depraved that he loses all sense of emotion at the death of a human being.

 Now let me just say this. Though death brings grief and loss, and though death is penal—a punishment for sin,--while death is not good in itself, for us who are in Christ death is for our good. Christ suffered death in all of its horrors, and by His death and resurrection He has conquered death. Time and circumstances are uncertain to us, but not to our heavenly Father who loves us. And for us death is the entrance into everlasting glory.

 Okay. #6. What happens after death? And here I’m talking only about the intermediate state. There’s the final resurrection; there’s the final judgment and that kind of thing. I’m not going to cover that right now. Maybe Roger will; I don’t know. But I’m talking about the intermediate state; that’s a term theologians use. It’s the time between death and the time when Christ returns.

 I’m not going to spend too much time on these, but there are some false views. First of all, with non-Christian views of death, there is nothing, immortalized or captured in that song that was sung at Jimmy Carter’s funeral a couple weeks ago: “Imagine” by John Lennon: “Imagine there’s no heaven; no hell,” etc. Of course I believe that people who say that really believe that because they don’t want to think about having to give an account to their Creator and their Judge.

 And then there is reincarnation. That’s not as big a thing or as popular a view as it was in the ‘70s in this country. I remember in the ‘70s that a lot of people talked about that. I think it’s a very depressing doctrine myself, but Hinduism espouses that.

 And then we have heretical views that are in the church, at least in the professing church. Universalism teaches that everyone is going to go to heaven. The non-Christian version of that is that everyone will go to heaven regardless of what kind of lives they have led, what they believe, etc. The “Christian” view of that is that because of the work of Christ, Christ died for everyone. And therefore the sins of everyone have been atoned for, and so everyone will go to heaven.

 That’s a misunderstanding of 1 Corinthians 15:22: *“As in Adam all die, so in Christ will all be made alive.”* You can’t read the New Testament and come to that conclusion. Jesus talked about hell, and it seems that He talked more about hell than He did about heaven. The “all” there means people of every tribe, language and nation: Jews and Gentiles, learned and unlearned, rich and poor, etc. But if there is anything that Jesus taught, it was that there are going to be people who will not be in heaven. And people are not saved in any other way but through Christ and Christ alone: John 14:6, Acts 4:12, 1 Timothy 2:5, etc.

 **Transcriber’s Note:** John 14:6, NKJV. *“Jesus said to him,”* (Thomas), *“I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”*

 Acts 4:12: *“Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”*

 1 Timothy 2:5: *“For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.”*

 **Don:** Now is the day of salvation. People say, “Well what about the love of God?” We can’t pit one attribute of God against another. The question we should ask is not why doesn’t God save everybody?, but why does God save anybody? Why does He save me? That’s the thing that I should be contemplating more often than I do.

 And then there is annihilationism, the doctrine that those outside of Christ will cease to exist; there is no conscious eternal punishment. Of course the parable—and I believe the account—of Lazarus and the rich man—teaches differently. The conscious existence of both the righteous and the wicked is taught in Scripture.

 On the Mount of Transfiguration Peter and James and John talked to Moses and Elijah. The Bible teaches “absent from the body, present with the Lord.” And for those outside of Christ, as I said before, death is not nonexistence, but eternal, ongoing, conscious destruction.

 Okay. And then there is something called “second probation.” It’s not a common doctrine, but some people believe that the unsaved at death when they see God are going to have the opportunity because they see God to make one last decision to repent and believe. That’s contrary to the teaching of Scripture.

 The Bible teaches that immediately when the rich man is buried, he is in hell with no possibility of repentance. I could go to other Scriptures as well.

 For us, the Bible says: *“Blessed ae they who die in the Lord from now on, for their deeds follow them.”* And of course the Scripture says that today is the day of salvation. Of what value is this life if we have another chance?

 And then we have the Roman Catholic doctrine of purgatory, where those who are not pure in this life need to have their sins further atoned for; there is temporal punishment. That is related, of course, to their doctrine of justification because they believe that grace is infused or poured into a person through the sacraments and their good works.

 We believe the Bible teaches that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us.

 So let me go very quickly through what the Bible teaches: (#7.) It is very well summarized in Q. 86 of the *Westminster Larger Catechism.*

 First of all, *“the souls of the wicked at death are cast into hell, where they remain in torments and outer darkness, and their bodies kept in their graves, as in their prisons, till the resurrection and the judgment of the Great Day.”*

 Again, the rich man in Jesus’ account immediately suffers torment in hell. 2 Peter chapter 2 talks about the wicked angels that are bound up in gloomy darkness. If that happened to angels, how much more to those of us who are made in the image of God.

 Conversely, the Catechism says this: *“After death the souls of the elect are then made perfect in holiness and then received into the highest heavens, where they behold the face of God in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies which even in death continue united to Christ, and rest in their graves as in their beds, till at the last day they be again united to their souls.”*

 You know, I can’t imagine what that will be like: perfect communion with God; perfect communion with our Savior. Perfectly holy, no sin; perfect joy, perfect fellowship one with another. Isaiah says that “everlasting joy will be upon their heads.” Paul in Philippians 1 says that to be with Christ is far better than anything we know in this life, even though we will not have bodies at that time. And that’s something that’s hard for me to fathom; I’m sure it’s hard for all of us to fathom. Nevertheless it’s going to be far better than this life.

 We don’t know much more than this; there are lots of questions. It’s kind of like Christmas. God waits till we’re there to give us those great presents.

 Is there verbal communication that we have with Christ or loved ones or the saints? Will we recognize each other then? We’ll find out; I’m sure that we’ll be surprised, pleasantly surprised.

 The body is committed to the grave, with the full promise of redemption at the resurrection. Even at death the body remains united to Christ. And we have the promise that neither life nor death can separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ. Romans 8:39.

 So that is a very quick summary there. Does anybody have any questions or comments before Roger takes over?

 **Ted Wood:** Did you say something like in the age to come we won’t have bodies? Did you say that?

 **Don:** In the intermediate state.

 **Ted:** Oh, okay.

 **Don:** By the way, all of the material that I’ve referenced is from a book called *Facing the Last Enemy* by Guy Waters. I know that one person here has ordered it, and I would highly, highly recommend it to you: both the book and the video series. And I think it’s available till the end of this month from Ligonier.

 **Brave Man:** What’s the name of it?

 **Don:** *Facing the Last Enemy* by Guy Waters.

 **Roger:** There are eight or nine 25-minute segments that fit into an episode of “Renewing Your Mind.” All right. Don said this is the first time that we’ve ever tag teamed at a Brave Men teaching series.. I don’t know; I might be the instigator for this particular topic, because my wife and I experienced a lot of this recently. And as many of you know, and Don knows, Jeff wrote a very poignant message at our congregational meeting about Tab. Having read it I found it to be very touching. He was so happy to get back to work.

 So with that, and in just the last couple of months, my wife and I attended a number of funerals. And as you’ll find out, this will be more of an application part. You’re welcome to join in; I’m going to share something about myself you probably didn’t know.

 **Ted:** Do you mean the felony?

 **Roger:** Not the felony, no. *(Laughter)* No, maybe something else. So anyhow, hopefully we have participation and I’ll get through this. From other materials and *Table Talk* this month these are the topics. There’s something called “The Death of Death,” and “Preparing for Death.” And actually I added “Helping Others to Face Death,” because when you attend a funeral,--some of you do, right?—often you may not know people that well. What do we do as far as application? And then “When Death is No More.”

 Okay, why do we fear death? The fear of death is the root of all phobias or the mother of all fears, as Jeff taught us before. So anyhow they are real. I don’t know what my blood pressure is now; it’s probably coming up as I am in front of you speaking. It’s stressful and drives up your blood pressure. But there is one thing for me that drives my blood pressure up even higher. And believe it or not it’s going to the doctor. Or at least in terms of time it’s before I go.

 Believe it or not, when I go to give blood, I gave blood for years. Has anybody ever done that? Do you know what it’s like? One time we were driving to Williamsburg. I had worked out really hard and I was driving a car. It was cool, and all of a sudden this weird sensation came on, which led to a panic attack. I didn’t know what it was; I was afraid.

 So we veered off and went to the emergency room. My mom was claustrophobic. My younger brother is taking medication for anxiety. It was the first time that I really experienced anything like that. But now it triggers that sort of response every time I take my blood pressure, except when I’m home.

 So I’ve been fighting my doctor for years; he’s trying to make me take blood pressure medication, because I’ve had 200/110 at the doctor’s office, and that’s a scary thing.

 But some of you may know that I work out all the time and I try to keep my potassium up. So at home my blood pressure may be 110/68. That’s generally acceptable, right?

 So I hadn’t given blood for years. So yesterday I decided that I was going to face my fear, so I started to go again. The last time I went I think it was 177/88. Well yesterday, the first time, they wouldn’t let me in because it was 187/108. I’m thinking that you know you’re nervous because you don’t realize it till you get back from this, right? So the second time it was 117/77. They ended up taking my blood pressure eight times before I was able to give blood.

 And then when I got into the chair I felt that anxiety came on. So they put ice packs and stuff on my neck.

 So anyhow we say that we’re not afraid, right? But it’s one of those responses that you really can’t control. You can go online and read all this stuff about rotary breathing. Or nurses will say, “Go to your happy place.” I’m an engineer, and I’ve studied the aftereffects of that. Once your body releases those chemicals into your system, it takes a bit of time before your blood pressure to come back down to normal. So it’s probably not a healthy thing; it’s probably why I have more white hair than my brothers do.

 As I deal with anxiety, it’s probably my career path that has led me into speaking, which I probably wouldn’t normally do. But now I’ve sort of overcome that. To me this is easier than giving blood, believe it or not. So anyhow, they are real.

 What else did I want to say about this?

 **Ted:** You know, Roger, if you just had enough faith you wouldn’t have this problem. *(Laughter)* You should trust in Jesus.

 **Roger:** That’s right. Yes?

 **Don Bishop:** You know, about fear of death, I like what a pastor I had in Buffalo said. He said, “I don’t fear death, but I fear the process.”

 **Roger:** Yes, absolutely.

 **Don:** In other words, I don’t fear the outcome of death.

 **Roger:** Absolutely. The last funeral that Michelle and I attended was on Monday, and it was an old farmer, a friend of her dad’s, a family friend. Michelle’s brother was really close to this guy’s son. And he was in the process of dying. And I was just thinking that I’m not really afraid of dying; it’s just the “how” part. He was a little bit nervous about it, but he died peacefully. It’s like R. C. Sproul says; we’re more concerned about the how. Yes, Gary?

 **Gary Craig:** I remember that Jesus wept at the tomb of Lazarus, even as He was thinking about the process of how he would die.

 **Ron Baling:** Woody Allen makes it funny, but it is true. “I don’t mind dying; I just don’t want to be there when it happens.” *(Laughter)*

 **Roger:** I think that it’s actually the process itself. I’m the youngest person in the room. But as you get older it’s just more and more; it becomes more real to me. I think that between the last century and now there are seventy people in hospice that you know. I think it increases to the point where my in-laws are 80 and 93; there aren’t a lot of people left that I even know.

 So anyhow, you might not have known that I’m not all that eager to get up here. I thought this was interesting. I mean, when I was younger,--and maybe you were too,--does anybody think that maybe Christ will return and you won’t die? That’s me. I threw this in here because Solomon in all his wisdom in Ecclesiastes said, *“And I said in my heart: What happens to the fool will happen to me also. Why then have I been so very wise? And I said in my heart that this also is vanity. For of the wise, as of the fool, there is no enduring remembrance, seeing that in the days to come all will have been long forgotten: how the wise dies just like the fool. So I hated life, because what was done under the sun was grievous to me, for all is vanity and a striving after wind.”*

 So the next slide is gonna be from *Table Talk,* and we’ll get to that in a minute. Does anybody else have anything to say about that? I still hold on to a little bit of hope, if you want to call it that, or wishful thinking that death won’t come. And I think the reality is that it’s gonna come for all of us.

 **Ted:** The thing for me is that it turns more existential. When you’re fifty years old you ask yourself the question: Where will I be in fifteen years? Oh, I’m going to be collecting Social Security. And then you’ll just continue with that.

 **Roger:** Right.

 **Ted:** And when you’re 65, you say “Where will I be in fifteen years?” It becomes oh, that’s interesting!

 **Roger:** Yes. And along those lines, does anybody do that little mental exercise? Well, my dad lived to be 90; I have so many years, etc. We do that, but every day is a gift from God.

 **Don Maurer:** I have twenty years up on my dad; he died at fifty.

 **Roger:** Yes. It’s definitely a somber topic, and one we really need to face and talk about. And I think that another trigger for the phobia is that every year you go to your doctor, expecting him to find something, right? It’s not so much a fear of dying; it’s well, what is he going to find? Is my PSA going to be twelve this year? It could be something.

 So anyhow, in *Table Talk,* in “The Death of Death,” the apostle Paul talks about death as the last enemy, as we heard. The good news—and this is hopefully more practical for us,--is that as Christian men we do not face death all alone. Christ is with us the whole time. Not that we as Reformed or true believers want to think of Jesus only as our example, but in essence we will follow Him because that was God’s plan, right? He would die and suffer on our behalf; He did physically die. And the glorious part is that He rose again from the dead. And so we have that hope, right?

 Does anybody have any comments? I have Scriptures written down on here, but for the sake of time I’m not gonna read them. Go ahead, Don.

 **Don Maurer:** Yes. Jeff keeps talking about the importance of union with Christ. And Paul talks about this: His death is our death; His resurrection is our resurrection. And conversely, the beauty of that is that Christ as our High Priest and our Mediator and the One who intercedes for us, obviously does not suffer. But when we suffer, because we’re still united to Him, it is as if He suffers with us. I know I have to be careful when I’m saying that. But the intimacy that we have when He is with us in death is a tremendous thing.

 **Roger:** Yes, it is. And I think the take-home is that some people may be able to put their phobias aside. But I think all of us to some degree are a bit anxious about the “how” part. I think that we’re resolved that In Christ we have confidence that we will be with Him forever. So again, it’s the other part.

 Okay, *our appointment.* So Hebrews 9:27 talks about our appointment.

 **Transcriber’s Note:** Hebrews 9:27, ESV. *“And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment.”*

 **Roger:** Here are some fun stats for you. Not! *(Laughter)* 150,000 people die every day; that’s 60 million every year. That’s a steady drumbeat, right? Every generation from Adam and Eve until Christ returns.

 So what do we do with that? I mean, what do we do with that sort of thought? How do we process that? Again, it’s not an easy thing when you’re dealing with it. But I think that’s where our union with Christ is the key. Again I think we have to continue to pray and use the means of grace that we’re given. I think that we just do the best we can wherever we are, whether it’s weighing heavy on you, or just in preparation as we go and talk to other people. Just think about it; what do we need to do?

 But certainly we all are going to die. And as far as preparing for death, believe it or not our secretary, Jeff’s most recent assistant, is writing a book on death and what to do after our preparations. In fact we had two hour-long classes about preparing for death: everything from making funeral arrangements to burials and all those sorts of things; getting your house in order.

 You know, I’m still guilty of that. I don’t have any plans; I just turned 67.

 **Ted:** You don’t have any plans till it happens. *(Laughter)*

 **Roger:** That’s right. When my father died he wasn’t feeling healthy. So he went into assisted living, and then he went into skilled nursing care. Finally I said, “Dad, what do you want?”

 Silence. “What do you want as far as burial? Where do you want to be buried? What do you want for a funeral service?” It was up to us a find a plot for veterans. I mean, that was actually kind of tough for us. But anyhow we should prepare; we should always be prepared. There’s no use kicking the can down the red light like it’s not gonna happen.

 I don’t know about you, but with people in our lives we see that a lot. It’s not gonna happen, so there is no preparation.

 **Ted:** Roger, last week we were at a church retreat. it’s accurate to say that our church is a very traditional church; we still have an organ.

 **Don Maurer:** All right!

 **Ted:** Our service is very traditional. I’ve seen this more and more; we’re getting more young adult families coming to church. I’ve had conversations with many of them. And I said to each one of them, “My time is over in the next ten to fifteen years. So my desire is to help to prepare you to lead this church. That would give me satisfaction.” I mean, I go along with the doctors; I understand those. But what brings satisfaction is not so much the doctors, but the sense and the reality for me of being used by God to help that church prepare the next generation of leaders. That gives me a lot of satisfaction. And I think I want to try to mentor different young men who will be the next leaders. And I tell them, “I want you to see yourself as a leader in the future. You need to prepare yourself to lead this church.”

 **Roger:** Yes, right.

 **Ted:** And it resonates in their heads; it gets them thinking.

 **Mike Davis:** Your realization of death and accepting that is that whether we accept it or not, it’s gonna happen. My realization of death and accepting that impacts the way I live my day-to-day life. I know that I’m gonna die statistically before my wife. So therefore I make sure that when I leave the house things are in the right order, so that if I don’t come back she’s in good shape. She can find where the investments are; she can find all the different categories. Some of them are updated fairly regularly; some of them require updating and different things on her part. And so it’s taking care of things, making sure that it affects your day-to-day life. But it’s just like Ted talking about preparing the next generation as well.. Why? Because we’re not going to be around. We may not be here twenty years from now.

 **Ted:** And it gives me great satisfaction. The world will tell you that you’re useless. No matter what it is, everybody is in a different place. Some people sit around and don’t do anything.

 **Roger:** Right; you are probably aware of that. Some people just sit around.

 **Jim Hamilton:** I’m 89 years old, probably the oldest guy here.

 **Roger:** Yeah.

 **Jim:** And it’s interesting to me talking to some of you with your cooperation. And they start off by saying, “How old are you?” And I say, “89 years old.” And they look at me. *(Laughter)*

 **Roger:** That’s a good point. Another issue that raises my blood pressure is a time share meeting, right? *(Laughter)* All my anxiety is related to times sharing.

 We’re running out of time here. When death is no more: 1 Thessalonians 4:17. *“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 meet the Lord in the air and be with the Lord. So we definitely have that to look forward to.

 And then from *Pilgrim’s Progress* of course, there’s the analogy of Christian and Hopeful approaching the Celestial City. There’s the river, right? I’ve come to like that analogy as far as approaching death is concerned. To get there you’ve got to get through the river, right?

 The river symbolizes death. What words of encouragement does Hopeful give? Does anybody remember what he tells Christian? He tells of the Lord’s continuing presence that we’ve already talked about. And he says to Christian, “When you pass through the waters, I will be with you, and through the rivers they shall not overwhelm you.” He quotes Isaiah 43:2. I guess you know that’s the beauty of *Pilgrim’s Progress;* all the Scriptural references that he brings.

 So then later, as Christian and Hopeful enter the Celestial City, Bunyan writes that *“they left their mortal garments behind them in the river,”* as I mentioned before. And they talked about death as the last enemy: 1 Corinthians 15:26. We’re running out of time here.

 *Helping others to face death.* Why don’t we just stop here? I have a couple of other slides on when death is no more, but Don already touched on some of that stuff. But the suffering of a loved one before death, or the suffering of those who have lost a loved one, the reality is that I can remember when we came to Christ Church. My mom had started living with us. She had lung cancer. She came up here because she had ovarian cancer and she had dementia. Her cardiologist called and said, “She’s coming to the office but she doesn’t have an appointment.”

 We brought here up here and she started taking treatments. My mom was struggling with what God’s will would be for here. And maybe it was God’s will that she wouldn’t be healed, which was something that in some ways was hard to hear, especially for my mom, right? I mean, from that world it’s almost like if you don’t have enough faith, why aren’t you healed?—that kind of thing. That’s the wrong thing.

 But how can we help people? In the time we have left we can discuss this a little bit. I’ve just shared with you about my fears. Oftentimes I’m an introvert by nature, and so what I deal with may not be the same thing. Oftentimes it’s good just being there.

 It was really nice for my sister-in-law. First of all her dad died within the last couple weeks. And then her mother-in-law died right after that, and it basically happened at the same time.

 I think a lot of times that we may have the fear of going to a funeral home; I did when I was a kid. When you go to your first funeral there’s fear, right? You’ve never seen anything like that before. My dad was that way; he hardly went to anybody’s funeral, even anybody who was close to him.

 We show love by just being there. As an encouragement I like to send a note or something weeks or months afterward, because that grief and loss isn’t going away. It’s helpful for us to send our brothers and sisters in Christ a note. “Hey, we’re still with you on this.” Hopefully that helps them through that time. It never really leaves us. Does anybody have anything else to say before we close in prayer? Don?

 **Don Bishop:** A lot of times it’s just coming beside somebody.

 **Ted:** You know, if we really believe that Christ is in us, when we show up at the funeral home for the viewing, that’s really Christ walking into the room. I show up and Christ in me is there, which is supernatural; it’s all supernatural.

 **Roger:** Yes, Don?

 **Don Maurer:** At the risk of saying something a little humorous, this is the first time in history of Brave Men that Roger and I have done any team teaching here today. Not only that, but it was almost the first time in our history that Scripture was not referred to. But Roger, you did it. And the Scripture is 1 Corinthians 15:26: *“And the last enemy to be destroyed is death.”* And as always, this is the word of the Lord.

 **Brave Men:** Thanks be to God.

 **Don:** Okay, amen. All right, Roger.

 **Ted:** Thank you for doing this. I mean, I’m just looking around at guys in their 60s or 70s. And we think about a lot but we don’t have a chance to talk about it. This is probably as near to it as it gets.

 **Don Maurer:** I agree.

 **Roger:** This is like therapy for me as I struggle with white coat syndrome. All right; let’s close in prayer. Heavenly Father, we thank You so much this day. And we thank You for the Lord Jesus Christ in whom indeed all of our sins are forgiven in Him, and we can look forward to be with You someday in the new heaven and the new earth. Lord, ultimately that is where we’ll be because we’re in you. We thank you, Lord. Bless every man as we go from this place, and we pray these things in Jesus’ precious name. Amen.

 **Brave Men:** Amen. *(Applause)*